

Strengthen Your Peer-Learning Network Via Action Learning



Partnership & Community Collaboration Academy
2012 Managing by Network

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What is Action Learning?

Action learning involves working on real problems, focusing on learning and actually implementing solutions.

Action learning is a process of inquiry, beginning with the experience of not knowing 'what to do next', and finding that answers are not available through current expertise.

**Definition from the Canadian Chapter of the
International Foundation of Action Learning**

Facing Challenges Together



When expertise fails to provide an answer, collaborative inquiry with fellow learners who are undergoing the same questioning experience is always available.

To be effective, this partnership in learning needs to be both supportive and at the same time challenging, deeply caring yet questioning.

Creating A Culture of Inquiry



Such partnerships actually create themselves when different people with different ideas engage whole-heartedly with each other to resolve each other's problems.

Honest Inquiry

This is a profound shift:

From dependence on available expertise and pride in the steady accumulation of knowledge to learning with and from fellow learners, honestly disclosing doubts and admitting ignorance



Action Learning Equation

Action learning is based on this concept:

$$L = P + Q$$

Learning requires **P**rogrammed knowledge (routine knowledge in use) and **Q**uestioning insight.

The process integrates research on what is obscure with action to resolve a problem, and personal and communal reflection.



The Role of the Group

Action Learning is an ongoing, highly focused process among group members that includes members helping each other to solve current, real-world problems -- and learn at the same time.

The learning comes primarily from the learner's continued actions toward current, real-world goals in their lives or work and from continued reflection on those actions.

Reflection is primarily based on addressing powerful questions posed by group members.



An Ongoing Process

In Action Learning, learners work in cohort groups to enhance the learning of each member by sharing highly focused questions, supportive challenges and ongoing support.

This is in contrast to the traditional approach of learning by collecting large amounts of knowledge and materials that might be used later on somehow.

Build a Peer-Learning Network Based on Desired Competencies

**Who in your peer-learning network
will assist you in developing partnerships
and
collaboration competencies ?**

**Knowledge + Skills + Abilities + Behaviors + Attitudes =
Competencies**

Identify one or two individuals, including yourself, who demonstrate the following competencies for your peer-learning network

Partnership & Collaboration Competencies	1	2
Partnering		
Conflict Management		
Influencing/Negotiating		
Teamwork		
External Awareness		
Vision		
Accountability		
Planning & Evaluation		

Consider colleagues outside the federal agency.

Consider friends and family from whom you seek advice.

Partnership & Collaboration Competencies	1	2
Collaborative Leadership		
Leveraging Partnerships		
Partner Cultural Awareness		
Community Collaboration		
Team Building		
Entrepreneurship		
Financial Management		
Partnership Management		

Look for individuals who possess more than one competency.

Partnership & Collaboration Competencies	1	2
Strategic Thinking		
Facilitation		
Political Savvy		
Consensus Building		
Developing and Managing Agency Agreements for Partnerships		
Policies for Donations and Fundraising Partnerships		

Questions to Ponder

What partnership and collaboration competencies are missing from the individuals in your peer-learning network?



Questions to Ponder

Are you using your peer-learning network to develop the partnership and collaboration skills you need as a decision-maker?



On-Going Task Assignment

During the course of our Managing by Network sessions, seek opportunities to develop your peer-learning networks

