

# Achieving Results Through Action Learning

## Authors

Jo Cumming and Ian Hall

## Description

Action Learning ('invented' by the late Reg Revans) is the answer if you want an approach that solves real problems whilst generating powerful learning. This manual shows you how to prepare the ground and get AL underway. It explains the dynamics of learning 'sets' and gives specific guidance on how to become a competent set adviser. The manual also contains all the materials for introductory workshops.

This manual is a practitioner's toolkit with everything you need to design and implement a successful action learning programme. It is a must for anyone interested in improving people's understanding of the necessity for change, the processes involved and the mutual benefits which can result. Help your people by:

- Creating an environment where they learn with and from each other in a supportive and challenging way
- Enabling them to tackle the real issues, questions, uncertainties and opportunities that are part of their lives
- Encouraging them to combine knowledge with action, to review the results, draw conclusions and apply the learning to the next issue

## How to order/pricing?

The ISBN for this book is 9781902899183 and the price is £254.50.

## Buyers Guide

### What is the purpose of this manual?

To introduce you to Action Learning, a powerful way to combine working on live issues and learning how to learn, and to give practical advice on how to implement it effectively.

### Is it for me? What is the target population for this manual?

The manual is particularly aimed at people who know little or nothing about Action Learning. but also has plenty of tips for more experienced practitioners. It is ideal for line managers, consultants, trainers, developers - in fact, anyone who wants to solve work-based problems whilst, at the same time, improving the effectiveness of people's learning.

### Who wrote the manual?

The authors, Jo Cumming and Ian Hall, have many years experience running successful Action Learning projects in a whole variety of organisations - public and private. Jo is a Chartered Occupational Psychologist and Ian has an MA in Management Learning from Lancaster University. They are realistic and practical and are well qualified in this field.

### What difference will it make?

Besides giving you a useful overview of the Action Learning approach the manual will help you to:

- Do an honest assessment of your organisation's readiness for Action Learning
- Know exactly what you need to do to get started
- Fully understand to role of a Learning Set Adviser
- Have specific guidelines for running successful Learning Set Meetings
- Know what to do to overcome resistance
- Understand how Set Members need to behave in order to be successful
- Know exactly what to do to be an effective Set Adviser
- Know how to evaluate the success of an Action Learning Programme
- Run either a half-day or a whole-day introductory workshop (the timetable, together with all the exercise briefs, handouts and visual aids are provided)
- Know what to read if you want to do further research.

### **In how many ways could I use the manual?**

You could:

- use the ready-made, tried-and-tested workshops to launch Action Learning in your organisation
- select the pages you want to distribute and photocopy them
- use the numerous checklists to help you stay on track
- use the contents as a useful starting point and customise them to suit your circumstances
- save yourself from reinventing the wheel by following the practical advice to the letter.

### **So, why should I buy it?**

Following its advice will ensure that your Action Learning Programmes are effective and fully comply with best practice.

## **Developing Interpersonal Skills**

### **Author:**

Dr Peter Honey

### **Description:**

Research shows time and time again that interpersonal skills (nowadays often referred to as emotional intelligence) are the single most important determinant of sustained high performance. This manual focuses on six key interpersonal skills - assertiveness, communication, face-to-face skills, influencing, negotiating and teamworking. Each skill set has a self-assessment questionnaire and lots of specific developmental advice.

This manual contains everything you need to help develop six vital interpersonal skills:

- assertiveness
- communication skills
- face-to-face skills
- influencing skills
- negotiating skills

- teamwork.

Each skill is dealt with in a practical, down to earth way.

- There are two introductions, one for trainers and one for learners, packed with advice on how to get the most out of the manual
- Each skill has its own separate section within the manual containing a user-friendly self-assessment questionnaire, a score key and profile chart and loads of helpful development suggestions
- You can photocopy any of the materials in the manual to turn them into handouts.

## **How to order/pricing?**

The ISBN for this book is 9781902899213 and the price is £254.50.

## **Buyers Guide**

### **What is the purpose of this manual?**

To provide people with the resources they need to develop six key interpersonal skills - assertiveness, communication, face-to-face skills, influencing, negotiation and teamworking. Each section contains an introduction to the topic, a self-assessment questionnaire, a score-key and lots of development suggestions.

