

## DOWNLOAD 1: Ideas for Self-Help

### IDEAS FOR EMPLOYEE SELF-HELP

As an introduction to plans of action, it is often helpful for managers to offer self-help ideas to help them strengthen their learning attitudes or dispositions. As part of creating a student's plan of action they should think about:

- a few everyday improvement activities;
- making a list of, say, 10 ideas that would make a difference to the way they go about their work AND any improvements that could be made to ways of working.

**How about using *Creativity* as a starting point to demonstrate what learner may have in mind when it comes to action planning?**

## CREATIVITY

imagination | free-thinking | exploration | innovation | playfulness |  
innovation | investigative enquiry | experimentation | intuition |  
problem-solving | originality | 'strikes of genius' | creating change

- Try guessing at solutions before working them out; see how good your guess was;
- Play games with routine tasks like observation, instruction and writing up notes: e.g. timing yourself; inventing a board game; playing 'any questions?'
- Make up characters and situations in which the concepts, ideas and facts in the way in which you learn come to life for you: write or imagine scripts and scenes;
- Use colour and draw pictures, diagrams, funny faces, symbols, to illustrate your notes;
- Make mind-maps with labels or draw 'trees' to illustrate the way that your thought processes take shape. 'meaning branches' to show how possibilities multiply when you think about alternative scenarios;
- Use a different kind of writing to present your work: e.g. a stream of consciousness, diary, a cartoon, a news article; try a story book with illustrations, to explain the topic to a much younger learner;
- Think about the rules you tend to follow in your learning and see if you can break them down constructively by doing something differently;
- Let your mind 'float free' when you are stuck or puzzled; see if your imagination comes up with a way forward;
- Trust your subconscious mind as much as you do your ability to think through a problem that has given you trouble to resolve.

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## DOWNLOAD 2

### INTRODUCING EMPLOYEES TO ELLI

#### The Messaging

##### 1. Making your learning at work easier by knowing how you do it ..

- Sometimes you find it easier to do things than at others;
- A lot of this has to do with how you approach it, partly whether the subject excites you or not but also partly because you don't know what particular learning habits you use when difficulties arise or you are faced with subjects in which you think you have little interest;
- You are used to your manager telling you about things that are new to you but we are now going to talk about you as a student learning to learn;
- However, this is not just about how you learned at school but how you learn at home and from your parents, your relatives, your friends and others that you meet;
- You have been learning since the day you were born ... first, in the security of your own home and from your parents and family but, since then, from all manner of people. We all learn from our mistakes as well as our successes;
- So, by learning how you do it we shall try to make your learning fun AND give you a new language in order that you can talk about learning and notice how your understanding of how you learn enables you to become better at it.

##### 2. The Language of Learning

- We are all learning something new every single day ... First let's find out what each of you have learned this week that is new to you?
- Every new experience we have, every new bit of knowledge we come across we add to what we already know and, whether we realise it or not at the time, will change, however slightly, the way we think about things or even how we do things.
- **So, the first thing we learn about learning is that it will bring about a change in us. Or, it might! In other words we have to use whatever we have learned to make us better at learning and allow us to change our habits or the way we behave.**

**We are going to find out about whether or not you allow what you learn to help you get better at learning by finding out whether or not it brings about any change.**

**possible answers to each question you will be asked and all that you have to do is to say whether ...**

- It is very like you
- Quite like you
- A little like you
- Not at all like you

**There are no right or wrong answers so that the important thing is to be accurate and truthful about yourself ... low scores are just as important as high scores so try to get all your scores 'just right'.**

- There are 7 particular characteristics or dimensions that influence how we learn and the first is *Changing and Learning*
- What are the other 6?
  - ⇒ **Creativity** is not just about writing, painting or music but how we use our imagination and come up with whacky ideas when we feel that we need to find a different way of doing things;
  - ⇒ **Critical Curiosity** is about looking for new knowledge and trying to find new ways of solving problems;
  - ⇒ **Meaning Making** is simply about how we put bits of information together, adding new knowledge or experience to what we already know to come up with something else;
  - ⇒ **Learning Relationships ...** who we learn with or from or even sometimes, learning alone;
  - ⇒ **Strategic Awareness ...** how much you know about yourself and your learning and whether or not you are interested in finding out more;
  - ⇒ **Resilience ...** how far you are prepared to persist when the going gets tough and even whether or not you are happy to make mistakes and learn from them.

