

Tool 2: Learning during

Objective

- To quickly monitor work plan progress.

Outputs

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

Time

- Allow approximately 30 minutes to complete this tool.

Background

The Development Framework's monitoring and evaluation tools are adapted from a model for action learning that WWF-UK developed to help its international conservation partners capture and apply what they learn through their projects and programmes.

As educators and schools work to develop good practice, they are constantly engaged in a cycle of planning, action, reflection and learning. In the fast-paced school environment, however, this learning typically takes place at an unconscious level: it is seldom captured and used to inform future practice, and it is rarely recorded and shared with colleagues and other education professionals outside the school.

In order to develop good practice through *Learning for Sustainability* – good practice that can be shared – a systematic approach to monitoring and evaluation is fundamental. Action learning tools offer practical ways for capturing and sharing learning.

Any lessons we have learned should be recorded as 'specific actionable recommendations'. Specific actionable recommendations present the learning in a form that is:

- specific (something clear and precise)
- actionable (that can be done), and
- presented as a recommendation (for future educators).

The 'Learning during' tool focuses on work plan progress. It is a formative assessment that:
advances good practice

reflects on the team's short-term learning

is conducted by the team for the team (with or without pupil representation)

takes about 30 minutes

makes learning conscious

can make learning explicit

builds trust among colleagues

focuses solely on the piece of work just completed, and

is carried out immediately after a piece of work is finished.

Process

Assemble your work plan team for a 30-minute meeting. Set an agenda with time limits and stick to it. Introduce and briefly discuss the four 'Learning during' tool questions.

1 What was supposed to happen?

What was the objective of the piece of work?

Was there a clear objective?

Was it measurable?

Does everyone agree? Note and briefly explore any disagreement. Disagreement need not be resolved at this meeting.

1 What actually happened?

What was the result?

Was it measurable?

Does everyone agree? Again, note and briefly explore any disagreement.

If necessary, remind the group that you are looking for understanding and learning, and not looking for blame or praise.

2 What were the positive and negative factors here?

Was there a difference between what was supposed to happen and what actually happened?

Did you do better or worse than expected?

What helped the success or contributed to the failure?

If necessary, probe deeper and ask 'Why?'

3 What have we learned?

This is where you express your learning as specific actionable recommendation(s): something(s) you learned that you will apply in the future.

Taking things forward

Participants take notes for themselves.

You, or someone appointed by the team, write up and share the lessons as specific actionable recommendations for developing good practice.

If any actions arise or further discussion is needed to reach agreement within the group, make sure a 'who by' and 'by when' is identified.

Make sure that participants see that their learning is having an effect. Refer to the specific actionable recommendations as appropriate to advance the development of good practice over the course of the project or programme.