



The Learning Partner

IIDC LEARNING SERIES



LEARNING BRIEF

INTEGRATING LEARNING IN ORGANIZATION WORKFLOW

Tools and Platforms for Collaborative Learning

Adapted from the IIDC Learning Guide for Development Organizations: A Facilitator's Guide

Webinars

Technology-enabled, short learning bursts, these are facilitated discussions that allow dispersed global/remote teams to meet collectively to discuss learnings. In low data resource settings this may be hampered and create a poor learning experience for participants.



Webinars

Mentorship and Coaching

Customised to the learner's needs, deliverable physically or remote and allows for personalized self-paced deeper inquiry which reinforces learning. However, the lack of opportunity to interact and learn from others, may lead to abandonment of the learning process if self-motivation is lacking.



Individual Coaching

Learning and Reflection events

Big group networking focusing on collaborative problem analysis, implementation and learning through expert-led group work, these events allow diversity in experiences shared, problems solved and cross-application of solutions.



Learning Conventions

Organizational Learning

Learning happens through facilitated dialogue, observation, critical thinking and clear action plans. Empathy is a key requirement that builds trust among staff to share learnings that may be 'hidden' or not obvious. However, it may not be easy to build consensus on 'learnings' or how and where to implement them.



Organizational Development

▶ 3 Ways to Improve Facilitation of Online Learning



(Adapted with permission from globallearningpartners.com)

With online interaction becoming the significant new norm, facilitators of online learning have to be especially careful to keep learners engaged since physical absence allows participants to 'switch off' without the facilitator's knowledge.

▶ **Budget time for the online 'thinking process'**. When preparing your session, plan to give participants time to think about answers rather than rushing them to give

you predictable, generic instant answers. Remember, this is a learning session and most often learn is extracted through discussion, debate and disagreement. This process requires time.

Good practice tip: Design online meetings and workshops to capture input throughout the sessions not at just one point in time.

▶ **Use case study problems for engagement**. Solving problems allows learners to participate and 'learn' what works and what does not work, storing up learning for future real life problem solving. Case studies allow diverse views to be heard and build team collaboration and cohesion which fosters learning.

Good practice tip: Create tough scenarios that challenge participants to think beyond easy or predictable solutions

▶ **Mix and match for optimal learning**. Some learners learn best through Q&As, others prefer problem solving, and others yet through 'teaching' sessions delivered via short videos. In recognition of the different learning styles, online facilitators have to include a variety of methods to successfully elicit learning. These learning styles act as cues which trigger anecdotes, experiences that become learning.

Good practice tip: Use a different mode of engaging learners for every session to break the monotony and capture all types of learners.

▶ Framing your learning questions

Given the diversity of learning platforms, both formal and informal, an organization must develop learning questions that will guide which learning platforms should be prioritized to give the best information. Examples are given below:

- Are we on track? What is working? What is not working?
- Where do we need to improve?
- What are the new ideas that we can collectively adopt?
- With whom else do we need to share our learnings? How should we do this?
- How do we incorporate our lessons into our existing theories of change?
- How do we achieve our common goal using different pathways?

Where to find more resources:

Impact and Innovations Development Centre www.iidcug.org

Global Learning Partners: www.globallearningpartners.com

The THINK School of Creative Leadership: www.thnk.org

Overseas Development Institute (ODI): <http://www.odi.org>

The Communication Initiative Network - www.comminit.com