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GWA

Training and Development

University of Nottingham

Resource Book

Day 1

Institute of Leadership and Management
Certificate in Team Leading

Delivered by GWA Training and Development on behalf
of Professional Development, University of Nottingham



University of Nottingham

ILM Level 2 Certificate in Team Leading

Resource Book – Day 1

Welcome to the first taught day of the Level 2 Certificate in Team Leading Programme. This Resource Book provides everything you need to know about the programme and the Certificate. Please make sure that you keep a copy of this handy for reference throughout the course.

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Roles and Responsibilities of Team Leader Skills

Key personal attributes	Roles and tasks undertaken
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairness • Honesty/integrity • Empathy/understanding • Respect for and interest in others • Dependability/reliability • Ability to inspire confidence in the team • Good time management skills • Consistency • Self confidence • Good interpersonal skills • Determination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating • Managing time • Problem solving • Controlling (people/tasks/resources) • Coaching • Setting goals/objectives/targets • Training • Allocating tasks appropriately • Delegating • Counselling • Organising • Monitoring • Evaluating • Co-ordinating • Planning • Listening

Limits of Responsibility

It is important to be very clear on your limit of authority. After this first training day check the each item on the list of team leader roles and tasks above and consider whether:

- you have a completely free hand in how you go about this task,
- you provide information for your boss to use in decision making or
- your authority lies somewhere in between the two extremes



Developing Yourself as a Team Leader

Understanding Learning Styles – Yours and Others

One way to improve performance is by gaining an understanding of how you as an individual and also members of your team prefer to learn. Having an insight into the various ways people learn, enables you to reflect upon your own learning, thereby improving personal performance.

Honey and Mumford's Learning Styles

Honey and Mumford identify four types of learning style. You will have worked out what yours is from the questionnaire conducted on the course. Each learning style has its strengths and weaknesses. By being aware of that style, it is possible to maximise the former and minimise the latter.

Activists

Activists involve themselves fully and without bias in new experiences. They enjoy the here and now and are happy to be dominated by immediate experiences. They are open-minded, not sceptical, and this tends to make them enthusiastic about anything new. Their philosophy is: 'I'll try anything once'. They dash in where angels fear to tread. They tend to throw caution to the wind. Their days are filled with activity. They revel in short term crisis fire fighting. They tackle problems by brainstorming. As soon as the excitement from one activity has died down they are busy looking for the next. They tend to thrive on the challenge of new experience but are bored with implementation and longer term consolidation. They are gregarious people constantly involving themselves with others but, in doing so, they hog the limelight. They are the life and soul of the party and seek to centre all activities around themselves.

Reflectors

Reflectors like to stand back to ponder experiences and observe them from many different perspectives. They collect data, both first hand and from others, and prefer to chew it over thoroughly before coming to any conclusion. The thorough collection and analysis of data about experiences and events is what counts so they tend to postpone reaching definitive conclusions for as long as possible. Their philosophy is to be cautious, to leave no stone unturned. 'Look before you leap'; 'sleep on it'. They are thoughtful people who like to consider all possible angles and implications before making a move. They prefer to take a back seat in meetings and discussions. They enjoy observing other people in action. They listen to others and get the drift of the discussion before making their own points. They tend to adopt a low profile and have a slightly wide picture which include the past as well as the present and others' observations as well as their own.

Theorists

Theorists adapt and integrate observations into complex but logically sound theories. They think problems through in a vertical, step by step logical way. They assimilate disparate facts into coherent theories. They tend to be perfectionists who won't rest easy until things



are tidy and fit into their rational scheme. They like to analyse and synthesise. They are keen on basic assumptions, principles, theories, models and systems thinking. Their philosophy prizes rationality and logic. 'If it's logical it's good'. Questions they frequently ask are: "Does it make sense?" "How does this fit with that?" "What are the basic assumptions?" They tend to be detached, analytical and dedicated to rational objectivity rather than anything subjective or ambiguous. Their approach to problems is consistently logical. This is their 'mental set' and they rigidly reject anything that doesn't fit with it. They prefer to maximise certainty and feel uncomfortable with subjective judgements, lateral thinking and anything flippant.

Pragmatists

Pragmatists are keen on trying out ideas, theories and techniques to see if they work in practice. They positively search out new ideas and take the first opportunity to experiment with applications. They are the sort of people who return from management courses brimming with new ideas that they want to try out in practice. They like to get on with things and act quickly and confidently on ideas that attract them. They don't like 'beating around the bush' and tend to be impatient with ruminating and open-ended discussions. They are essentially practical, down to earth people who like making practical decisions and solving problems. They respond to problems and opportunities 'as a challenge'. Their philosophy is: "There is always a better way' and 'If it works it's good'.

