

# HoWARP

Action-Oriented Continuing  
Education at the Workplace

Intellectual Output 3

## Methods manual for action-oriented virtual training



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## Table of contents

What does this method book want? .....	5
The basics: The principle of complete action .....	6
The application .....	7
Part A: Planning steps for digital workshops.....	9
Before the workshop .....	10
1. Preparation of the contents .....	10
1.1. Netiquette .....	10
1.2. Privacy agreement.....	10
1.3. Selection and inspection of technology & equipment .....	10
1.4. Setting up the virtual rooms.....	10
1.5. Sending materials and overview of technical requirements.....	10
1.6. Offer of help with technical problems.....	10
1.7. Recording needed?.....	11
1.8. The facilitation team needs its own channel for simultaneous exchange .....	11
1.9. Methodological design of the virtual spaces and choice of formats.....	11
1.10. Timetable.....	11
1.11. E-moderation.....	11
1.12. Who will participate in the WS and how will the groups be composed?.....	11
During the workshop .....	11
1. Organisation .....	12
2. Content.....	12
2.1 Supervision of working groups .....	12
2.2 Organise work processes.....	12
2.3 Counselling and office hours .....	12
After the workshop.....	12
1. Follow-up.....	12
1.1. Create forum for questions, answers, and discussion .....	12
1.2. Putting documents and records online .....	13
2. Feedback.....	13
2.1 Organise feedback .....	13
2.2 Evaluate feedback .....	13
Group formation.....	13
Part B: Tools for virtual workshops .....	14
1. Applications .....	15

# HoWARP

1.1.	Video conferencing programme.....	15
1.2.	Virtual whiteboard.....	16
1.3.	Web-based text editor (Pad) .....	17
1.4.	Learning cards.....	18
1.5.	Messenger App.....	20
1.6.	Live Polling .....	21
2.	Formats.....	23
2.1.	Plenary session .....	23
2.2.	Breakout rooms .....	24
2.3.	Chat.....	25
Part C: Methodology .....		26
1.1.	Self-introduction/ marketplace .....	27
1.2.	Warm-Up Game 1: Questions .....	29
1.3.	Warm-Up Game 2: Drawings.....	30
1.4.	Triangle of common ground .....	31
1.5.	Presentations/ keynotes.....	32
1.6.	Microlearning .....	34
1.7.	Sharing best practice stories .....	36
1.8.	5x Why.....	37
1.9.	Group puzzle.....	38
1.10.	Dialogue corners.....	39
1.11.	Group work with observers .....	40
1.12.	Starfish method .....	41

## What does this method book want?

How can in-company training be designed to be action-oriented? How can it - instead of mainly consisting of lectures - directly practise competent action? How can these new competences be learned in such a way that they can be applied as directly as possible in everyday work? And how can the corresponding workshops also be conducted virtually if travel expenses - and in times of Covid19 also health risks - are to be minimised?

These questions were the starting point of the project "HoWARP - Action-Oriented Continuing Education at the Workplace" (<https://agile-learning.eu/ho-warp/>), in which experts from Germany, Austria and the Netherlands are working together. Answers can be found in the knowledge repositories, concepts and resulting pilot applications developed there, which can be found on the project homepage, among other places.

These concepts need to be supported by appropriate tools and methods in the implementation of workshops. This is the purpose of this collection of methods. It should help to consider several perspectives at the same time in the design of continuing education:

- a) Further education can and must, unlike initial education, build on existing competences and work experience.
- b) Action orientation: The participants should not only acquire knowledge but also build up action competence in the vocational field.
- c) Workplace: As far as possible, participants should not be taken out of the work context but should learn from tasks from their own (present or future) practice. This means that the contents make a lot of sense and at the same time require little effort for transfer.
- d) Virtual learning formats: Distributed, globalised work in general, reduction of travel expenses due to climate emergency and especially Covid19 nowadays make virtual formats more important than ever.

It is not easy to meet this complex field of different requirements. In our experience, it is particularly problematic that with the limitations and constraints of virtual training, many conventional and well-tested methods no longer work to turn participants into actors. Therefore, this handout shows how, according to the results of HoWARP and other projects, action-oriented learning can also take place in virtual continuing education.

## The basics: The principle of complete action

The "principle of complete action" (see Figure 1) has proven itself as a didactic structuring for action-oriented learning<sup>1</sup>. From this established principle, a goal-oriented distribution of roles and tasks of the participants can be understood and the methods to be used can be derived.



Figure 1. The steps of the "Complete Action" (own representation)

The principle of complete action focuses on the connection between learning and action. The focus is no longer on imparting knowledge alone, but also on applying the knowledge in work-relevant tasks and in solving problems. In this way, not only is the technical relevance ensured, but also a more lasting anchoring of the (technical) knowledge in the learners is achieved.

In each step, the learners are active, while the teachers have different roles. The six steps are in detail:

- **Inform:** The starting point is always a task from the current or future work context provided by the teacher. This task must be fully grasped and absorbed by the participants. It will usually involve familiarising themselves with new subject content. If possible, the learners should acquire this content themselves, using material provided or researched by themselves. In this way, an intensive acquisition of this content is achieved. However, the teacher can also present the contents in a lecture or similar, e.g., if there is not enough time for a phase of independent learning. The step of appropriation must then take place afterwards.
- **Planning:** In this step, learners should independently consider and work out ways of approaching and completing the tasks. Teachers can provide advice and guidance but should not direct the planning process.
- **Decide:** At the end of planning, learners need to decide how they want to proceed in their learning process. This should be presented to the teachers. As a rule, they will take note of the decision and comment on it if necessary, but in the case of very problematic decisions, they may also have to withhold approval, e.g. if the plan is obviously hopeless or if it consumes too many resources. In any case, the decision must always lie with the learners, who also take responsibility.
- **Execute:** The execution is done by the learners independently. If possible, they should work under conditions (material, tools, working environment) that correspond to their own workplace to

facilitate the transfer to their own work. The teachers are available continuously or at agreed times for advice and support but must leave the responsibility for the execution with the learners.

