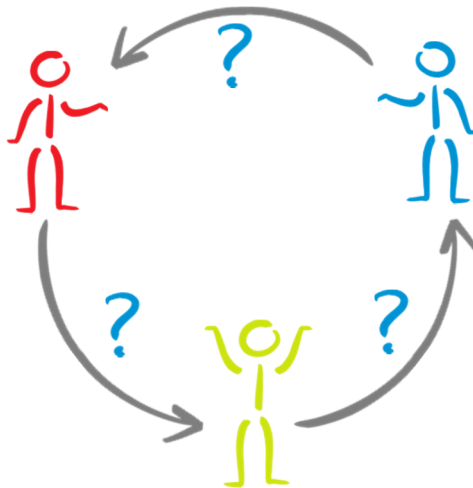


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The facilitator's tool kit



Action Learning - Top 10 Tools

Action learning is the quickest and simplest problem solving technique for modern leaders and managers

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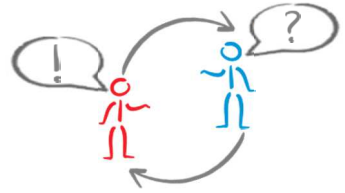
Why use Action Learning?

- Quickest and simplest way to solve problems
- Develop effective leadership skills
- Less time spent at fewer meetings
- Action plans that actually happen!

Why use a Tool Kit?

- 10 quick prompt cards
- As an aide memoire when facilitating any meeting
- Reminders of the action learning techniques

The 6 action learning conventions



1. *The Issue*

A problem, project, challenge, opportunity, issue or task.

2. *A set or group*

A set, group or team of 5 to 8 individuals.

3. *Questions*

Non-directive questioning and reflective observations.

4. *Action*

There is no real meaningful learning unless action occurs.

5. *Learning*

Set members observe and reflect on their learning as a group.

6. *An action learning facilitator*

A skilled facilitator is essential.

The action learning ground rules

- ***Keep an eye on the clock***

Good time keeping in meetings and punctuality are crucial.

- ***Confidentiality is understood***

Nothing of a personal nature that is expressed in a set will be talked about outside, unless it has been agreed by the group.

- ***One person presents at a time for a specified time***

- ***Say “I”***

Problems are owned by the person presenting. Avoid ‘we’, ‘they’ etc, instead use ‘I’, ‘me’

- ***Everyone is equal***

No one person is more important than another. Everyone is given the opportunity to contribute.

- ***Don’t advise***

Questions asked are free from advice, solutions, opinion and point of view. They are neither leading or subjective.

- ***Continual Learning***

Everyone on the team agrees to be a learner. Facilitators can stop the process at any time if they see an opportunity for the group to learn.

- ***Some action must be taken***

- ***Maximum attendance is crucial***

Every member of the set is asked to attend every set meeting possible and to make meetings a high priority. Apologies for absence are communicated directly to all group members.

Two models of action learning

Shared issue

Entire group presents and works on a single issue, problem, challenge

The issue is determined by the organisation or group

Organisation and all group members commit to taking action

Membership can be identified by organisation

Membership remains intact until disbanded

Group individuals implement the action and in some cases can recommend action

Facilitator may be rotated or permanent

Reflective enquiry process is used

Focus is both on action and learning

Individual issue

Individual issues, problems or challenges are presented and worked on by individuals

The issues are determined by individuals

Individuals commit to taking action

Members self-select

Members who depart may be replaced

Individual implements the action

Facilitator is usually rotated among members

Reflective enquiry process is used

Focus is both on action and learning

(Based on Marquardt MJ. 2004 Optimising the Power of Action Learning p.6)

Shared issue format:

- Refresh ground rules.
- Group check in and feedback from the actions of previous session.
- Group either chooses a shared issue from a pre-determined list or agrees on a shared issue that they all speak about at the check in stage that effects them all.
- Write up the shared issue in a 'nutshell' on the flipchart e.g. "30% of employees no longer respond to any organisational survey".
- Each person speaks about the issue from their own perspective and opinion using 'I' and 'me' for no more than 2 minutes.
- A different member of the set summarises each presentation.
- After everyone has spoken the facilitator asks the group "what questions do we need to ask ourselves about the issue"
- Everyone writes down two questions to him or her self about the issue.
- Everyone then takes it in turn to respond to their own questions.
- On the last turn around the group each person comes up with an action to go away with.
- The facilitator writes down the actions on a flipchart and each person keeps a record of the actions.
- The group reflects on the process and any learning is identified and recorded.