Choosing Activities Related to Styles

The activities which are most congruent with each of the styles are set out in the following pages. The lists are intended first to help guide people positively towards learning activities which they ought to find sympathetic. The learner may find that she or he can undertake the activities more consciously and more effectively or may find that she or he is missing out on some activities which ought, from his basic style, be attractive to her or him.

Activists learn best from activities where:

- There are new experiences/problems/opportunities from which to learn.
- They can engross themselves in short 'here and now' activities such as business games, competitive teamwork tasks, role-playing exercises.
- There is excitement/drama/crisis and things chop and change with a range of diverse activities to tackle.
- They have a lot of the limelight/high visibility, ie. they can 'chair' meetings, lead discussions, give presentations.
- They are allowed to generate ideas without constraints of policy or structure or feasibility.
- They are thrown in at the deep end with a task they think is difficult, i.e. when set a challenge with inadequate resources and adverse conditions.
- They are involved with other people, i.e. bouncing ideas off them, solving problems as part of a team.
- It is appropriate to 'have a go'.

Activists learn least from, and may react against, activities where:-



- Learning involves a passive role, i.e. listening to lectures, monologues, explanations, statements of how things should be done, reading, watching.
- They are asked to stand back and not be involved.
- They are required to assimilate, analyse and interpret lots of 'messy' data.
- They are required to engage in solitary work, i.e. reading, writing, thinking on their own.
- They are asked to assess beforehand what they will learn, and to appraise afterwards what they have learned.
- They are offered statements they see as 'theoretical', i.e. explanation of cause or background.
- They are asked to repeat essentially the same activity over and over again, i.e. when practising.
- They have precise instructions to follow with little room for manoeuvre.
- They are asked to do a thorough job, i.e. attend to detail,, tie up loose ends, dot the i's and cross t's.

Reflectors learn best from activities where:-

- They are allowed or encouraged to watch/think/chew over activities.
- They are able to stand back from events and listen/observe, i.e. observing a group at work, taking a back seat in a meeting, watching a film or video.
- They are allowed to think before acting, to assimilate before commenting, i.e. time to prepare, a chance to read in advance a brief giving background data.
- They can carry out some painstaking research, i.e. investigate, assemble information, probe to get to the bottom of things.
- They have the opportunity to review what has happened, what they have learned.
- They are asked to produce carefully considered analyses and reports.
- They are helped to exchange views with other people without danger, i.e. by prior agreement, within a structured learning experience.
- They can reach a decision in their own time without pressure and tight deadlines.

Reflectors learn least from, and may react against, activities where:-

- They are 'forced' into the limelight, i.e. to act as leader/chairman, to role play in front of onlookers.
- They are involved in situations which require action without planning.
- They are pitched into doing something without warning, i.e. to produce an instant reaction, to produce an off-the-top-of-the-head idea.
- They are given insufficient data on which to base a conclusion.
- They are given cut and dried instructions on how things should be done.
- They are worried by time pressures or rushed from one activity to another.
- In the interests of expediency they have to make short cuts or do a superficial job.

Theorists learn best from activities where:-

- What is being offered is part of a system, model, concept, theory.
- They have time to explore methodically the associations and inter- relationships between ideas, events and situations.



- They have the chance to question and probe the basis, methodology, assumptions or logic behind something, i.e. by taking part in a question and answer session, by checking a paper for inconsistencies.
- They are intellectually stretched, i.e. by analysing a complex situation, being tested in a tutorial session, by teaching high calibre people who ask searching questions.
- They are in structured situations with a clear purpose.
- They can listen to or read about ideas and concepts that emphasise rationality or logic and are well argued/elegant/watertight.
- They can analyse and then generalise the reasons for success or failure.
- They are offered interesting ideas and concepts even though they are not immediately relevant.
- They are required to understand and participate in complex situations.

Theorists learn least from, and may react against, activities where:-

- They are pitchforked into doing something without a context or apparent purpose.
- They have to participate in situations emphasising emotions and feelings.
- They are involved in unstructured activities where ambiguity and uncertainty are high, i.e. with open-ended problems, on sensitivity training.
- They are asked to act or decide without a basis in policy, principle or concept.
- They are faced with a hotchpotch of alternative/contradictory/techniques/methods without exploring any in depth, i.e. as on a 'once over lightly' course.
- They doubt that the subject matter is methodologically sound, i.e. where questionnaires haven't been validated, where there are any statistics to support an argument.
- They find the subject matter platitudinous, shallow (or gimmicky.)
- They feel themselves out of tune with other participants, i.e. when with lots of Activists or people of lower intellectual calibre.