- **Checking:** The results of the execution are first checked by the learners themselves: Does the result meet the requirements and their expectations? Have they achieved what the task required and, if so, to what extent? Subsequently, there must also be a professional assessment by the teachers to what extent the learning Aim of the method has been achieved from their point of view and where they still see gaps or deficiencies and where there is a need for improvement.
- **Evaluate:** At the end of the learning phase, it is important to evaluate the experience with the procedure: Was the information sufficient? Was there sufficient and purposeful planning? Did the decision turn out to be sustainable? What could have been done better in the execution? What could be done differently next time? This evaluation should be carried out by the learners themselves, if necessary, with guidance. The role of the teacher corresponds most closely to that of a coach. The teacher provides his observations during the past learning phase and suggests strategies for future action. This reflection at the end should not only focus on the learning process of the participants but also on the design and implementation of the workshop itself. <sup>1</sup>

## The application

This principle of complete action should structure the technical core of an action-oriented training. For a workshop (i.e. a compact, activating course with a defined group) this means that the participants have to go through all steps at least once. At the same time, a workshop has its own process structure: from "warming up" the participants at the beginning to a sensible alternation of input and individual work and activating elements after tiring phases to planning breaks and recovery. Individual methods can simultaneously support one or several steps of the "complete action" and influence the dynamics of a workshop. The "breakout rooms" of a conference software, for example, can be used both in the start phase so that participants get to know each other better and to work on tasks in small groups or to prepare a reflection at the end.

In order not to list all potentially helpful methods for every moment of a workshop, this manual has been given the following structure:

- A) The planning steps for a digital workshop: what to look for, what do I need to prepare etc.?
- B) The tools that can be used for virtual workshops,
- C) A collection of methods in a narrower sense, which should help to make the individual phases of a workshop, such as the steps of the complete action, interesting, varied and activating for the participants.

We wish you lots of fun and the joy of discovery!

The HoWARP Team

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<sup>1</sup> How action-oriented continuing education can be designed on the basis of these steps is described in more detail in the HoWARP project's "Intellectual Output 4: Competence-based Framework Curriculum for Organisers of Continuing Education". It can be downloaded from the project homepage.



## Part A: Planning steps for digital workshops

### Overview

Before the workshop	During the workshop	After the workshop	Group formation
<p>Preparation of the contents</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Netiquette</li> <li>2. Privacy agreement</li> <li>3. Selection and inspection of technology &amp; equipment</li> <li>4. Setting up the virtual rooms Sending materials and overview of technical requirements</li> <li>5. Offer of help with technical problems</li> <li>6. Recording desired? The moderation team needs its own channel for simultaneous exchange</li> <li>7. Methodological design of the virtual spaces and choice of formats</li> <li>8. Timetable</li> <li>9. E-moderation</li> <li>10. Who will participate in the WS and how will the groups be composed?</li> </ol>	<p>Organisational</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Change tempo/ format every 25 min (after 15 min attention already decreases)</li> <li>2. After 50-55 min break</li> <li>3. After max. 3 h long break</li> <li>4. Time management</li> </ol> <p>Content</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Supervision of working groups</li> <li>6. Organise work processes</li> <li>7. Counselling and office hours</li> </ol>	<p>Follow-up</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create forum for questions, answers, and discussion</li> <li>2. Putting documents/records online</li> <li>3. Organise feedback format</li> <li>4. Answer questions</li> <li>5. Evaluate feedback</li> <li>6. Reflection between those responsible</li> <li>7. Adapt format if necessary</li> </ol>	<p>The social must be organised! (Informal exchange, collaborative learning &amp; working atmosphere)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Keep the room open before and after seminar times</li> <li>2. Organise group messenger/ chat</li> <li>3. Offer get-to-know-you formats</li> <li>4. Virtual break room</li> <li>5. Blog</li> <li>6. Profile/ introduction videos</li> </ol>

### **Communication:**

- is sequential not simultaneous
- is delayed
- all participants are "hyper "aware of themselves

## Before the workshop

### 1. Preparation of the contents

#### 1.1. Netiquette

In visual events, rules of communication must be agreed upon at the beginning. These mainly concern the handling of each other's data, agreements on visibility and anonymity, as well as agreements on the form of speeches and questions.

#### 1.2. Privacy agreement

If you wish to record the workshop, as well as to safeguard your own data, a data protection agreement should be signed by all participants before the workshop begins.

#### 1.3. Selection and inspection of technology & equipment

The choice of technology used should meet the requirements of the workshop organisers as well as the technical conditions of the participants. It is therefore important to consider which applications are needed for the workshop, which know-how is available and whether everyone has a stable internet connection. If new tools are to be used, think about how you can familiarise yourself and the participants with them before the workshop if possible. Before the workshop begins, all equipment and programmes should be checked for functionality. Above all, a very good sound transmission and a stable internet connection are indispensable minimum requirements. One person should be responsible for the smooth running of the technology during the workshop, because problems that arise cannot be solved by the teachers on the side.

#### 1.4. Setting up the virtual rooms

Take time to prepare the virtual rooms in which you want to work with the participants. How many rooms do you need? Set up the applications needed for group work (e.g., [pads](#), [whiteboards](#), etc.). Prepare appropriate documents with the work tasks. Think about how the results produced in the rooms are to be saved.

#### 1.5. Sending materials and overview of technical requirements

In order for the participants to be able to prepare well for the workshop, they will need the relevant links, passwords and work tasks from you in good time, as well as an overview of the technical requirements. It may be useful to set up an online platform where all information and materials can be made available in a bundled form.

#### 1.6. Offer of help with technical problems

If it is possible for you to offer technical support on the day itself or even in advance, you should consider such an additional offer. There are almost always participants who have difficulties with the technical requirements or with the applications used.

## 1.7. Recording needed?

If you want to record the event, do it on a separate computer and do not rely on the recording functions of the tools. One person should be responsible for the smooth running of the technology throughout the workshop, as any problems that arise can hardly be solved by the teachers during a workshop. Remember to have the recording approved in writing by all participants as part of the data protection agreement or on a separate form.

## 1.8. The facilitation team needs its own channel for simultaneous exchange

Set up a separate messenger or chat channel for yourself, i.e., the teachers and facilitators, on which you can communicate in parallel to the workshop. Make sure that this channel is separate from the workshop software to avoid false postings to the whole group.