Individual issue format:

- Refresh ground rules.
- Group check in and feedback from the actions of previous session.
- Group decides who will present or refers to previously agreed list.
- Presentation of project/issue.
- Member of set summarises issue.
- Presenter writes down the issue in a sentence or 'nutshell' using the negative e.g. 'I am not managing my work load effectively at the moment'.
- Presenter chooses questioning technique.
- Carry out technique.
- Facilitator asks the presenter 'How close are you in resolving your issue, in the process so far?'
- Depending on answer, presenter may request another questioning technique or may be ready to talk about actions.
- Presenter makes a note of actions.
- Process review.



Five action learning questioning techniques

- **Questions on flip chart**

Each person writes one or two questions on a flip chart. Presenter responds after all questions have been written.



- **Questions on post-its**

Each person writes one or two questions on a post-it. Presenter responds after all questions have been handed to him/her.



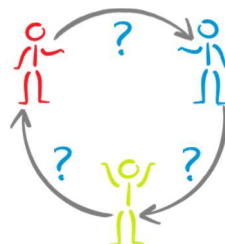
- **Ping-pong questions around the room**

Each person takes it in turn to ask a question. Presenter responds to each question asked.



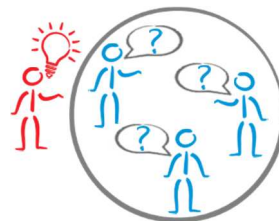
- **Questions around the room**

Each person takes it in turn to ask a question. Presenter responds after all questions have been asked.

