



Global University for Lifelong Learning

Enabling YOU to make a difference in OUR world ...



The concept of action learning

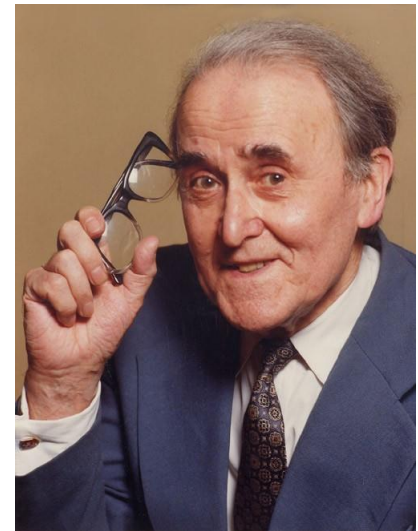
‘Those unable to change themselves cannot change what goes on around them’ **Reg Revans**

(1) What is action learning?

'Learning is all around us' Reg Revans

Reg Revans was widely regarded as a modern pioneer of action learning. His vision was of:

'...practical people learning from each other, creating their own resources, identifying their own problems and forming their own solutions'.



(2) Balancing the equation ...

'Learning must be equal to or greater than the rate of change' Revans

$L = P + Q$ where:

(L) Learning is a function of:

(P) 'Programmed knowledge' (e.g. books, reports)

(Q) Questioning insight (Learning to ask the right questions)

(3) How does action learning help?

Action learning leads with questions (not content) and fosters shared, work-based learning. In so doing, it:

1. is learner-centred and can be tailored to the needs of a group
2. promotes higher level, active learning
3. encourages co-operation and teamwork
4. is based on outcomes and applications, not recall

(4) How does action learning help? (Continued)

‘Organizations are developing focused, large-scale, customized action learning programs with measurable results.

These hands-on, application-driven programs are based on actual business challenges facing the organization and give participants an opportunity to actively discuss, diagnose, and recommend solutions to real-life business challenges...’

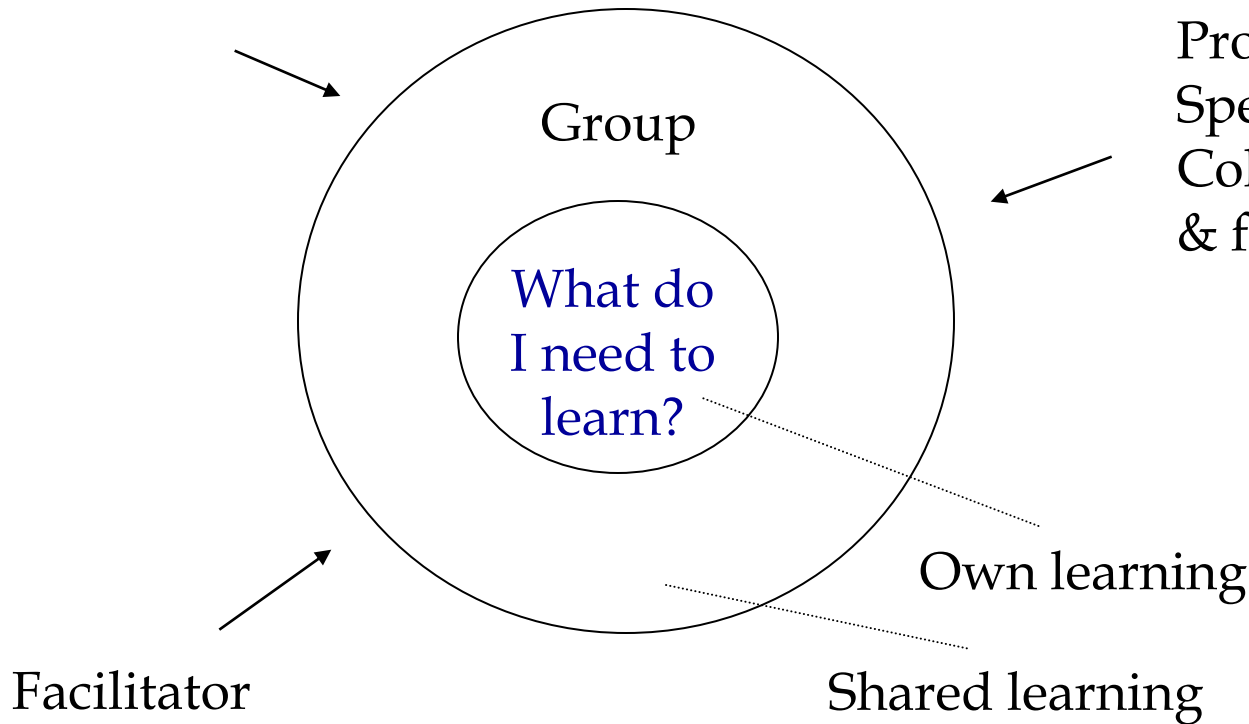
Jeanne Meister (1998) Corporate Universities: Lessons in Building a World-Class Work-Force

