



# Experiential Learning: Guidelines for Facilitators

## Guidelines for Facilitators

1. Ensure all planned activities are centred on the learner without facilitated instruction or proffered opinion; like the principles of life coaching and those of facilitative decision-making methodology, the other person is at the centre.
2. The facilitator creates an appropriate learning environment, provides an activity that will initiate the learning process, create an atmosphere and framework conducive to constructive critical review, ensures that any conceptual thinking is progressed to meaningful conclusions, and opportunities for improvement identified.
3. The activity must engage, stimulate and challenge, motivating the learner to become absorbed in the task themselves. It must not involve role play in a conventional artificial sense. All activities must be designed, managed and facilitated carefully so that the activity has impact.
4. Learning review: this needs to involve the learner in personal thought, challenge and discussion before coming to some form of conclusion. Encourage a period of individual reflection guided by open-ended or tick-box questionnaires, followed by a facilitated discussion. Concentrate the review (and learning) on positive aspects; too much emphasis on negatives can seriously undermine confidence in the whole area of learning and development.
5. The role of the facilitator in the review is to enable others to learn by drawing out the issues and developing the learning that is relevant to the individual. The facilitator should ask questions that will stimulate thought about relevant issues and enable the group to use answers to develop further thought and learning.



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6. If you observe a point that isn't raised during a review it is legitimate to raise it, but only through questioning. If, despite questioning, individuals don't relate to the point, there is no benefit in pursuing as any 'learning' will not be theirs. A better option is for you to run another activity designed to focus more attention on this specific point. Whatever happens, don't be tempted to provide 'professional analysis' as this approach takes the ownership of the learning away from the individual.
7. Learners can and will make experiential learning opportunities work for them. To be an effective facilitator your role is to provide opportunities for others to learn and progress.

## Summary

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1. Learner is central to the learning without instruction or opinion of the facilitator.
2. Provide a good learning environment and framework for activities.
3. Activities must engage, stimulate and challenge.
4. Encourage individual reflection guided by open ended or tick box questionnaires.
5. Ask questions that will stimulate thought.
6. Ownership of the learning is for the learner.
7. Provide opportunities for others to learn.

## Examples of Experiential Learning Models

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- David Kolb: Experiential Learning Theory
- David Kolb: Learning Style Inventory
- Honey and Mumford: Learning Style Questionnaire



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