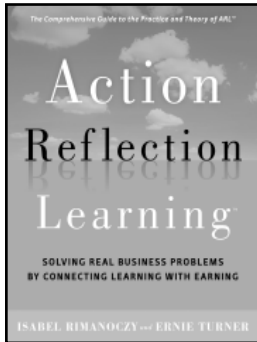


BOOK REVIEW

Action Reflection Learning

by Isabel Rimanoczy and Ernie Turner

☆☆☆



In *Action Reflection Learning*, Isabel Rimanoczy and Ernie Turner dive into a topic that is deeply rooted in behavioral science and ‘real world application’ rather than the widely accepted theory and lecture based business school model of the 70s.

ARL was developed by Swedish professors, researchers and consultants in response to the traditional management training practices of the 1970s. The Swedes wanted

a better method of learning. They challenged the accepted routine of the education process. No longer did they want to sit and listen to the teacher impart knowledge to the student. The Swedes envisioned a process that would require interaction and students could take ownership of their learning.

As a basis of their research, Rimanoczy and Turner take great care to identify and describe elements of ARL and provide learning stories to emphasize the 16 components. They give a clear outline of how each step is used by marking the margins. As the book progresses,

the reader is challenged to uncover the elements in the stories. The learning coach’s (or facilitator’s) role is to guide the participants to solve their issue.

Trainers should take the opportunity to read Chapter 10. In this chapter, the authors discuss the five stages of learning and their components. Each component, such as appreciative approach, balancing task and learning, and safe environment, is broken down to discuss what it is, when it should be applied, and how to apply it. This chapter can help novice to master trainers improve their facilitation skills.

What one may struggle to understand is how to put this theory into action without having any practical experience in ARL. The application of the theory may seem a bit intimidating at first, but the underlying importance of interaction and ownership in any type of educational setting cannot be overlooked.

Readers will find the text helpful in managing change. The book offers suggestions and tools to help overcome the complexities that arise when businesses or organizations face crises. ARL is an excellent strategy in terms of organizational development and provides trainers with powerful facilitation techniques.

As a trainer I will be using a few of the elements in my facilitation going forward; however, it is geared more toward organization development professionals. This would be a must-read for OD.

Reviewed by Beth Haste

○ OCTOBER 2008 | ○ VOLUME 21 | ○ ISSUE 10

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