## 1.9. Methodological design of the virtual spaces and choice of formats

When designing workshops in virtual space, setting up the breakout rooms is not only a technical challenge. The process in detail and the corresponding design of the virtual rooms should be thoroughly prepared. Which methods are suitable for which formats in the virtual space is explained in [Part C: Methodology](#).

## 1.10. Timetable

Make a precise schedule for your workshop and note down for each session in as much detail as possible which technical and organisational aspects need to be considered and what support you need. Improvising is much more difficult with virtual events than with face-to-face events.

## 1.11. E-moderation

Moderation plays an even more important role in the virtual space. It should be clearly defined in advance how questions can be communicated and how functions such as chat and reporting systems are to be used.

## 1.12. Who will participate in the WS and how will the groups be composed?

Make sure you know well in advance which and how many people will participate in your event, as this will influence both technical decisions and the choice of methods. Consider the composition of the group and how intensively you want to guide or accompany the work in the groups. In heterogeneous groups there is a broader spectrum of experiences and previous knowledge, homogeneous groups with similar experiences, on the other hand, may make it easier to find a question that the participants can relate well to their everyday work, etc.

## During the workshop

For a virtual workshop, it is important to highlight some basic features of communication:

- It is sequential / never quite simultaneous
- It is delayed
- All participants are "hyper "aware of themselves

## 1. Organisation

During a virtual workshop, there are some basic factors to consider. As the attention span is shorter in the virtual space, different rules for time management apply here. You should not plan sessions longer than 3 hours, after which you need a long break (e.g., lunch break) or asynchronous independent work. Within this time span, a break of at least 5 minutes should be scheduled every 50-55. Within a learning unit, you should change the format after max. 25 minutes, e.g., from plenary to group work, because in the virtual room the attention span already starts to decrease after 15 minutes. We recommend that you plan the workshop precisely in advance. A template for such a time management plan can be found in the appendix.

## 2. Content

### 2.1 Supervision of working groups

Working groups in the virtual [breakout room](#) can be led or attended by you. Depending on how intensively you want to accompany the groups, you need more or fewer people for moderation. You can "walk" through the virtual rooms yourself and visit the groups or provide each group with its own moderator.

### 2.2 Organise work processes

A variety of methods are available to you for working in groups, also in the virtual space; we present some of them in [Part C: Collection of Methods](#). Decide on the appropriate methods depending on the group size, composition and work Aim of the method and consider which of the applications from [Part B: Tools for virtual workshops](#) you need for this.

### 2.3 Counselling and office hours

Make sure you are available for one-to-one meetings and advice. It is best to communicate a fixed structure at the beginning of the workshop. You do not have to be available all the time, especially in your own interest. Communicate fixed office hours and specify how participants can register for them. In addition, you can still be available for questions at the beginning and end of the sessions in an extra breakout room or in the big room for everyone.

## After the workshop

### 1. Follow-up

#### 1.1. Create forum for questions, answers, and discussion

Follow-up and feedback are a fundamental part of agile and action-oriented learning and teaching. It is therefore essential to provide formats for questions and discussion in the group as well as with the teachers. Messenger services are just as suitable for this as forums on the learning platform or additional offers for online meetings outside the regular workshop times. If work is to be done asynchronously alone or in small groups between two workshop units, the corresponding tools and working materials must be made available.

## 1.2. Putting documents and records online

For action-oriented learning, independent learning and self-regulation play an important role. Learning materials, recordings, additional texts, etc. should therefore be made easily accessible at any time, ideally on a learning platform created for the course. Ensure that all participants have access to the materials and that tasks are clearly defined and securely communicated.

## 2. Feedback

### 2.1 Organise feedback

Think about feedback separately. What format will you and the participants use to get feedback? You can find methods on the topic of feedback in [Part C: Collection of methods](#).

### 2.2 Evaluate feedback

Take the time to evaluate the feedback. What is retained, what can be improved? Make a feedback round on the workshop within the team and compare the results with the feedback from the participants. At the end of the process, the format for the next unit or workshop can be further developed based on the results.

## Group formation

In virtual workshops, group formation must be more actively supported to enable informal exchange and a collaborative learning and working atmosphere. The participants cannot get to know each other before the workshop and in the breaks over coffee and snacks. A group feeling and thus a good working atmosphere must therefore be promoted by you. The following measures can help:

- Keep the virtual room open before and after seminar times and provide additional meeting rooms depending on the tool used.
- Organise group messenger: Create a group on a [messenger service of](#) your choice and invite the participants to join before the workshop.
- Offer get-to-know-you formats: You can already offer get-to-know-you formats before, but also during the workshop. These can be, for example, joint coffee breaks or a virtual evening event, additional discussions, virtual exhibitions, or evening joint film offerings on a suitable topic.
- Virtual break room: provide a break room that is always open throughout the workshop. Possibly use an application that allows participants to open breakout rooms themselves if they want to talk to each other in smaller groups.
- Profile/ Video introduction: Ask the participants for information beforehand and make it available in a virtual exhibition. You can find a suggestion for this in the method collection under "[Self-introduction/ marketplace](#)".

## Part B: Tools for virtual workshops

Different applications and formats are needed for the success of a virtual workshop. Nowadays, the applications are manifold, the internet is full of commercial and freely available offers. However, no specific providers are recommended in the following. Rather, the possible applications and formats are to be presented in their basic functions and areas of application. This should enable a well-founded assessment of the needs and facilitate<sup>2</sup> the decision for the tool that is suitable for the respective workshop.

In addition to a short description, recommendations for implementation and the most important advantages and disadvantages of the tools, you will find below references to

- Possible areas of application,
- the steps of the "Complete Action" in which they can be particularly helpful,
- a recommended number of participants and
- the usability with good and poor internet connection.

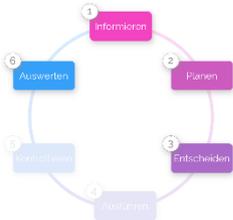
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<sup>2</sup> When choosing a provider, however, it is advisable to pay attention to compatibility with your country's data protection policy.

