

ENGAGING WITH LEADERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Action Learning : 'How was it for you?'

**Leadership
Foundation**
for Higher Education

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- **Early discussions & 'Skype' introduction**
- **Your reflections**
 - **Challenges**
 - **Benefits**
 - **AL Groups**
 - **Personal**
- **Wider comparisons & reflections**



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- **Will Action Learning work across countries?**
- **Will it translate across HEI contexts & cultures?**
- **How to build & sustain learning communities within & between workshops?**
- **What kind of projects?**
- **Will it be accepted & tried or rejected?**
- **Should we risk it or not?**
- **....And I can't see you!**

Your challenges

- **'Isn't it too basic?'**
- **It's very different from 'normal' interactions and group discussions**
- **It takes a long time...**
- **I'm used to giving instructions and providing answers....**
- **Finding the right questions**
- **Active listening**
- **Institutional cultures**
- **Issues of authority & respect**
- **Style – too judgemental or too bland?**
- **Response – too defensive?**

Your benefits

- **Identifying shared view of problems**
- **Working towards problem resolution**
- **Getting buy-in to proposals**
- **Extracting information and ideas**
- **Developing ownership and responsibility for outcomes**
- **Achieving your objectives with less resistance**
- **Increases speed of decision-making based on consensus**
- **Sharpens focus of projects**
- **Helps to anticipate stakeholder critique**
- **Aids deeper & more critical analysis, reflection, thinking**

- **Became truly 'collegial' peers**
- **Good friends**
- **Offered challenge & support**
- **Offered cross-cultural & cross-institutional insights**
- **A new professional network**
- **Sharing experience between senior and more junior colleagues**

- **New friends**
- **Supporting 'the lonely leader in v challenging contexts'**
- **Family connections**
- **Family dialogue**
- **Self-insight**
- **New skills**
- **Motivation & reward through success**
- **Challenge to own paradigms and thinking**
- **Deeper, more rigorous intellectual analysis**
- **Helps you to work on own challenges**
- **'Helps you to see yourself as you really are'**

- **All managers find AL techniques (questioning, listening) difficult**
- **Discipline & commitment pay off**
- **Professional & personal networks are of real value**
- **Beyond hierarchy**
- **AL as a management tool – conflict, consensus, development**
- **AL crossing continents**

“Leadership is not defined by the exercise of power, but by the capacity to increase the sense of power among those who are led.

The most essential work of the leader is to create more leaders”.

(Mary Parker Follett, 1924)

**Creating the
freedom
to lead**