**DON'T FORGET that the language we use is that that emerged from the original research and you are entirely free to use your own as long as the meanings remain the same and your explanations still ring true. Many organisations like to develop their own language ... and even their own icons.**

### 3. The Questionnaire ... a few helpful hints

- There really are no right or wrong answers so that it is important to be true to yourself and answer honestly;
- The questionnaire is quite long and some of the questions may appear to repeat themselves BUT they don't! (the fact they appear to be very similar is the way that research questionnaires work!!) You should read each one very carefully to make sure you have fully understood it;
- Once you know that you have understood the question, don't dwell on it, just give the answer that suits you best ... and try to keep up an even pace without dwelling too much anywhere;
- In answering try to think of yourself as you are now in the situations you learn in ... at school, at home or anywhere else;
- Ask for help if you don't understand a question or think that you won't finish in the time you are being allowed.

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**DOWNLOAD 3**

**CREATING REFLECTIVE CONVERSATION**

When considering the introduction of reflective conversations managers will find themselves debating the type of conversational framework that will best suit their member of staff. The following questions will be helpful in determining that framework:

- How will the reflective conversations, that will inevitably take time, fit into the working day?
- How long should I/we expect these conversations to be, or indeed allow them to be?
- Would it be appropriate to group staff together to make conversations more lively and to share their relevance?
- How can the very different nature of these coaching conversations be most effective when accommodating the very different needs of different staff?
- How will staff react to their learning profiles and how can I ensure that they will seek to pursue their learning journeys?

### **Planning Conversations that Inspire Staff to make their Learning Journeys**

By questioning the profile shapes you begin to gain an understanding of what they might imply about each employee. Your interrogation will help you to shape a series of questions that you could profitably pursue. Remember not just to look at the strengths and weaknesses demonstrated by scores for individual dimensions but at the pattern as a whole. This is important because you will be able to use personal strengths to support the development of appropriate interventions as you work on the weaknesses. Apart from that by thinking through each profile carefully you can learn a great deal more about your member of staff's approach to learning than perhaps you already knew.

#### **Where the dimensional profile shows 'a lot like me' or high scores**

##### **Ask yourself:**

- Do these profiles reflect the person as I know them?
- Do I agree with the profiles?
- Has person provided a realistic view of themselves?
- Is there some over-confidence being exhibited here?
- How well have the dimensions been understood?
- Do I think that this is a true representation of what this person is like most of the time?
- Are there times when they are nothing like this? When?
- Will the person see themselves as they are portrayed?
- Which of the dimensions are worthy of a closer look?
- Is the balance of strengths and weaknesses as I would expect?

##### **When approaching your staff profiles you might try the following openers to prompt early conversation:**

- Your profile is really interesting. Do you think that it properly reflects how you learn?
- What do you think about this record of your strengths and weaknesses?
- Let's now go through your scores for each dimension/behavior?
- What do you think this profile says about you?
- Are you like this most of the time?
- What about when you are at home or out with your friends?
- Are there times when you know that you are not behaving like this? Share them with me.

- So, let's talk about a dimension in which you have a particular strength ... you choose
- Now. What about your weaknesses? Let's examine one of those ... your choice

### Where the dimensions tend to show 'a bit like me' or middling scores

#### Ask yourself:

- Is this person really like this or have they played safe?
- Would I agree with this profile or am I being shown a lack of confidence in his or herself?
- Are the dimensions being fully understood?
- Are there times when I overlook this person rather than trying to understand who they really are?
- Which of the dimensions do I think should have come through more strongly, or perhaps scored more weakly?
- Will the person see themselves like this?
- Perhaps I might try using a blank profile to get this person to draw a pattern that they think best represents them?

#### In this instance you might think about trying the following openers:

- Before we look at your actual profile, how about drawing it for me ... how you think the questionnaire will have drawn its picture of you from the questions you answered?
- Now let's compare what you have said about yourself ... remembering that in both cases it is you that has spoken!
- Why do you think that many of your scores are in the middle with relatively few as 'peaks' or strengths and equally few as 'troughs' or weaknesses?
- So, how about us tackling one dimension in which you have a strength together? You choose.
- Now, one in which you feel you might be weaker than in some of the others. Again your choice.

### Where the dimensions exhibit 'not like me' or particularly low scores

#### Ask yourself:

- Is this a profile I would expect or have I missed something that I should have picked up?
- What, if anything, should now be worrying me about this person? Does this profile reflect what I already know? Is there something more that I can do about it?
- Maybe I should use the blank profile here, put the actual profile to one side and get them to draw what they think their profile should have said about them?
- Are there times when I know this person isn't like this?
- I think that I might begin here by getting this person to talk about their scores in one of each of the stronger and weaker dimensions.

#### You might try the following openers:

- Before we look at your actual profile, how about drawing it for me ... how you think the questionnaire will have drawn its picture of you from the questions you answered?
  - Now let's compare what you have said about yourself ... remembering that in both cases it is you that has spoken!
  - Why do you think that many of your scores are so low with relatively few as 'peaks' or strengths?
  - So, how about us tackling one dimension in which you have a strength together? You choose.
  - Now, one in which you feel you are weaker than in some of the others. Again your choice.
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