### **Is it for me? What is the target population for this manual?**

This manual is equally useful for individuals and trainers, developers and facilitators. It is designed to be used on a 'self-study' basis by individuals and doubles up as a valuable resource pack for trainers who need practical materials in the soft-skills area (there is a special introduction for trainers).

### **Who wrote the manual?**

Dr Peter Honey, a Chartered Psychologist and a trainer with many years experience at designing and delivering interpersonal skills programmes for a variety of organisations. He is well-known as a creator of self-assessment questionnaires and a keen advocate of their usefulness in encouraging people to take responsibility for their own development. He believes that questionnaires provide an engaging starting point, but that it is important to follow them up with practical suggestions for development.

### **What difference will it make?**

People with well-developed interpersonal skills stand out as the ones that really make a difference. The materials in this manual will help you to:

- Take stock and identify strengths and weaknesses in your current interpersonal skills
- Assess the demands of your present job/working circumstances
- Understand the importance of appropriate verbal and non-verbal behaviours
- Make it more likely that you can secure genuine co-operation

- Handle tricky situations with appropriate assertiveness
- Choose the behaviours that will help you to achieve your aims in different circumstances
- Negotiate 'win-win' outcomes
- Create a productive, purposeful teams that deliver.

### **In how many ways could I use the manual?**

You could:

- use the needs analysis checklist to help you decide which interpersonal skills you need to develop
- use the questionnaires to assess your current levels of interpersonal skills
- use the development suggestions to help produce personal development plans
- use each questionnaire and suggested timings for stand-alone sessions
- run a one-to-one coaching session using the questionnaires as a useful starting point
- send out photocopies of the relevant questionnaire as pre-work before a course
- use the questionnaires as ice-breakers or warm-up exercises.

### **So, why should I buy it?**

Simply because this manual provides a no-nonsense approach to developing interpersonal skills. It is an invaluable resource for anyone who wants to improve their 'soft-skills' (i.e. the really tough ones that matter!).

## **How to Chair Meetings Effectively**

### **Author**

Dr Peter Honey

### **Description:**

Meetings tend to be regarded as a necessary evil - time consuming talk shops that rarely stay focused. This manual takes a hard look at the role of the chair both before, during and after a successful meeting. It contains a 60-item self-assessment questionnaire (and a 360 degree version) with a score key and benchmarking norms. There are 60 practical thought-starters - more than enough to transform your meetings.

Most meetings suffer from being too time-consuming, too boring or lacking sufficient purpose. These are all problems that an effective chairperson can prevent and this valuable resource will show you how! The self-assessment and 360-degree questionnaires enable you to evaluate your existing chairing skills (and there are many!) and the thoughtstarters and planning actions sections will help you produce a plan to improve them further.

### **What are the Benefits?**

- It will strengthen people's commitment to meetings
- The 360 degree questionnaire enables people to benefit from others' feedback
- It will improve the effectiveness of meetings

- It will benefit people even when they are not chairing
- The manual includes scoring norms enabling people to make sense of their results and benchmark themselves against others.

## **How to order/pricing?**

The ISBN for this book is 9781902899244 and the price is £207.00.

## **Buyers Guide**

### **How to Chair Meetings Effectively**

Most meetings suffer from being too time-consuming, too boring or lacking sufficient purpose. These are all problems that an effective chairperson can prevent and this valuable resource will show you how! The self-assessment and 360 degree questionnaires enable you to evaluate your existing chairing skills (and there are many!) and the thought-starters and planning actions? Sections will help you produce a plan to improve them further.

### **What is the purpose of this manual?**

To provide guidance on the key skills of chairing meetings. Helping people to manage simultaneously, structure, time, communications, problem-solving, decision making and behaviour, all vitally important to the overall effectiveness of meetings.

### **Is it for me? What is the target population for this manual?**

The manual is aimed at anyone who has, on occasion, to chair meetings. It is also helpful for those who regularly attend meetings and whose behaviour can complement the efforts of the chairperson. Managers, Trainers, Consultants, in fact anyone who, during the course of their working day, is involved in the process of meetings.

