The Action Learning Handbook
Powerful Techniques for Education, Professional Development and Training

By Ian McGill and Anne Brockbank

'No matter how familiar you are with action learning, this book will challenge your understanding and leave you feeling good about your need to learn even more.'

- Professor Brendan McCormack, University of Ulster

Action learning is a continued process of learning and reflection with the support of a group of colleagues, working on real issues. The action learning method is increasingly used to bring innovation to many different fields of work. The principles of action learning can achieve improvement and transformation in a wide range of applications and disciplines, including professional training and educational contexts.

This book is a comprehensive guide to action learning which maintains an accessible, practical focus throughout. It is packed with useful resources, including case studies and ideas for workshop sessions.

Key topics covered include: action learning in professional and educational settings; setting up, facilitating and evaluating an action learning programme; the roles and skills required to practice successfully, its use in relation to the individual, the group and the organization; the role of reflection; and action learning theory.

Newcomers to the area of action learning will find this an essential introduction which can be put to use straight away, while more experienced practitioners seeking a deeper understanding will value the thorough analysis of action learning theory.

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This handbook is written for users of action learning. We include amongst users: experienced users as well as those embarking upon action learning for the first time; those with some experience who wish to deepen their understanding; and those who are becoming, or are, facilitators of action learning. The handbook endeavours to reflect the life of an action learning set (the term used for a group engaged in action learning). Thus Part I is mainly about the activities necessary to create, initiate and start sets. Action learning is a continued process of learning and reflection with the support of a group of colleagues, working on real issues. The action learning method is increasingly used to bring innovation to many different fields of work. Action learning is a continued process of learning and reflection with the support of a group of colleagues, working on real issues. The action learning method is increasingly used to bring innovation to many different fields of work.