

The Action Learning Toolkit

– Activity Summary –

1. What is Action Learning?

Action Learning is introduced and defined – and tools and resources for facilitators and others are provided to explain Action Learning and to illustrate how it works.

2. Why Do We Need Action Learning?

The general case for Action Learning is made – why we need it, and why it's so appropriate to our times. Action Learning is set in the context of The Knowledge-based Society and The Learning Organization and is illustrated with cases and examples of where it has been used effectively.

3. Will Action Learning Work in My Organization?

The conditions for Action Learning are assessed, and help is given to decide whether it's right for your purposes and your organizational setting.

4. How Do You Get Ready for Action Learning?

The importance of preparing the ground work for Action Learning cannot be overstressed. We now define some of the building blocks and preparatory work to be taken before people start to meet and work through their issues and problems.

5. How Do You Get Started?

Action Learning needs volunteers with the freedom to choose which tasks or problems they will tackle. These conditions are discussed, and the tools and resources are provided to run a 'taster' session so that people can experience the idea before committing themselves.

6. What Does an Action Learning Program Look Like?

Some principles of design and examples of programs that have worked well in particular settings are introduced.

7. How Does an Action Learning Set Work?

This introduces one of the prime ideas of Action Learning: the set, or small group of colleagues working to help each other to act and to learn from this experience of action. It describes how an Action Learning set works and provides tools and resources to form sets, to get them started, and to get the most out of them.

8. Do We Need a Facilitator?

Most sets will have a facilitator or set advisers. This unit lays out the pros and cons of this role and provides tools that can be used by anyone acting in this role, including set members.

9. What is Learned in Action Learning?

Action Learning is a profound forum for self-development, where participants acquire new abilities and enhance their existing ones. This unit describes and illustrates the skills and abilities most likely to be learned in Action Learning and provides some tools to be used by set members in considering their development.

10. Action Learning for Organizing: Teams, Networks and Communities

The collective ability to act and learn collaboratively in teams, networks and communities is key to the 'new organizing'. Some of the issues for collaborative Action Learning and organization development in these collectives are reviewed, and tools for further development are provided.

11. Evaluating Action Learning

Evaluation is part of the life of all Action Learning sets in the form of regular reviewing and can also be a summative process seeking the views of all interested parties.