### **Who wrote the manual?**

Dr Peter Honey who is a Chartered Psychologist dedicated to helping people develop themselves and improve their performance. For over 30 years his primary interest has been helping people to learn effectively from work-based experiences. He is a Patron of the Campaign for Learning and a trustee of the Lifelong Learning Foundation and the Prisoners' Education Trust. He is also a Fellow of the RSA, CIPD and ITOL. He was also one of the founder members of the distinguished group that produced A Declaration on Learning.

### **What difference will it make?**

It will give you a clear understanding of the key processes of chairing meetings and will help you to

- Have specific guidelines for running a successful meeting
- Ensure that meetings you chair are planned thoroughly
- Get buy-in to the objectives on the agenda
- Ensure that you keep the meeting on track
- Know how to manage people's behaviour

- Ensure that all participants are able to contribute
- Understand the value of summarising what has been discussed
- Make it more likely that the shared objectives are achieved.

### **In how many ways could I use the manual?**

You could:

- Check the current status of your chairing skills using the questionnaire
- Collect the perceptions of your colleagues using the 360-degree version of the questionnaire
- Use the checklists and thought starters to devise a personal action plan
- Improve your communication skills during meetings
- Improve the decision making process by agreeing the criteria
- Run a workshop to improve the overall effectiveness of meetings

### **So, why should I buy it?**

Following the advice will ensure that future meetings are more effective and worthwhile and that shared objectives are more likely to be achieved.

## **The Learning Company Toolkit**

### **Authors:**

Mike Pedler, John Burgoyne and Tom Boydell

### **Description:**

Learning is here to stay and more and more organisations are striving, not only to understand what it means to become a learning organisation, but what to do to start on the journey and, having started, to keep up the momentum.

This toolkit offers massive encouragement and plenty of practical guidance. It features 20 developmental activities (including the well known organisational toxicity index). Look no further if you want everything you need to start turning the aspiration into a reality.

The founders of the Learning Company Project have designed this resource specifically to help managers and professionals with the concepts and ideas of the learning organisation. It contains 20 developmental activities (including workshops and diagnostics) for use with small or large groups.

### **What are the Benefits?**

- Comprehensive help is provided in the form of 20 developmental activities, including diagnostics, checklists, brainstorming sessions and presentations

- Time-saving support materials are provided, such as step-by-step guides, exercises, OHT's and handouts
- The toolkit is versatile and can be used with small or large groups, in one-to-one coaching sessions or in in-company programmes with participants from different organisations
- Each of the 20 activities is stand-alone, enabling you to select ones that suit your needs at any given time and this ensures that you will get long-term use out of the resource.

## **The Learning Company Toolkit**

The founders of the Learning Company Project have designed this resource specifically to help managers and professionals with the concepts and ideas of the learning organisation. It contains 20 developmental activities (including workshops and diagnostics) for use with small or large groups.

## **How to order/pricing?**

The ISBN for this book is 9781902899060 and the price is £254.50.

## **Buyers Guide**

### **What is the purpose of this manual?**

To give people plenty of practical tools that will help to create learning-friendly work environments (i.e. learning companies or learning organisations).

### **Is it for me? What is the target population for this manual?**

The manual is written for anyone who needs ideas to help make learning and development a priority in their organisation. This includes managers and management development specialists.

### **Who wrote the manual?**

The manual was written by the three people who masterminded the famous Learning Company Project: Mike Pedler, John Burgoyne and Tom Boydell. They are well-known authors having previously collaborated with three best sellers (published by McGraw-Hill), *A Manager's Guide to Self-Development*, *The Learning Company*, and *Towards the Learning Company: Concepts and Practices*. The tools in this manual were originally developed for their own use as management development specialists. They found them so useful that they wished to make them available to a wider audience. This manual is the welcome result.

### **What difference will it make?**

The manual contains 20 developmental activities, each with a step-by-step guide and all the necessary handouts and exercise materials. These activities show how to put learning 'on the map' as a process of strategic importance in any successful organisation. Learning companies, i.e. companies that are good at learning, have a number of advantages over those that fail to place

learning centre-stage. They are more likely to survive because they continuously learn and create 'virtuous circles' where success breeds success. They deal better with problems and challenges, they have a better understanding of things going on around them and they can identify, and exploit, opportunities whilst avoiding areas of risk and danger.