(5) Implementing action learning

Community, Workplace
and other resources

Web of support:

Learning coach
Project teams
Specialist advisers
Colleagues, friends
& family, others ...



The concept of action learning

(6) How does it work?

Via small groups. Aim to re-discover the way that small children learn! Also:

1. Participants learn from 'telling their story'
2. Participants learn from 'listening' and asking questions
3. A facilitator does not 'teach' but 'steers'
4. Outsider(s) sometime help - no such thing as a 'dumb question'
5. Challenging (via questions) is how 'breakthroughs' are made!

(7) Why questions?

Questions:

1. Keep things 'open' - busy people tend to race ahead to solutions
2. Slow things down - different perspectives take shape
3. Prompt creative thought and new lines of thinking
4. Help us to listen and encourage others
5. Enhance the prospects for learning from small groups
6. Help to build a sense of cohesion and mutual support
7. Enhance our receptiveness to new ideas and change

(8) What sort of questions?

Open questions are the most helpful. For example:

1. What are you aiming to achieve? (re: outcomes)
2. Why is your project important?
3. What are the known problems?
4. What might be difficult to address?
5. Who can help you with the details? (e.g. specialists)
6. What might other stakeholders do to help?
7. Will others influence the success of your work?
8. If so how? What can be done to involve them?

(9) What does the facilitator do?

The facilitator is responsible for:

1. Guiding and linking, on-going briefing (for learners, learning coaches, specialist advisers)
2. Reviewing
3. Providing meeting support (e.g. formal group meetings)
4. Quarterly progress reporting
5. Appropriate use of the system resources

(10) When **not** to use action learning...

If:

1. It a project is too big or (politically) too difficult to implement
2. There is little or no senior management support
3. There is insufficient time to get beneath the surface
4. You are working on your own (without a group)
5. Commitment, motivation, enthusiasm is low
6. Learning support is absent (facilitator/learning coach, specialist adviser(s)/web of learning support)

(11) What kind of learning outcomes?

By leading with questions you will be able to:

1. Create your own, dynamic, customized agenda for learning
2. 'Draw in' data (from many sources) that 'sheds light on your questions' and provides new learning that is meaningful to you and others
3. Address your own continuing professional development needs: In essence: What do I need to learn next in order to 'stay sharp' at work?

(12) What kind of learning outcomes? (Continued)

By leading with questions you will be able to:

4. Enhance your skills, confidence, teamworking ...
5. Build-on your experience, intuition and insight (the things that define your concept of 'professionalism')
6. See your career more clearly and build on your strengths
7. Become a 'reflective practitioner' – able to take effective action, analyze, reflect on how to improve and learn from the outcomes ...

(13) Outcomes: Benefits for the organization...

‘Action learning opens the mind to the skills that are required in the 21st century.

Our re-organization required a \$1.1 million budget reduction. Using a team approach, we came up with many ideas. We saved this much without losing any productive work hours or laying anyone off. I've been in this business for twenty-eight years. I was a sceptic (of action learning) before ... now I am a strong believer in this process.’