## 1. Applications

### 1.1. Video conferencing programme

#### *Scope of application*



- Suitable for phases 1,2,3, and 6 of the complete action
- For groups of up to 100 participants
- Good internet connection required

#### *Short description*

All applications on the market offer a virtual conference room for the large group. Either all participants or only the person speaking can be seen. In addition, for action-oriented formats, the option of breakout rooms is recommended, in which small group work can take place. There are various concepts on the market; they differ mainly in what "rooms" are offered in addition to the conference room and whether the participants can change rooms independently or even open them. Breakout rooms are necessary as soon as work is to be done in small groups.

#### *Implementation, application*

The link to the conference room must be sent to the participants in good time by e-mail or messenger. It is advisable to point out the specific technical requirements for using the software in good time. If you are hosting the event, you need a stable internet connection with a large bandwidth; the more participants you have, the more data volume you need to host.

#### *Advantages*

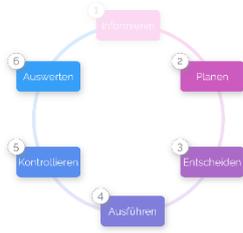
- The participants see themselves and the speakers
- Enables presentations to be shown and other content to be shared with everyone
- Enables work in small groups
- Enables group discussions

#### *Disadvantages*

- Stable internet connection required
- Technical equipment needed
- Possible insights into the private sphere of the participants (see also chapter [1 Preparation of the contents](#))

## 1.2. Virtual whiteboard

### *Scope of application*



- Suitable for phases 2,3,4,5 and 6 of the complete action
- For groups of any size
- before and during the training,
- Usable for tasks between two workshops

### *Short description*

A virtual whiteboard can be used by all participants at the same time. It is suitable for making information available and as a moderation wall for jointly recording content and making it accessible to others. Conceptboard, Miro or Mural, for example, are available on the market.

### *Implementation, application*

Make the link to the whiteboard available to all participants in good time. If possible, make sure that all participants familiarise themselves with the board in advance, e.g., in the form of wanted posters or other small tasks to be completed in the whiteboard before the start of the event.

### *Advantages*

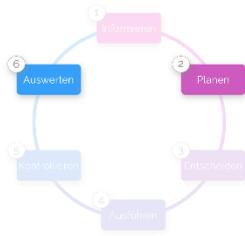
- Enables collaborative work on a document
- Enables collection of questions and ideas in the group (virtual moderation wall)
- Enables thematic fields in which data and further links can also be provided
- The whiteboard becomes a central "place" for the common exchange of thoughts and information
- Stakeholders use this tool and find their way around the required functions

### *Disadvantages*

- Requires technical know-how
- Can overwhelm those involved at the beginning

## 1.3. Web-based text editor (Pad)

### *Scope of application*



- Suitable for phases 2 and 6 of the complete action
- For groups of any size
- before and during the training,
- Usable for tasks between two workshop dates

### *Short description*

The pad offers the possibility to write in a document with several TN at the same time when the bandwidth of the internet connection is low. All changes are immediately visible to everyone. It is also suitable for recording questions and comments during a conference event that are to be edited later. It offers similar functions to a writing programme and usually makes the individual users clear through different font colours.

### *Implementation, application*

Depending on which functions you need, you decide on a provider and create an online-based pad on their website. Then send the link to all participants. Alternatively, the pad can also be directly integrated into a learning platform and used by everyone there.

### *Advantages*

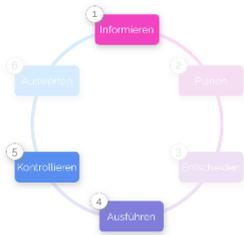
- Easy handling, as the functions are very similar to common writing programmes
- Little internet bandwidth needed
- Enables collaborative work on a text
- Work results are recorded
- The group develops a document together

### *Disadvantages*

- The basic version of the pad usually does not have many more functions than a writing programme. In the meantime, however, there are also versions with more additional functions, but these may incur costs.

## 1.4. Learning cards

### Scope of application



- Suitable for phases 1, 4 and 5 of the complete action
- For the independent development of content
- Support self-directed learning
- Suitable as work assignments between two sessions or for independent elaboration of specific questions

### Short description

Learning cards are self-learning materials that support self-directed learning and learners in the processing of work tasks. They are sorted according to occasions from the work context (triggers) and offer a quick overview of the possible transfer results for the own work context (outcomes). In each learning card, a concrete transfer task for the own work context is integrated, which allows the learners to apply new knowledge directly. The transfer task can also be assigned acceptance criteria that enable the professional supervisor to decide about the quality of the solution after it has been completed and thus provide constructive feedback to the learners. The actual contents, examples and impulses serve to provide assistance in applying the transfer task to one's own context and are usually short, as application related as possible and refer to further information and methods. <sup>3</sup>

A selection of different learning cards on various topics can be found and reused under a CC-BY-SA licence on the following page: <https://academy.agile-learning.eu>.

### Implementation, application

Select a learning card that fits your project or create corresponding learning cards for your project.

The following structure has proven to be useful for the learning cards:

- Name the area of application (e.g., "Moderation of a working group")
- Give examples of possible learning outcomes (e.g., "Can create a schedule for a work meeting") that can be achieved with the learning card,
- Explain the relevant contents
- Set tasks where the content is to be applied.

These tasks should be formulated in such a way that the processing of the learning card contributes to the processing of the work task, e.g., "Make a list of the materials needed for the implementation of your project". In this way, the work on the learning card can be integrated into the work of the (learning) group.

The learning cards are made available to the participants and/or assigned as learning tasks.

### Advantages

- quick orientation about the content and possible outcomes after engaging with the material,

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. Höhne, B. & Longmuß, J. (2020) Agil und informell lernen - Bedarfsorientierte Kommunikations- und Kollaborationsmethoden. In: G. Richter (ed.): **Learning in the digital transformation. How work-integrated learning succeeds in company practice**, p. 134ff. Stuttgart: Schäffer-Poeschel

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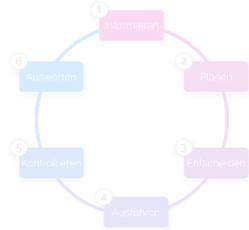
- Processing in a manageable time frame (approx. 30 minutes)
- action-oriented to enable concrete testing of a method or solution directly in one's own work context.

## *Disadvantages*

- Effort for the creation and layout of the cards.

