



***"Leading and Sustaining Change at All Levels of the Organization through Action Learning: Individuals, Teams and Organizations"***

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***\*This is the final piece of a three part article.***

**Part III – Action Learning and Organizational Development**

In Part I and II, we've looked at action learning from the leader, the team and the need to legitimize individuals through open communication, building trust in the team by openly identifying assumptions, creating pathways by the sharing of perspectives and developing one's agency with the use of individual power to take action and creating the context for changed behaviors.



In this article, we will explore how organizational learning is a culmination of individual and team learning.

We see that the value and orientation to innovation and reaching strategic goals is not about simply "filling the gap" with discreet pieces of knowledge learned by an individual. Rather, it's an approach that learning in context and with others to create a map of possibilities through a social constructivist perspective.

From an organizational development perspective, this inside-out process positions learning as a journey that replaces existing paradigms of decision making at hierarchical levels.

The journey is one of making the implicit explicit by illuminating experiences, challenging existing frameworks of strategic decision making, and I will be bold by saying, that it disrupts the exiting organization’s culture around what is valued and how it is actualized in its behaviors. It does so by identifying the alignment and/or *mis-alignment* that all companies have in common, which is understanding of the mission, consolidation and integration, core values, the role of teams and capability, how organizations create and sustain change through learning.

So organization learning emerges when our individual and team perspectives identify that the organization is a process of permeable networks, relationships, sustained by communication of ideas and action that links development to strategy.

This is different from the consumption of information; it’s using existing information to create emergent knowledge.

Action learning is a both a methodology and a form of organizational learning as information becomes knowledge through questions, reflection and action that is embedded in the actual work of the team and organizations strategy for the future. The result can be action learning becomes a lever for organizational change to include cultural change as existing paradigms of “how we do things around here” are explored through questions that open up the habitual norms and expectations that script individuals, teams and organizations. What I have come to appreciate about action learning is as a team process, it becomes important in the transformative change to transformational leadership at all levels. The cornerstone of this rests on the time tested adage “those unable to change themselves cannot change what goes on around them”. Now then, how are you using action learning?



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