

6 Core Principles to Strengthen Your Work Participant Packet

Welcome and Introduction

Our Organization as a Place of Learning – *a warm up*

- A Learning most likely abounds in your organization! It likely includes both formal and informal situations. Some examples might include team meetings and performance evaluations, but there are many other ways.

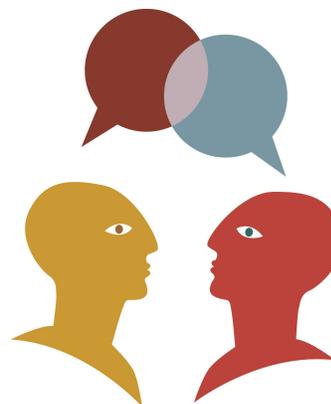
Take two minutes to jot down all the many learning situations which you have influence over in your work and where learning already happens, or where we would like to see learning happen.

On Being a Learning Organization...



- B Now, **share** your ideas with a partner.

Then, in the whole group, let's **hear** a sample of your ideas!



Six Core Principles to Ensure a Learning Organization

- A As you **listen** to a presentation about the 6 core principles, **think** about ways in which you have seen these honored and practiced in your organization (or not!).
- *What was the impact of the presence (or absence) of these principles?*



Debrief:

- *Which of these principles is your organization especially strong at? Which needs more attention?*
 - *What comes to mind when you see these principles as connected and interconnected in this way?*
 - *Which of these principles is especially important to you as a participant in an event, gathering, meeting or other aspects of your organization?*
- B **Take** a silent minute to **consider** which one principle you most want to focus on in your work in the coming month.

Then, **walk over** to that table (or stand under that chart). That's where you will work for the next while.

Strengthen the Core Principles in Your Work

- A **ROUND 1:** In your small group, **review** the short description of the core principle you have selected to work on (also found in the Appendix). **Share** examples you've seen inside and outside of this organization of how this has been incorporated and honored really well.

- *What ideas does this spark about how you can do this in your context?*

Write these ideas on the chart in front of you for others to read.

- B **ROUND 2:** **Move** to another principle that you are interested in, and repeat. Start with a silent read of the examples already captured by the previous group. **Add** your new ideas.

- C **ROUND 3:** **Move** to another principle, and **repeat**.

- D **ROUND 4:** **Go back** to the first principle you worked on and **read** what has been added.

- *What else comes to mind for you at this time?*

Add these to the chart as well.

- E On your own, **walk** around to all the tables and **select 2 things** you want to do right away in your work. **Write** these below.

I will ...	
1	
2	

- F Now on your own, **select 1 idea** you want to offer leadership, to help create more of a “learning organization”. **Write** that idea on a Post-it note.

We will **review** and **collect** them at the end.



So, Now What?

A Let's **hear** examples from those who are willing to share.

- *What principle will you be working on?*
- *What one action step will you take to further honor this in your work?*

B We will now collect all your ideas for the organization. As you **reflect** on what impact all this positive action would mean, **select** 1 or 2 words that summarize the potential impact IF we all did these things.

Let's all **call out** those words as way to end our time together.



Thank you for your participation!

GLP Resources on a Learning-Centered Approach

A video

8 Steps of Planning Video and Template

<http://bit.ly/conferencecartoon>

A blog

“Six Core Principles, Virtually”

<http://bit.ly/6virtually>

Free downloadable resources

<http://bit.ly/resourcesGLP>

A book

Vella, J. (2002). *Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

APPENDIX | 6 Core Principles for Adult Learning Cards

1. Respect

Learning is risky for adults, and they need to feel respected in order to take that risk. Facilitators demonstrate respect when they acknowledge and use the wealth of experience and knowledge that adults bring to a learning environment. They also need to affirm that adult learners are the key decision-makers in their own learning process and need to be invited to make personal meaning of the content being presented or taught.

Putting it into Practice

- Don't do or decide for learners what they can do or decide for themselves.
- Invite learners to add their experience, examples and knowledge to new content.
- Invite participation rather than calling on people by name.
- Avoid activities that embarrass people.
- Send an agenda or program overview in advance of the event or meeting.

2. Immediacy

Adults are more engaged when they see the immediate usefulness of what they are learning. If they will be using something very soon, they will work harder to learn it. Facilitators can build immediacy by helping participants discover opportunities for *immediate application*, and by building opportunities for immediate application into the session.

Putting it into Practice

- Ask participants to visualize and describe when and where they will apply the new learning in the near future - "How do you see yourself using this in the next week?"
- Invite participants to create action plans to put the new skill or knowledge into practice.
- Build practice, case studies or demonstrations into the session so that learners know they will be applying the content very soon.

3. Relevance

Adults must see a reason for learning new content or they will "unhook" and disengage in the learning process. Good teaching connects new content with learners' daily lives and real needs. Learners will learn faster and more permanently that which is significant to them and their present lives.

Putting it into Practice

- Discover what your learners want and need BEFORE the event. Invite their input.
- Use stories and examples related to the context of your participants.
- Invite them to personalize the content – ask them to relate it to their work and life.
- Avoid creating sessions where the content will be relevant for only a few people.
- Explain why they are here and make space for personal meaning-making.

4. Safety

Adults will not learn if the environment feels threatening. The perception of threat can trigger physiological changes in the brain that reduces its capacity for deep thinking. The atmosphere in the room, the design of learning tasks, and the way dialogue is facilitated should create a sense of safety, so that adults can take increasing levels of risk with their learning.

Putting it into Practice

- Affirm learner's ideas, questions and (even) resistance.
- Be transparent about how and why an event is happening – why them, why now.
- Use warm-ups at the beginning of each day of a workshop to help build safety in the group.
- Be attentive to power dynamics in the group.

5. Engagement

Adults learn when they are fully and actively engaged in the process of learning, not when they are passive recipients of someone else's learning. This active engagement involves their intellect, their feelings and their physical actions. This may be a noisy process (they are talking), a quiet process (they are reflecting or wrestling with it), or an active process (they are searching, practicing, doing).

Putting it into Practice

- Always give learners time to personalize and do something with new content.
- Use individual, pair, and small group work to help ensure everyone is engaged.
- Keep presentations short and appropriately “chunked” so participants spend less time *hearing* and more time *doing*.
- Find diverse ways to engage your participants to ensure all types of learners have space to learn.

6. Inclusion

Adults need to feel included in the learning process, to see that their perspective matters, and to trust that their voice is invited and heard. Facilitators must be sensitive to how the dynamics of gender, age, physical ability, education, culture, religion, ethnicity and community position influence participation in any given event. They should watch for the balance of voices and perspectives raised in the group and design/facilitate in ways that intentionally draw on the varied expertise and experience in the room.

Putting it into Practice

- Establish clear and agreed upon ground rules for the event.
- Intervene, based on the ground rules, with a participant who dominates discussion or shuts others down.
- Use small group and pair work to ensure all voices are raised and heard.