## 1.5. Messenger App

### *Scope of application*



- Supplementary throughout the workshop
- For any group size
- Can be set up as a group chat for all participants. In this case, it is used for group communication before, during and after the workshop.
- Can also be used as a parallel form of communication between organisers, teachers, and facilitators.

### *Short description*

Internet-based app in which individuals and groups can communicate with each other and exchange data. The messenger service can be set up as a group chat for all participants. In this case, it is used for group communication before, during and after the workshop. It can also serve as a parallel form of communication between the organisers, teachers, and facilitators.

### *Implementation, procedure*

A privacy-compliant app is communicated to all participants, who install it on their end devices. The messenger can be used before, during and after the event to connect the participants with each other and/or to offer a separate exchange possibility for the event team.

### *Advantages*

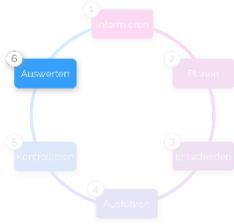
- Networking among the stakeholders
- Creation of a group feeling
- Clear groups avoid posting errors

### *Disadvantages*

- Participants who do not own a corresponding end device or do not want to use the app for other reasons will be excluded

## 1.6. Live Polling

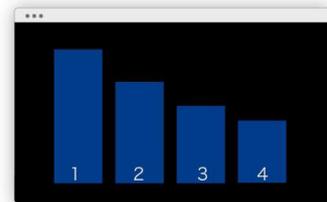
### Scope of application



- Suitable for phase 6 of the complete action
- Recommended for feedback in larger groups
- Requires the participants to be equipped with appropriate end devices (smartphone or tablet).

### Short description

Feedback instrument that can be used with a smartphone, asks the participants' opinion, and displays it in a simple graphic. Many different apps can be downloaded free of charge. A DSGVO-compliant application is e.g. Mentimeter.



### Implementation, procedure

The participants need their own end devices, or you provide them yourself. Providing end devices has the advantage that the necessary apps are already pre-installed.

A beamer and, if possible, wi-fi are also required. You can specify different question formats in advance or directly during the course, and the participants answer with their end devices. Possible formats are:

- Voting/ multiple choice: Vote now for A, B or C
- Free text entries, e.g., questions
- Clickable images: images (e.g., maps on which a point appears by clicking)
- Brainstorming
- Sorting tasks: A list must be sorted into the correct order
- Word clouds: Participants are only allowed to enter one word at a time. If several participants enter the same word, it is displayed larger on the screen in relation to the others.

### Advantages

- Opinions and moods of the group can be representatively surveyed and visualised at the same time
- Even shy participants express their opinions
- Quick retrieval of opinions/knowledge
- At the end you have a good overview of the opinion of the participants
- You can see immediately how many participants have taken part

### Disadvantages

- Delays due to technical problems
- App-enabled terminals are required
- Giving control, as you only see the results shown with the others



## 2. Formats

### 2.1. Plenary session

#### *Scope of application*

- Throughout the whole workshop
- Work with all participants at the same time

#### *Short description*

Everyone meets with the teachers in a virtual room.

#### *Implementation, procedure*

A "conference room" is needed for presentations and discussions in a large plenum. Depending on the size of the group and other requirements, a variety of applications must be selected. The virtual conference room should, if possible, be supervised by at least two people, one person for moderation and one person for technical support in the background. A work phase in the digital room should not last longer than 50-55 min, after 20-25 min the format should be changed to maintain the attention span.

#### *Advantages*

- It is possible to work with all participants at the same time

#### *Disadvantages*

- Video conferences with many participants require a stable internet connection
- Depending on the programme, the use is associated with costs

#### *Success factors*

- Select a suitable programme for the respective Aim of the method, group size, internet connection
- Compatibility of the programme with other applications used

## 2.2. Breakout rooms

### *Scope of application*

- Throughout the whole workshop
- Participants work in small groups

### *Short description*

Breakout rooms are virtual rooms where participants can work in small groups. They are usually connected to the large conference room and are created by the event team.

### *Implementation, procedure*

For the work in small groups, the event team will create an appropriate number of breakout rooms. Depending on the work task, these are equipped with a clock, an application for working together and for recording results, as well as a whiteboard with the question and any further information required. It is possible to assign rooms to the groups as well as to assign rooms to different topics and let the participants decide themselves which room they want to "enter".

### *Advantages*

- Work in small groups is possible virtually
- Breakout rooms can be equipped as desired

### *Disadvantages*

- Fewer opportunities to go from one group to another than in presence
- In case of interruptions of the internet connection, participants start again in the large meeting room when reconnected and must be reassigned to the breakout rooms

## 2.3. Chat

### *Scope of application*

Can be used as a parallel form of communication during a virtual workshop.

### *Short description*

Most virtual rooms offer a chat function. This allows participants to write messages to each other and the moderator to all or selected participants.

### *Implementation, procedure*

The chat can be shared with everyone and used, for example, as a medium for asking questions. If the chat is integrated into the concept in this form, it should be supervised by someone other than the lecturer, because this cannot be done well in parallel to the lecture.

The chat can be saved and used as a supplement to the minutes.

### *Advantages*

- Can be saved
- Links and further information can be provided in parallel
- Feedback possibility of the listeners

### *Disadvantages*

- Another person is needed to moderate the chat

## Part C: Methodology

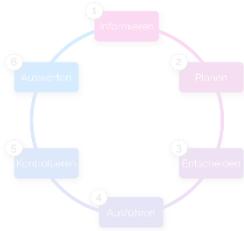
In the following, different methods for working in virtual workshops are presented. Here too, in addition to a short description, recommendations for implementation and the most important advantages and disadvantages, there are again indications of

- Possible areas of application,
- the steps of the "Complete Action" in which they can be particularly helpful,
- a recommended number of participants, if applicable, and on
- the usability with good and poor internet connection.

# HoWARP

## 1.1. Self-introduction/ marketplace

### Scope of application



- In the run-up to the workshop
- For groups of up to 12 participants, with more participants can only take note of some of the others, e.g., the members of their own small group.
- Getting to know each other format to start the workshop

### Aim of the method

- Creates awareness that individuals should be active in the workshop and can get involved
- Develop an active role in the workshop, take responsibility
- Independent acquisition of the application/tool used in the workshop
- Participants introduce themselves in front of the group and the teachers and make themselves visible to them.
- Participants get to know each other and the teachers

### Short description

A [virtual whiteboard](#) is set up in advance with questions about the person, which can be general and/or personal (e.g., name, education, why am I here? What is my favourite food/dream job? My previous experience with the topic). On the moderation wall, the answers to the questions can be provided in the form of profiles or in a matrix.

