

ACTION LEARNING SETS

Action learning sets follow a set process to explore problems and successes, hear different perspectives and share useful resources. Each time the action learning set meets it follows the same three-stage process supported by a facilitator:

1. Presenter round

- The facilitator invites a participant to talk for up to three minutes about a challenge or goal.
- The other participants act as supporters – they listen and show interest, but do not interrupt or speak!

2. Open questioning round

- The facilitator invites each supporter to ask the presenter one enquiring question each to help clarify their thinking.
- The enquiring questions should be open and non-judgemental. Please find a list of useful questions below.
- The presenter briefly responds to each question.

3. Reflection and action plans round

- The facilitator invites each supporter to make an offer of help or resources. These can include ideas, materials, and useful contacts. Please find a list of examples below.
- There is no discussion about the offers made. The presenter listens and makes notes.
- The facilitator ensures that all presenters have time and space to list actions they will take. The actions must be captured for review at the next meeting.

Examples of enquiring questions

Open question words	Example
What...?	What do you need to do next?
How...?	How might you change the approach next time?
When...?	When do you want to try this by?
Why...?	Why are you drawn to this approach?
Who...?	Who else could you talk to about this?
What if...?	What if learners respond in different ways?

Do not offer:

- Judgements (even positive ones!)
- Advice (either explicitly or disguised as a question e.g. why don't you...?)
- Solutions

Examples of offers of help or resources

- A person within the organisation to talk to
- A person outside the organisation to talk to
- A resource or repository of resources
- An article or book
- A scheme of work or lesson plan
- A video
- A course or programme
- A chat outside the action learning set
- A strategy or theory
- An idea