Strategies for an Effective Introduction

Component	Strategies, Tools & Guiding Questions
Gain attention	Strategies for gaining attention should be included throughout a unit or lesson whenever it is important to focus learners on the need to engage in the teaching and learning process. There is no more important time to do this than at the very beginning of a new unit or lesson. The *Document Appendix* provides specific examples associated with the following attention-getting strategies. - Incongruity, Conflict - Concreteness - Variability - Humor - Inquiry - Participation
Advance Organizer	Connect what is about to be learned with what is already known and understood about the new knowledge/subject/topics.
Context	The meaningful, purposeful, mindful instructional contexts to be defined in the experiences should be communicated in the introduction, and all subsequent instructional strategies should be presented "in context." *Appendix F* provides descriptions and examples of common technology-supported meaningful learning contexts.
Orientation	Orienting activities should be initiated in which the purpose for personally engaging in the instruction is clearly established. This can be explicitly facilitated by the instruction, or implicitly established through the learner's meaningful relationship with the instructional context itself.
Purpose & Personal Goals	Learners should be made aware of the purpose of the learning experience (this MIGHT involve informing the learners of intended outcomes). Related to the purpose, strategies should be included that encourage learners to set personal goals relative to succeeding within the impending instructional experiences. Instructor/learner communication and feedback should be provided to ensure that individual goals are indicative of the successful acquisition of intended instructional goals.
Big Picture	Present the course "Big Picture," and clearly identify where the main ideas and outcomes for the unit or lesson "fit" into this picture.

	An initial "Big Picture" might also be generated by the individual learner as a means of communicating an initial state of awareness with the content addressed by the learning experience.
Relevance	Strategies should be employed to engage the learners in reflection over the usefulness (personal relevancy) of the SKA to be learned.
Scaffolds	Access to learning scaffolds should be clearly identified, especially procedural scaffolds (guidance on how to utilize resources and tools, such as how-to sheets, tutors, introductory remarks and examples from the instructor).
Group or Team Roles (if applicable)	The introduction should establish clearly-perceived learner accountability, role(s) and task(s) within the learning environment, particularly if cooperative groups are to be established. In other words, individual learners should be very clear about what role they will play, and what their responsibilities will be, throughout the learning experience.
Instructor Role	The introduction may need to clarify the specific role that the instructor will play within the learning experience. Will the teacher be a "guide on the side," providing individualized help when needed? Or will the teacher be the "sage on the stage," presenting general information to the class as a whole?

Document Appendix: Keller's (1987) ARCS Model Addressing Motivation in the Instructional Planning Process

Attention Strategies	
Incongruity, Conflict	Introduce a fact that seems to contradict the learner's past experience.
	Present an example that does not seem to exemplify a given concept.
	Introduce two equally plausible facts or principles, only one of which can be true.
	Play devil's advocate.
Concreteness	Show visual representations of any important object or set of ideas or relationships.
	Give examples of every instructionally important concept or principle.
	Use content-related anecdotes, case studies, biographies, etc.
Variability	In stand up delivery, vary the tone of your voice, and use body movement, pauses, and props.
	Vary the format of instruction according to the attention span of the audience.
	Vary the medium of instruction.
	Break up print materials or (displays) by use of white space, visuals, tables, different typefaces, etc.
	Change the style of presentation.
	Shift between student-instructor interaction and student-student interface.
Humor	Where appropriate, use plays on words during redundant information presentation.
	Use humorous introductions.
	Use humorous analogies to explain and summarize.
Inquiry	Use creativity techniques to have learners create unusual analogies and associations to the content.
	Build in problem solving activities at regular intervals.
	Give learners the opportunity to select topics, projects and assignments that appeal to their curiosity and need to explore.
Participation	Use games, role-play, or simulations that require learner participation.

Relevance Strategies	
Experience	State explicitly how the instruction builds on the learner's existing skills.
	Use analogies familiar to the learner from past experience.
	Find out what the learner's interests are and relate them to the instruction.
Present Worth	State explicitly the present intrinsic value of learning the content, as distinct from its value as a link to future goals.
Future Usefulness	State explicitly how the instruction relates to future activities of the learner.
	Ask learners to relate the instruction to their own future goals (future wheel).
Need Matching	To enhance achievement striving behavior, provide opportunities to achieve standards of excellence under conditions of moderate risk.
	To make instruction responsive to the power motive, provide opportunities for responsibility, authority, and interpersonal influence.
	To satisfy the need for affiliation, establish trust and provide opportunities for no-risk, cooperative interaction.
Modeling	Bring in alumni of the course as enthusiastic guest lecturers.
	In a self-paced course, use those who finish first as deputy tutors.
	Model enthusiasm for the subject taught.
Choice	Provide meaningful alternative methods for accomplishing a goal.
	Provide personal choices for organizing one's work.

Confidence Strategies	
Learning Requirements	Incorporate clearly stated, appealing learning goals into instructional materials.
	Provide self-evaluation tools which are based on clearly stated goals.
	Explain the criteria for evaluation of performance.
Difficulty	Organize materials on an increasing level of difficulty; that is, structure the learning material to provide a "conquerable" challenge.
Expectations	Include statements about the likelihood of success with given amounts of effort and ability.
	Teach students how to develop a plan of work that will result in goal accomplishment.
	Help students set realistic goals.
Attributions	Attribute student success to effort rather than luck or ease of task when appropriate (i.e. when you know it's true!).

	Encourage student efforts to verbalize appropriate attributions for both success and failures.
Self-Confidence	Allow students opportunity to become increasingly independent in learning and practicing a skill.
	Have students learn new skills under low risk conditions, but practice performance of well-learned tasks under realistic conditions.
	Help students understand that the pursuit of excellence does not mean that anything short of perfection is failure; learn to feel good about genuine accomplishment.

Satisfaction Strategies	
Natural Consequences	Allow a student to use a newly acquired skill in a realistic setting as soon as possible.
	Verbally reinforce a student's intrinsic pride in accomplishing a difficult task.
	Allow a student who masters a task to help others who have not yet done so.
Unexpected Rewards	Reward intrinsically interesting task performance with unexpected, non-contingent rewards.
	Reward boring tasks with extrinsic, anticipated rewards.
Positive Outcomes	Give verbal praise for successful progress of accomplishment.
	Give personal attention to students.
	Provide informative, helpful feedback when it is immediately useful.
	Provide motivating feedback (praise) immediately following task performance.
Negative Outcomes	Avoid the use of threats as a means of obtaining task performance.
	Avoid surveillance (as opposed to positive attention).
	Avoid external performance evaluations whenever it is possible to help the student evaluate his or her own work.
Scheduling	Provide frequent reinforcements when a student is learning a new task.
	Provide intermittent reinforcement as a student becomes more competent at a task.
	Vary the schedule of reinforcements in terms of both interval and quantity.

Appendix References

Keller, J. M. (1987). Development and use of the ARCS model of instructional design. Journal of Instructional Development, 10 (3), 2-10.