### Implementation, application

The participants answer the questions on "sticky notes", put them in order and follow the teacher's instructions. This can be done in the form of clusters, topic corners, matrix, etc. To better distinguish which answer comes from whom, each person can be assigned a colour. The self-reports can be supplemented with a photo or a short video.

**Option 1:** At the beginning of the workshop, the participants do not introduce themselves but another person using the profiles.

**Option 2:** Answering the questions together as an introduction to the workshop

### Advantages

- The participants already deal with the further training in advance.
- Technical problems become visible in advance.
- Communication among each other even before the start supports group formation.

### Disadvantages

- Time-consuming preparation for participants and teachers
- If many participants do not take part, it can make it difficult to start.

### Success factors

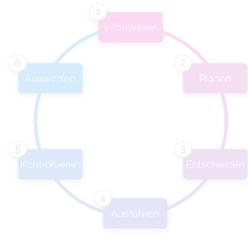
- The digital board must be available sufficiently long in advance.

# HoWARP

- Participants must be known well in advance.

## 1.2. Warm-Up Game 1: Questions

### *Scope of application*



- In the run-up to the workshop
- For groups of up to 30 participants
- Getting to know each other format to start the workshop

### *Aim of the method*

- Group Warm-Up

### *Short description*

Everyone turns off their camera. The moderator asks questions and whoever can answer yes turns on the camera.

### *Implementation, procedure*

Think of questions that will introduce the participants to each other. The questions should not be too personal for the first meeting. Questions related to the workshop topic can also be useful.

### *Advantages*

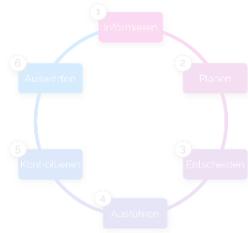
- Lightening the atmosphere
- Activation of the participants, all are involved
- The initial excitement has died down and everyone is focused on the seminar
- The participants have got to know each other a little and can start the group phases more easily.

### *Disadvantages*

- None

## 1.3. Warm-Up Game 2: Drawings

### *Scope of application*



- In the run-up to the workshop
- For groups of up to 20 participants
- Getting to know each other format to start the workshop

### *Aim of the method*

- Group Warm-Up
- Stimulate deeper and other types of conversations

### *Short description*

Creative way to get to know each other and develop initial ideas. Everyone draws a picture on a certain question and then presents it to the others.

### *Implementation, procedure*

Make sure everyone has a pen and paper to hand. Ask a question to be answered with a drawing, e.g., what animal would you use to describe the way you work?

*Option 1:* The participants take a photo of their drawing and upload it on the learning platform or virtual whiteboard.

*Option 2:* The participants hold it up to the camera so that everyone can see it.

### *Advantages*

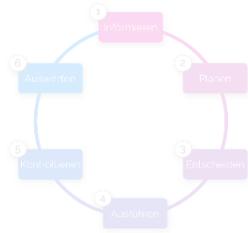
- Lightening the atmosphere
- Activation of the participants, everybody is involved
- The initial excitement has died down and everyone is focused on the seminar
- Language barriers can be bridged
- The participants have got to know each other a little and can start the group phases more easily.

### *Disadvantages*

- Participants who do not like to draw may refuse the task.

## 1.4. Triangle of common ground

### Scope of application



- In the run-up to the workshop
- For groups of up to 30 participants
- Getting to know each other format to start the workshop
- Can also be used in the reflection phase in relation to concrete questions

### Aim of the method

Learn more about the team members/colleagues, get to know each other and dive into the topics.

### Short description

Finding commonalities and differences

### Implementation, procedure

On a virtual whiteboard, the group creates a document with a triangle or a square. Everyone writes their name in one corner.

The group starts a conversation about their differences, but also about what they have in common. The commonalities of all three or four people should be written down in the middle. Individual similarities between two people are written on the page.

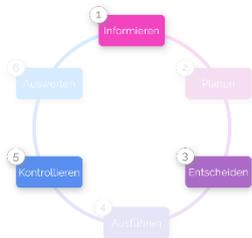
*Option 1:* Share the triangle / square later with the larger group

### Advantages

- Support to reduce insecurities and feelings of strangeness
- Especially good for intercultural teams
- If the team members know nothing about each other, it is also a lot of fun & surprising to find out similarities, but also to see the first differences
- The triangle / square can function as a reminder of commonalities when differences arise later in group / teamwork

## 1.5. Presentations/ keynotes

### Scope of application



- Suitable for any group size
- Can be combined with various applications (presentation slides, videos, whiteboard,...)

### Aim of the method

- Contents are made available
- Tasks are presented and explained
- Results are presented

### Short description

In the virtual conference room, content is presented to all participants simultaneously. Everyone can follow the presentation via a split screen and listen to the lecture. Afterwards, questions can be collected and discussed.

### Implementation, procedure

A presentation in the virtual room should not last longer than 15-20 minutes. Care should be taken that slides shown contain little text and that the content is linked with pictures if possible. The person speaking should be visible in a small picture. Determine beforehand how questions should be dealt with. Possibilities are written in the chat, write in an Scope of application



- Suitable for phases 2,3,4,5 and 6 of the complete action
- For groups of any size
- before and during the training,
- Usable for tasks between two workshops

### Short description

A virtual whiteboard can be used by all participants at the same time. It is suitable for making information available and as a moderation wall for jointly recording content and making it accessible to others. Conceptboard, Miro or Mural, for example, are available on the market.

### Implementation, application

Make the link to the whiteboard available to all participants in good time. If possible, make sure that all participants familiarise themselves with the board in advance, e.g., in the form of wanted posters or other small tasks to be completed in the whiteboard before the start of the event.

