

Learning Review

*A Tool for
'Learning in the Moment'*

- Evolved from the Army “After Action Reviews”, adapted to fit a non-military environment
 - Short-term, small team
 - By the team, for the team
 - Takes about 15 minutes
 - Makes learning conscious
 - Can make learning explicit
 - Builds trust

Learning Review Structure

- What
 - The meeting just completed
- Who
 - The team and no-one else
- When
 - Immediately after the meeting is finished
- Where
 - At the meeting place

Learning Review Rules

- Openness, nothing hidden
- Leaders lead on equal footing
- Learning, not blame or evaluation
- Everyone involved takes part
- No outsiders
- Real issues, not “the time the tea arrived”

Learning Review

Four Question Format

1. What was supposed to happen?
2. What actually happened?
3. Why was there a difference?
4. What can we learn from it and how can we do it better in the future?

Q1 - What Was Supposed to Happen?

Some prompts:

- What was the purpose of the meeting?
- Was there a clear objective?
- Was it measurable?
- Does everyone agree? Maybe there were different understandings.
- You could try asking people to write down what they thought the objective was.

Q2 - What Actually Happened?

Some prompts:

- What was the result?
- Was it measurable?
- Does everyone agree? What is “ground truth”?
- You are not looking for blame, or to praise. This is not finger pointing
- It will help if there is some type of record of the proceedings

Q3 - Why Was There A Difference?

Some prompts:

- Was there a difference between supposed and actual?
- Did you do better/worse than expected? Or did it all go to plan?
- What helped the success, or caused the failure?
- You may need to question quite deeply to find out the factors that caused a deviation from expectations

Q4 - What Can We Learn & Do About It?

- This is where you express the learning in terms of ‘what we will do in the future?’
- If any actions arise, make sure they are adopted

What Do You Do With the Output?

- Make sure learnings are applied
- Participants make notes for themselves or use simple template
 - Scribe can make notes of key learnings and solutions for future collation
- Pass critical learnings on to other teams

What Do People Say About Learning Reviews?

- “There are times when you think we don't have time to do this, then you do it and you think we don't have time not to do this.”
- “This was the one activity that actually made a difference to the way we did business.”
- “You’ll be surprised at how much you learn.”
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Hints for Leading an Effective Learning Review

- The emphasis is to learn and do better tomorrow, not to capture knowledge for the rest of the corporation
- Limit the time for the session
- Use a 2 by 2 table on a flip chart to capture the input from the team
- Quickly focus on 1 or 2 key areas to learn about
- Once you get to question 3, let the conversation continue on to question 4 to drive home a key learning and action

Q1 – What...	Q2 What actual...
Q3 – Why diff...	Q4- What to learn and do diff...

Learning Review Summary

Learning While Doing

- Short-term, small team
- By the team, for the team
- Takes about 15 minutes
- Makes learning conscious
- Can make learning explicit
- Builds trust