Pragmatists learn best from activities where:-

- There is an obvious link between the subject matter and a problem or opportunity on the job.
- They are shown techniques for doing things with obvious practical advantages, i.e. how to save time, how to make a good first impression, how to deal with awkward people.
- They have the chance to try out and practice techniques with coaching/ feedback from a credible expert, i.e. someone who is successful and can do the techniques themselves.
- They are exposed to a model they can emulate, i.e. a respected boss, a demonstration from someone with a proven track record, lots of examples/ anecdotes, a film showing how it's done.
- They are given techniques currently applicable to their own job.
- They are given immediate opportunities to implement what they have learned.
- There is a high face validity in the learning activity, i.e. a good simulation, 'real' problems.
- They can concentrate on practical issues, i.e. drawing up action plans with an obvious end product, suggesting short cuts, giving tips.



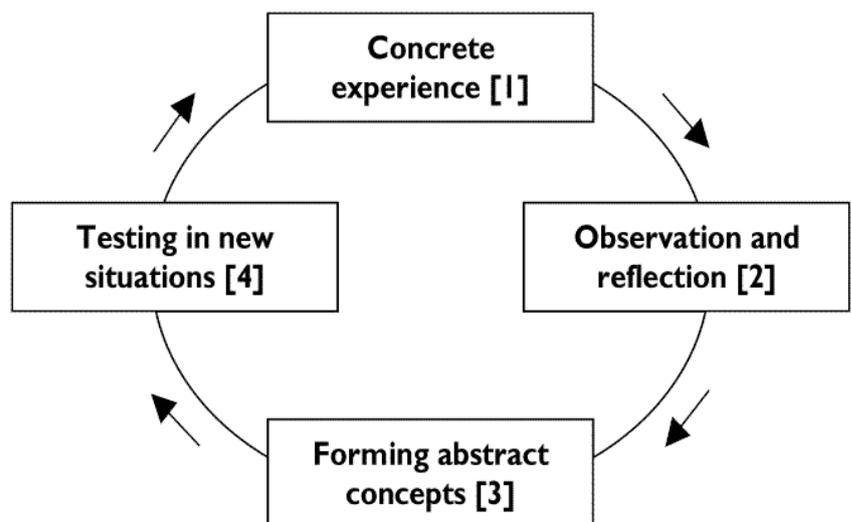
Pragmatists learn least from, and may react against, activities where:-

- The learning is not related to an immediate need they recognise, they cannot see an immediate relevance/practical benefit.
- Organisers of the learning, or the event itself, seem, distant from reality, i.e. 'ivory towered', all theory and general principles, pure 'chalk and talk'.
- There is no practice or clear guidelines on how to do, it.
- They feel that people are going round in circles and not getting anywhere fast enough.
- There are political, managerial or personal obstacles to implementation.
- There is no apparent reward from the learning activity, i.e. more sales, shorter meetings, higher bonus, promotion.

Kolb's Learning Cycle: Experiential Learning

David A. Kolb (with Roger Fry) created his famous model of Experiential Learning out of four elements:

1. concrete experience;
2. observation and reflection;
3. the formation of abstract concepts;
4. testing in new situations.



He represented these in the experiential learning circle

Kolb and Fry (1975) argue that the learning cycle can begin at any one of the four points - and that it should really be approached as a continuous spiral. However, it is suggested that the learning process often begins with a person carrying out a particular action and then seeing the effect of the action in this situation. Following this, the second step is to understand these effects in the particular instance so that if the same action was taken in the same circumstances it would be possible to anticipate what would follow from the action. In this pattern the third step would be understanding the general principle under which the particular instance falls.

Generalizing may involve actions over a range of circumstances to gain experience beyond the particular instance and suggest the general principle. Understanding the general principle does not imply, in this sequence, an ability to express the principle in a symbolic



medium, that is, the ability to put it into words. It implies only the ability to see a connection between the actions and effects over a range of circumstances. (Coleman 1976: 52).

An educator who has learnt in this way may well have various rules of thumb or generalizations about what to do in different situations. They will be able to say what action to take when say, there is tension between two people in a group but they will not be able to verbalize their actions in psychodynamic or sociological terms. There may thus be difficulties about the transferability of their learning to other settings and situations.

When the general principle is understood, the last step, according to David Kolb is its application through action in a new circumstance within the range of generalization. In some representations of experiential learning these steps, (or ones like them), are sometimes represented as a circular movement. In reality, if learning has taken place the process could be seen as a spiral. The action is taking place in a different set of circumstances and the learner is now able to anticipate the possible



Using SWOT Analysis to Assess Team Leader Skills

As a team leader, there are a number of ways you can consider improving your own performance.

Personal SWOT Analysis

SWOT Analysis is a powerful technique for identifying Strengths, Weaknesses and for examining the Opportunities and Threats you face within your role.

It can help you develop your career in a way that takes best advantage of your talents, abilities and opportunities. With a little thought, it can help you uncover opportunities that you are well placed to take advantage of. By understanding your weaknesses you can manage and eliminate threats that would otherwise catch you unawares.