### Advantages

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- Enables collaborative work on a document
- Enables collection of questions and ideas in the group (virtual moderation wall)
- Enables thematic fields in which data and further links can also be provided
- The whiteboard becomes a central "place" for the common exchange of thoughts and information
- Stakeholders use this tool and find their way around the required functions

## *Disadvantages*

- Requires technical know-how
- Can overwhelm those involved at the beginning

, discuss afterwards in plenary or in small groups. Alternatively, the presentation can be recorded and made available in advance. Questions can then be answered, and the content discussed synchronously.

## *Advantages*

- Videos and recorded presentations enable asynchronous work. If there is little time, the questions that have arisen can be discussed directly in plenary.
- Presentations in real time are livelier and learners as well as teachers come into direct contact. It ensures that everyone hears the content and can work with it afterwards.

## *Disadvantages*

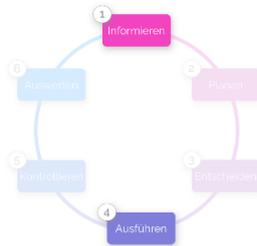
- Attention drops more quickly during lectures

## *Success factors*

- Stable internet connection required for a video conference

## 1.6. Microlearning

### *Scope of application*



- Suitable for phases 1 and 4 of the complete action
- For any group size
- Can be used for beginners as well as for advanced learners

### *Aim of the method*

- Microlearning enables self-direction / self-organisation by the learner; possibility to choose what and when to learn (learning on demand). Gives responsibility for learning to the learner.
- Learners receive targeted information
- Creates the possibility to take note of and edit these asynchronously

### *Short description*

Microlearning is a way of offering learning material in small bites. A learning unit - also called a nugget - usually takes less than 5 minutes, often between two and five minutes. It consists of relatively small learning units and short-term learning activities. The format varies: article summaries, infographics, slides, quizzes, surveys, videos, links, or images. It serves a specific learning goal and is often offered via mobile phone, tablet, or social media - and can be used in the workplace, e.g., during working hours.

### *Implementation, procedure*

The small learning units are developed and programmed by subject experts in varied formats to keep learners interested. They can be made available at the beginning of a course or at the point in the work when they are needed. They can be made part of the work or be an additional 'bonus track'.

### *Advantages*

- Simple and inexpensive to produce/update
- short development cycles
- High impact (just-in-time)
- Personal and social
- Little time required for the participants (positive sense of achievement and quick results)

### *Disadvantages*

- Less suitable for complex learning concepts or for working on long-term goals. It can lead to fragmented online learning experiences where participants lose track.
- It is difficult to link microlearning precisely to the existing knowledge of the participants or to encourage them sufficiently to connect new ideas, e.g., through reflection, with experiences and existing knowledge.

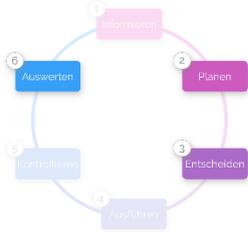
### *Success factors*

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- The learning units are attractive enough to be used in idle times, e.g., during a coffee or smoking break
- They contribute to the learning task

## 1.7. Sharing best practice stories

### *Scope of application*



- Suitable for phases 2, 3 and 6 of the complete action
- For any group size
- Whiteboard or pad required
- For large groups, many breakout rooms need to be hosted

### *Aim of the method*

Reflection of the input in relation to own experiences

### *Short description*

After a keynote, ask participants about their best experiences with the topic, e.g., "what was your best learning experience?".

### *Implementation, procedure*

Define for yourself which topic of your presentation you would like to deepen with the participants afterwards. Ask them about their best experiences in this area. The participants first answer the question for themselves and write it down in a pad or on a virtual whiteboard. Afterwards, they are divided into groups of 2-3 people and exchange their experiences in breakout rooms. They try to find out what these good experiences have in common or what made them special.

In a third step, the results of the group work are presented in plenary. Together they work out which factors underlying success should be worked with in the further course.

### *Advantages*

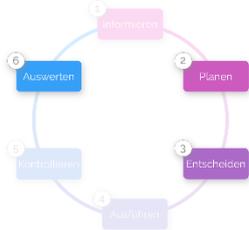
- Direct application of what has been learned
- By applying the new contents, an examination of the topic takes place. This leads to a better understanding of the content and more sustainable learning.

### *Disadvantages*

- For large groups, many breakout rooms are needed.
- With large groups, not all can present their results in plenary
- Requires stable internet connection

## 1.8. 5x Why

### Scope of application



- Suitable for phases 2, 3 and 6 of the complete action
- For any group size
- Also suitable as a warm-up

### Aim of the method

Getting to the core of a person's beliefs and motivations. Get to the bottom of backgrounds in organisations and team structures.

### Short description

Challenging the status quo

### Implementation, procedure

Create a breakout room or start a virtual session in teams of two. The team decides who will interview whom first. Start by asking a general question about the respondent(s)' habits or views. Then ask "why" five times in a row for each answer.

It is less about horizontal questions and more about depth. The person asking the question writes down what they hear, paying special attention to the moments when it feels like the person being questioned has gone one level deeper to understand why they are doing what they are doing.

You should always keep in mind that you may not get to the core until the fourth or fifth question of "why".

### Advantages

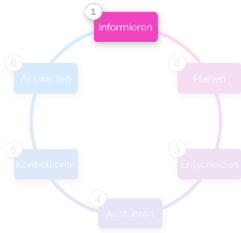
- The deeper knowledge about the topic could help to better understand the perspective of the participants, for example.
- The participants become aware of their own motivations and those of others.
- Problems or backgrounds of individuals or organisations can be made visible

### Disadvantages

- For large groups, many breakout rooms are needed.
- Requires stable internet connection

## 1.9. Group puzzle

### *Scope of application*



- Suitable for phase 1 of the complete action
- For any group size
- Can be used for beginners as well as for advanced learners
- Supports peer to peer work

### *Aim of the method*

- Independent development of content
- Teaching of the contents by peers

### *Short description*

Content is not presented frontally but is made available to small groups. They work out the contents (with or without guiding questions), summarise them and present them to the others. How this can be communicated to the others in an action-oriented way can also be part of the work task.

### *Implementation, procedure*

The learning content is divided into smaller units. Each working group receives part of the information, reads it, clarifies the content, and prepares it for the rest of the group. It gets its own breakout room for this. The workshop leader can observe the different groups working and give feedback later. She is available for questions and support needs.

