

Tool 3: Learning after

Objective

To conduct an evaluation following the completion of the work plan.

Outputs

- A list of lessons learned, expressed as specific actionable recommendations.

Time

Allow 60 minutes to complete this tool.

Background

The 'Learning after review' is a work plan team meeting that takes place after a piece of work is completed. The review summarises and captures the lessons learned during the project or programme for the benefit of future action learning teams or new phases of the project or programme. To optimise its success, the review must take place immediately after the project or programme is finished, and it must involve the entire action learning team.

The 'Learning after review':

- is a facilitated face-to-face meeting
- makes learning conscious and explicit
- focuses on the project or programme just completed
- involves everyone who has been involved in the project or programme (including pupil representatives), and can also include key colleagues who will use the lessons learned in the future, and
- allows closure.

Process

- 1 Choose a facilitator who will keep time and record responses, but who won't contribute to the discussion. This will help focus the meeting and keep it within the time allowed.
- 2 Set a meeting date, time and place. Confirm that the key players will be there.
- 3 Gather and assemble all key documents, including:
 - the original project or programme proposal
 - notes/minutes from previous meetings
 - any other monitoring and assessment tools used
 - student work
 - photographs
 - anything else that documents the project or programme.
- 4 Send out appropriate pre-meeting reading materials.
- 5 Open the meeting by restating the purpose, that is to ensure that future projects are even more successful by identifying the points learned from this project or programme. We are not here to assign blame or praise.
- 6 Introduce the five questions around which the review is organised:

- What was the objective of the project or programme?
- What did you achieve?
- What went well in this project or programme?
- What could have gone better?
- Looking back over the history of this project or programme, how satisfied do you feel with the way it went?

Now set time limits for each question – about 10 minutes for each question with five minutes reserved to wrap-up the discussion.

7 Now ask the questions one at a time and use the secondary questions to evoke deeper responses. Give participants a few moments to reflect on each question and encourage them to record their responses, prior to opening the questions for discussion. Don't make judgements, and record all responses.

Question 1: What was the objective of the project or programme?

- What did you set out to do?
- What did you really achieve?
- Were there any unstated objectives?

Question 2: What did you achieve?

- What was the pupil experience?
- What was the staff experience?
- What was the community experience?
- Were deadlines met?
- Are all the stakeholders happy?

Question 3: What went well in this project or programme?

- Why did this bit go well?
- What did the team do to ensure it went well?
- How can you ensure that future projects or programmes go as well?
- If you were a future project or programme leader, what advice would you offer?

Question 4: What could have gone better?

- What happened that stopped the team from delivering more?
- What was missing that meant this happened?
- How can you ensure that future projects or programmes go better?
- If you were a future project or programme leader, what advice would you offer?

Question 5: Looking back over the history of this project or programme, how satisfied do you feel with the way it went?

- How would you rate your satisfaction level on a scale of 1 to 10?
- What would have made it a perfect '10' for you?
- How would you rate the product and the process separately?

Taking things forward

- Ensure that the outputs of the meeting are typed and distributed to all participants (electronically or on paper). If you quote participants, be sure to check the quotes with the people who made them before distributing or posting the report.
- If any actions arise from this summative discussion, be sure that someone within the group takes responsibility. All actions should identify 'by whom' and 'by when'.
- Write up and share the specific actionable recommendations.