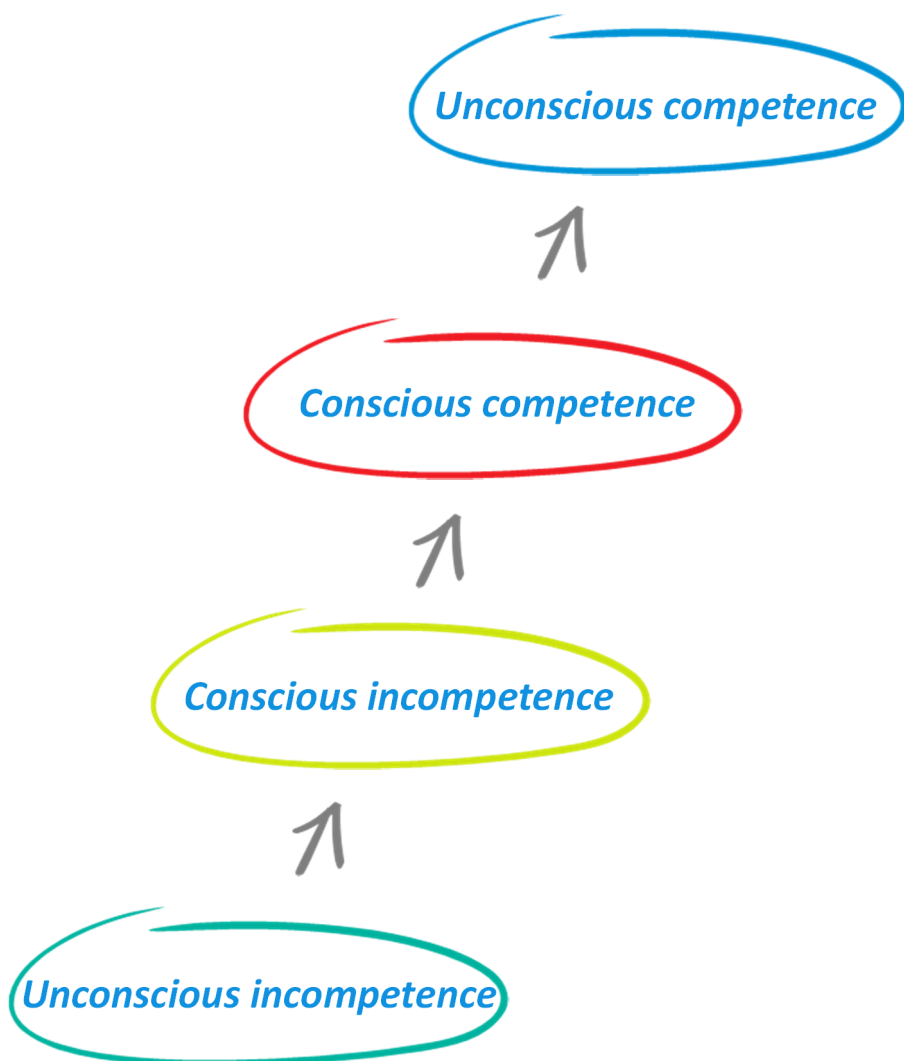


- **Goldfish bowl**

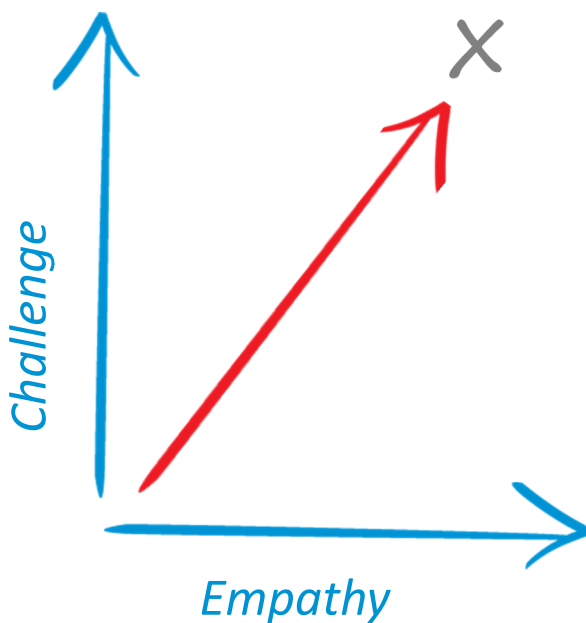
Presenter sits outside the group, while the group, reflect and ask questions as if the presenter is not in the room.