### **In how many ways could I use the manual?**

You could:

- Select the activities you want to use in your organisation and follow, to the letter, the guidelines the author's offer based on their own experiences of using the tools
- Use the tools on offer as invaluable thought-starters and customise them for your own use
- Photocopy the numerous handouts/visual aids and incorporate them into your training programmes
- Use the numerous questionnaires and checklists (including the well-known Organisational Toxicity Index) as diagnostic tools to establish how near or far your organisation is from being a Learning Company
- Incorporate the tools that focus on leadership issues and strategic decision making into a senior management workshop

### **So, why should I buy it?**

Because it will instantly give you 20 practical activities that will help you turn your organisation into one that values learning as the key to sustaining a competitive advantage.

## **Making Continuous Improvement a Reality**

### **Author:**

Dr Peter Honey

### **Description:**

Everything is capable of improvement and everyone needs to take responsibility for continuous improvement - but it is often left as a lofty aspiration rather than becoming a way of life.

The manual contains a 50-item questionnaire to help people take stock of their continuous improvement practices (there is also a 360 degree version). The manual is packed with practical thought-starters so that people can see exactly what to do to make CI a reality.

This manual provides comprehensive help on making continuous improvement a reality. The self-assessment and 360-degree questionnaires enable people to evaluate their commitment to various aspects of continuous improvement. The thoughtstarters and "planning actions" sections can then be used to target weak areas and to create personalised plans to tackle them.

### **What are the Benefits?**

- It is a very practical way of making continuous improvement an integral part of working life



- The 360 degree questionnaire enables people to benefit from others' feedback
- It enables people to create desirable and relevant continuous improvement goals, with guidance on how to achieve them, making them more likely to be sustained
- Norms are provided to help people make sense of their results and benchmark themselves against others.

## **How to order/pricing?**

The ISBN for this book is 9781902899251 and the price is £207.00.

## **Buyers Guide**

This manual provides comprehensive help on making continuous improvement a reality. The self-assessment and 360 degree questionnaires enable people to evaluate their commitment to various aspects of continuous improvement. The thought-starters and 'planning actions' sections can then be used to target weak areas and to create personalised plans to tackle them.

### **What is the purpose of this manual?**

The manual was designed to help people, personally and within organisations to initiate, and more importantly, sustain continuous improvement. It supports the idea that 'the only truly competitive edge' is the one achieved by becoming a continuous improver.

### **Is it for me? What is the target population for this manual?**

This manual is for everyone, it will help you as an individual wishing to assess and improve your ability to continuously improve and would be equally useful for managers, trainers and consultants wishing to help people within organisations achieve that all important 'edge'.

### **Who wrote the manual?**

Dr Peter Honey, a Chartered Psychologist and a trainer with many years experience of designing and delivering programmes to aid continuous improvement within a variety of organisations. Dr Honey is a strong believer in a process oriented approach and has found that working continuously to improve processes and standards is the best recipe for success.

### **What difference will it make?**

Besides introducing you to the philosophy of continuous improvement it will help you to

- Understand the key elements
- Make an honest assessment of your continuous improvement skills
- Understand that without exception, things can always be improved
- Overcome resistance that may be holding you or your organisation back
- Devise measurable indicators of key processes with a view to improvement
- Fully understand the value of experimenting with new ways or doing things
- Measure key performance areas before, during and after improvements

**In how many ways could I use the manual?**

You could:

- use the questionnaire to identify current levels of continuous improvement skills
- use the thought-starters as part of a personal development plan
- find out how to set the criteria for processes most in need of improvement ( e.g. incur the most cost, recurring mistakes, trigger most complaints)
- use the guidelines to write your own list of process measures
- run a workshop to revise and improve current key processes

**So, why should I buy it?**

Following its practical advice will ensure that you, and your organisation, adopt behaviours that will not only initiate continuous improvement but will maintain and sustain it on an ongoing basis.