Comment from an action learner

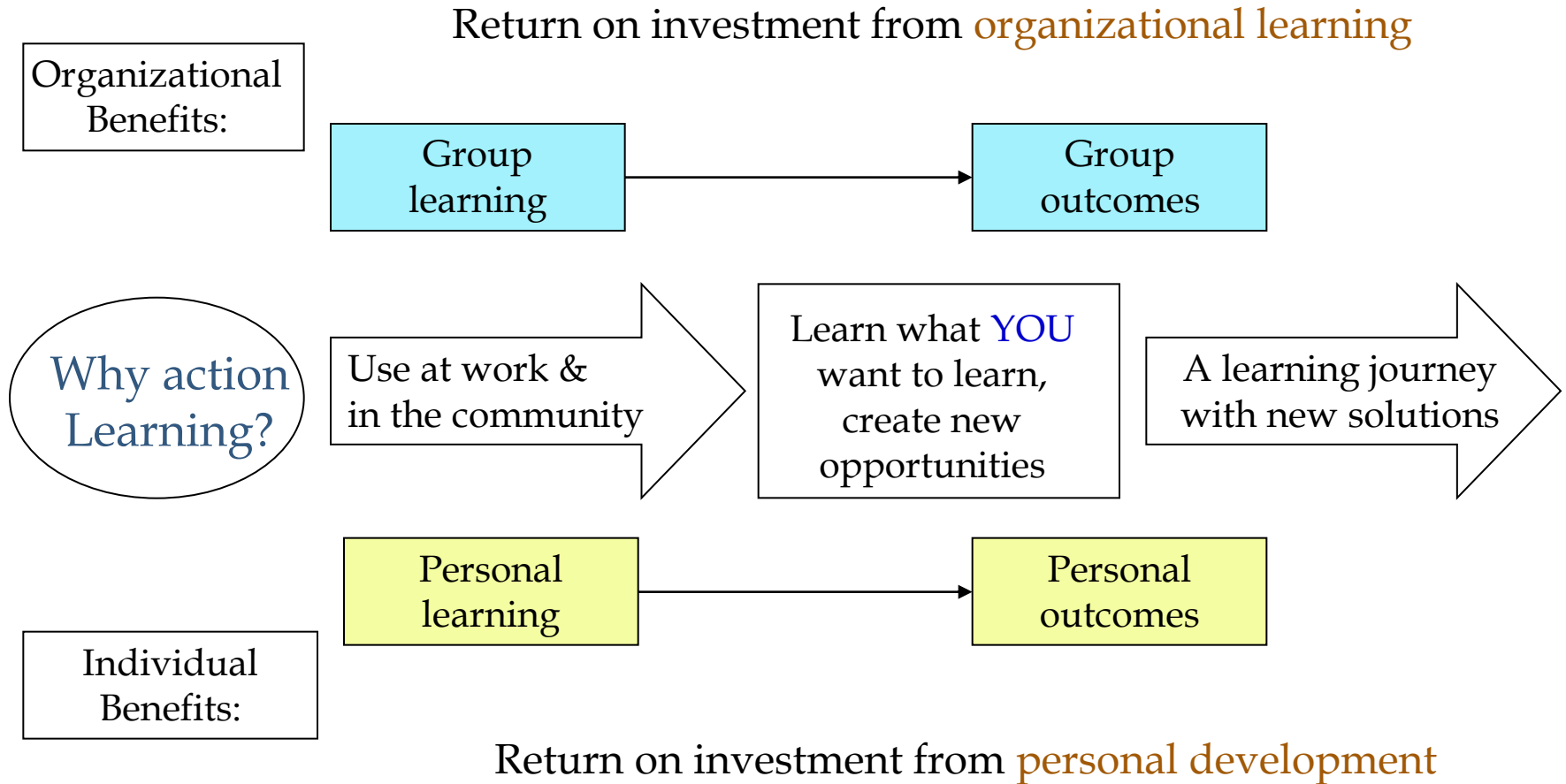
(14) Outcomes: Benefits for the learner...

‘Determination to learn is the key to the future. Ideas are exposed rather than being imposed. The action learning process is the most effective way to combine learning with real business applications.

The concept offers a superb solution to increased employee knowledge and motivates them. They have a brighter future, both professionally and personally.’

Comment from an action learner

(15) Impact: The return on investment



(16) In summary: The opportunity provides ...

1. A professional qualification
2. An approach that fits your own learning style
3. Customization: Your project become the curriculum
4. A supportive place to try something new
5. A return on investment in your learning - professional recognition is given for outputs or applications - at work



Global University for Lifelong Learning

Enabling YOU to make a difference in OUR world ...



GULL is a non-profit public benefit corporation incorporated in California, USA. GULL is recognized by the Government of Papua New Guinea & endorsed by other Governments, Leaders & Institutions.

Web: www.gullonline.org