### *Advantages*

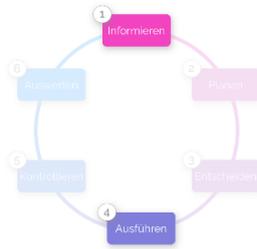
- The learning content is divided into smaller units, which shortens the processing time.
- This allows for a quick change of formats, which can improve attention in virtual workshops.
- The groups succeed in developing and implementing action-oriented forms of knowledge transfer.

### *Disadvantages*

- If a group drops out or does not understand the content, the workshop leader must be able to step in at short notice.

## 1.10. Dialogue corners

### *Scope of application*



- Suitable for phases 1 and 4 of the complete action
- For groups of approx. 25 participants
- Can be used for beginners as well as for advanced learners
- Can be used synchronously and asynchronously

### *Aim of the method*

- Collegial exchange
- Small group work

### *Short description*

A whiteboard with "working corners" is prepared. Each corner is assigned to a working group. The format can be used for warm-up questions as well as for working on content-related tasks.

### *Implementation, procedure*

Small groups of 4-5 people are formed. Each group is given a question to work on and a correspondingly prepared "corner" on a digital whiteboard. Each group has between 15 and 25 minutes to work on the task in the breakout room. If necessary, the group can appoint a moderator and a person to write down key points. If there is a plenary presentation of the results, it should be decided at the beginning who will take on this task. Afterwards, the "walls" can be pushed together and presented and discussed in the plenary.

**Variation 1:** At the end of the working phase, the groups move on to the next wall. They read the results of the previous group and, if necessary, add their own ideas, for which they get "stickers" with their own colour.

**Variation 2:** In the next phase, the participants can "stroll" through the corners and look at the results of the other groups like in a gallery. This can be followed by a discussion in the plenary.

### *Advantages*

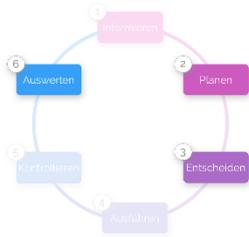
- Short processing times and quick format changes possible (15-25 min each).
- All participants can contribute their ideas.

### *Disadvantages*

- Not implementable without virtual whiteboard

## 1.11. Group work with observers

### *Scope of application*



- Suitable for phases 2, 3 and 6 of the complete action
- For any group size
- Structures the group work

### *Aim of the method*

- Making roles and special features of virtual communication visible
- Ensures the functionality of the group work
- Reflects the group work process to the group
- Giving feedback is learned and constructive feedback is experienced
  - Feedback from peers is perceived differently and can often be better absorbed
  - Peers come into the position of the person giving feedback
  - Feedback is given more empathically because you get into both positions

### *Short description*

One person in the working group is assigned to observe the others at the beginning of a working phase. He or she does not join in the discussion but observes the working process and gives constructive feedback to the group at the end.

### *Implementation, procedure*

The role is only assigned for one task, if necessary, this role changes to another person for the next group work. It is important that the person observing does not join in the discussion and concentrates on taking notes for constructive feedback. If small groups stay together for several phases of work, the person observing can also come from another group. Guiding questions for the observation can be provided in advance.

### *Advantages*

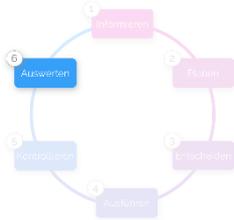
- Dominant speakers can be thwarted by appointing them as observers.
- The participants learn how to observe group processes and how to give constructive feedback.
- Group members receive constructive feedback on their working methods

### *Disadvantages*

- Separate time must be allocated for feedback

## 1.12. Starfish method

### Scope of application



- Suitable for phase 6 of the complete action
- For any group size
- Enables feedback from all participants
- Facilitates the evaluation of the feedback

### Aim of the method

The Starfish method asks open and non-judgemental questions that make it easy to present a personal view of things in the feedback.

### Short description

Several open questions are entered into a pie chart, which are answered by the participants. The questions are formulated in such a way that they allow for appreciative and constructive feedback and are not aimed at evaluating the others.

### Implementation, procedure

Create a circle with the 5-6 fields, each of which is occupied by a certain aspect or question.

- What do we want to stop doing? What should we stop doing?
- What do we want to do less of? What should we reduce?
- What do we want to start with? What should we try out?
- What do we want to do more of? What do we need more of?
- What do we want to keep? What should we continue to do?
- optional: What do we want to give thanks for? Who do we want to thank?



Figure 2cf.

[www.blog.orbit.de](http://www.blog.orbit.de)

Ask the participants to write an answer to each question on a card or in the chat etc., or to express it when it is their turn. Save the results in written form.

**Variation:** For larger groups (approx. 10 people or more): Instead of doing an evaluation with everyone in plenary, the participants send a message to everyone in which they answer the questions.

### Advantages

# HoWARP

- All participants respond to the questions asked, even the shy ones.
- The method can also be used asynchronously and with large groups.
- No one needs to criticise anyone else personally or be afraid of personal criticism
- The participants reflect on the workshop
- The participants exchange information about the workshop
- The event team will have a list of possible improvements after the workshop.

## *Disadvantages*

- With larger groups, the method in synchronous form is time-consuming if everyone is to speak individually.

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<sup>i</sup> See, among others, Engeström, Y. (2014). Activity Theory and Learning at Work. In U. Deinet & C. Reutlinger (Eds.), *Activity - appropriation - education* (pp. 67-96). Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-02120-7\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-02120-7_3); Herkner, V., & Pahl, J. -P. (2020). Action orientation in vocational education and training. In R. Arnold, A. Lipsmeier, & M. Rohs (Eds.), *Handbook of vocational education and training* (pp. 189-203). Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-19312-6\\_17](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-19312-6_17); Wolf, S. (2003). *Lernfeld und Prozessorientierung in der beruflichen Erstausbildung - das Beispiel Mechatroniker* [Diploma thesis, TU Berlin, Berlin]. <http://dx.doi.org/10.14279/depositonce-1598>, p. 12ff. ; Bünning, F. (2007, August 10). *Approaches to Action Learning in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)*. [http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/pubs/ActionLearning.pdf](http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/pubs/ActionLearning.pdf)