

The objective of an action learning set is to help a person achieve deeper understanding of a problem or issue and help them to see it differently so that they can find their own solutions.

As a member of an action learning set you should:

- listen openly and without prejudice
- give help, advice and assistance
- question positively to increase understanding
- support each other
- challenge the problem owner
- generate options for action.

**'There is no action without learning and no learning without action'** Reg Revans

## KEY POINTS

- Issues need to be current.
- The owner of the problem must want to act to resolve it.
- Each member is helped by others to review in a way that allows new insights to develop and from which new ideas about solutions emerge.
- The process works from problems rather than puzzles.
- Listening and questioning by the group are focused on better understanding and insights, and on supporting the owner of the problem, rather than on solving the problem for them.
- The process supports different levels of learning about:
  - the problem
  - oneself
  - the process of learning.

## HOW TO ORGANISE AN ACTION LEARNING SET

The protocol must be clearly established with the whole group before the set moves off into its own space. Group size can vary but all members must have equal 'airtime'.

Source: Revan, R. (2011). 'ABC of Action Learning.'

'I am part of the problem and the problem is part of me' Reg Revans

### GROUND RULES

- Divide the available time equally among the set members.
- Ask the set to appoint a timekeeper or chair/facilitator to ensure that the set is managed fairly and as agreed.
- Start with a round robin – each person to have two minutes to say what they hope to get out of the session.
- Each person should use their airtime to explore a real and current issue.
- The person presents the problem and makes clear how much help they want and what sort of help.
- The group asks questions to help the person gain a different view of their problem.
- Close with a summary of learning. This is another round robin where each member has a further two minutes to reflect on their learning from the session, determine any key issues and review the process.