Strengths

- What advantages do you have that others don't (for example skills, education or connections)?
- What do you do better than anyone else?
- What personal resources do you have access to?
- What do other people see as your strengths?

Consider these points from your own perspective and from the point of view of the people around you. Don't be modest, be as objective as you can. If you are having difficulty, try writing down a list of your characteristics – hopefully some of these will be strengths!

In looking at your strengths, think about them in relation to the people around you. For example, if you're a great mathematician and the people around you are great at maths, then this isn't likely to be a strength in your current role – more likely a necessity.

Weaknesses

- What could you improve?
- What should you avoid?
- What things are people around you likely to see as your weakness?

Again, consider this from a personal and external basis: do other people perceive weaknesses that you don't see? Do colleagues consistently out-perform you in key areas? It is best to be realistic now, and face any unpleasant truths as soon as possible.

Opportunities

- Where are the good opportunities facing you?
- What are the interesting trends you are aware of?

Useful opportunities can come from such things as:

- Changes in technology
- Changes in government policy
- Changes within your School/department



A useful approach to looking at opportunities is also to look at your strengths and ask yourself whether these open up any opportunities. Alternatively, look at your weaknesses and ask yourself whether you could open up opportunities by eliminating them.

Threats

- What obstacles do you face?
- What are the people around you doing?
- Is your job changing?
- Is changing technology threatening your position?
- Could any of your weaknesses seriously threaten you?

Carrying out this analysis will often be illuminating – both in terms of pointing out what needs to be done, and in putting problems into perspective.

SWOT Analysis Worksheet

<p>Strengths: What do you do well? What unique resources can you draw on? What do others see as your strengths?</p>	<p>Weaknesses: What could you improve? Do you have fewer resources than others? What do others see as weaknesses?</p>
<p>Opportunities: What good opportunities are open to you? What trends could you take advantage of? How can you turn your strengths into opportunities?</p>	<p>Threats: What trends could harm you? What is your competition doing? What threats do your weaknesses expose you to?</p>



Getting Feedback on My Performance

Feedback

A definition of feedback could be:

‘giving open and constructive information to people about their performance and investigating ways in which performance may be improved’.

Gaining feedback is, if done constructively, an effective way of collecting information from colleagues, line managers and team members on your own performance. In terms of receiving positive feedback, it can enable you to:

- Establish better working relationships
- Develop your performance
- Identify existing strengths and areas for improvement
- Increase motivation

Ways of Gaining Feedback

So far we have focussed on ways of dealing with feedback, we are now going to look at some ways of gaining feedback to improve performance.

Performance Review/Activity Review

The University's Performance Review Scheme is one way of gaining formal feedback from your line manager. It is a process whereby you and your reviewer meet, in a formal setting, to review how well you have achieved your goals for the previous year and agree your goals for the coming year. The meeting also allows Departments/Schools to identify and respond to your development needs, and to discuss longer term career aspirations.

What does Performance Review mean for me?

- It gives you the opportunity for regular feedback on your contribution, at least once a year.
- It means that your contribution to the University can be assessed to seek to ensure that it is properly recognised and rewarded.
- It helps you to understand how your contribution impacts on the success of your wider team or area.
- It gives you an opportunity for structured developmental planning to equip you to achieve your goals.
- It gives you an opportunity to review your skills, knowledge and experience with your reviewer and update/enhance them where necessary.
- It gives you an opportunity, together with your reviewer, to discuss and plan your personal development and long term career development.

360 Degree Feedback

360 Degree Feedback can provide you, as a team leader with invaluable information about how others see you and how they rate your skills. Feedback often comes from team members, peers, and managers within your School/Department, as well as self-assessment,



and in some cases external sources such as customers and suppliers or other interested stakeholders.

Some of the benefits of 360 Degree Feedback include:

- Individuals get a broader perspective of how they are perceived by others than previously possible.
- Increased awareness of and relevance of competencies.
- Encouraging more open feedback.
- Provided a clearer picture to senior management of individual's real worth.
- Clarified to employees critical performance aspects.
- Opens up feedback and gives people a more rounded view of performance than they had previously.
- Identifying key development areas for the individual, a department and the organization as a whole.
- Identifying strengths that can be used to the best advantage of the business.
- A rounded view of the individual's/ team's/ organization's performance and what the strengths and weaknesses are.
- Raised the self-awareness of people managers of how they personally impact upon others — positively and negatively.
- Supporting a climate of continuous improvement.
- Starting to improve the climate/ morale, as measured through the survey.
- Focused agenda for development. Forced line managers to discuss development issues.
- Perception of feedback as more valid and objective, leading to acceptance of results and actions required.