Learning Ladder



Empathy ↔ Challenge Axis

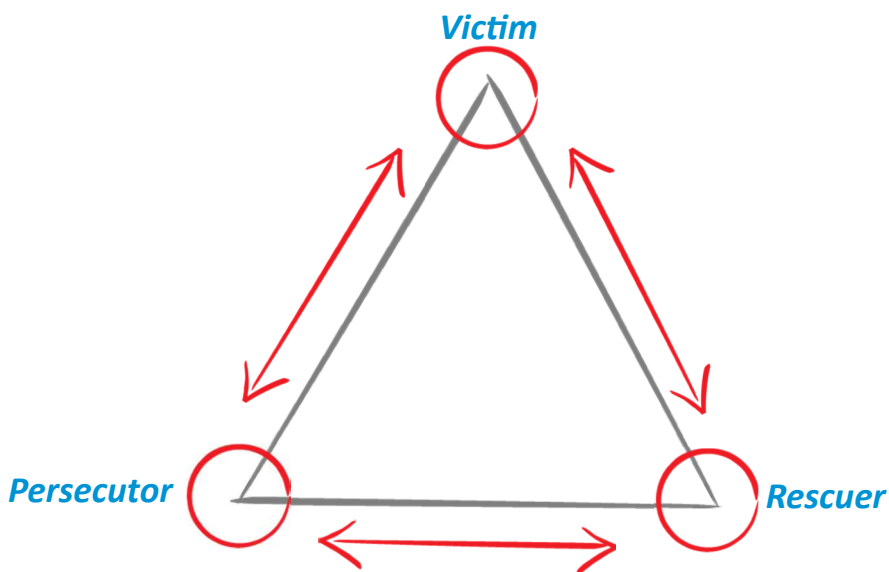


Scale of Rapport

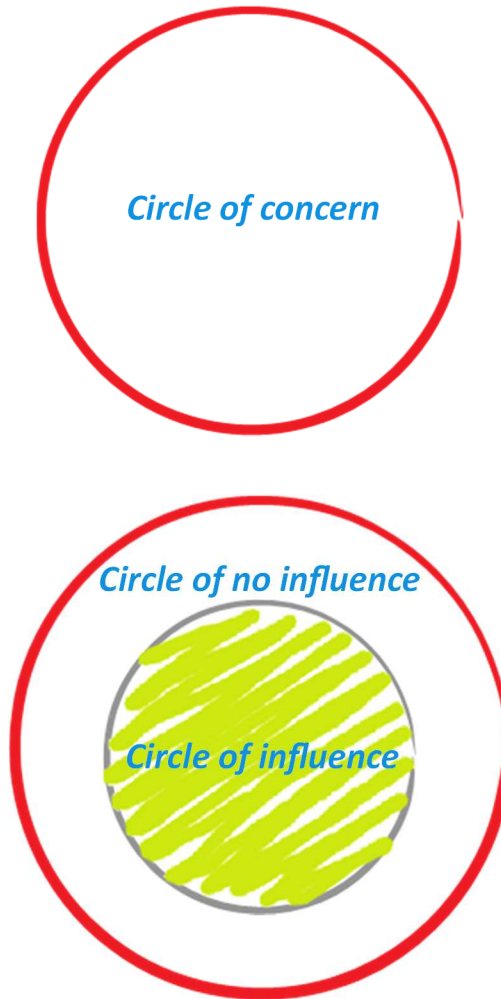


- 5 *Support, trust, connected*
- 4 *Strong sense of knowing the familiar*
- 3 *Genuine warmth and kinship*
- 2 *Comfortable, familiar*
- 1 *Interest*
- 0 *Neutral*
- 1 *Hesitation*
- 2 *Some discomfort*
- 3 *Awareness of dislike*
- 4 *Genuine aversion, real dislike*
- 5 *Strong hostile feeling, loathing*

Drama Triangle

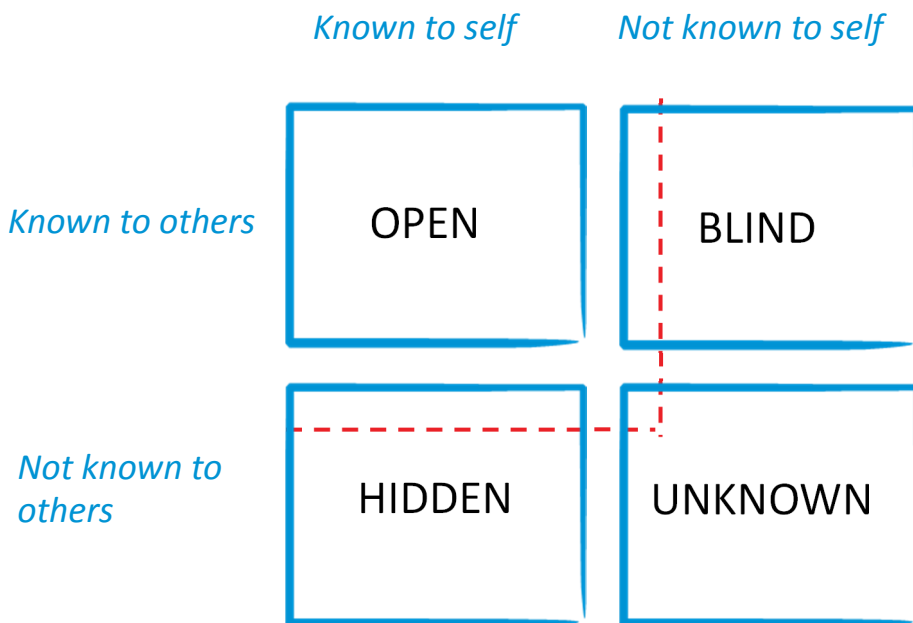


Covey's Circle of Concern & Influence



The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, Stephen Covey 1989

Johari Window



Based on the The Johari Window model devised by American psychologists Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham in 1955

Self-evaluation form

To be completed by all set members at the end of each action learning session and kept by the facilitator as evidence of action learning.

Venue:

Facilitator:

Date:

1. 3 things that stand out for me today:

a.

b.

c.

2. Myself

The one thing that I have learned about myself is:

3. Others

The one thing I have learnt about others is:

3. Action

My action steps as a result of today are:

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