

The Power of Questions and Mindsets in Action Learning

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Introductions

- ▶ Name
- ▶ Your experience with Action Learning
- ▶ Your experience with Question Thinking
- ▶ What you hope to get out of today

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Agenda

- ▶ Action Learning Brief Overview
- ▶ Question Thinking Brief Overview
- ▶ Mindset Exercise
- ▶ Action Learning and the Choice Map

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What is Action Learning

- ▶ A process that involves a small team (“set”) working on real problems, taking action, and learning while doing so
- ▶ A powerful management tool that creates dynamic opportunities for individuals, teams, leaders and organizations to successfully adapt, learn and innovate

WIAL Historic Roots

Reg Revans
Action Learning
UK

- Titanic
- Cambridge Physicist
- Coal Mines

Trust & Energy Sociotechnical Systems

Kurt Lewin
Action Research
USA

- NTL
- experiential learning
- group dynamics

Mike Marquardt
Integration of approaches

- Integration
- Six components
- two ground rules

Organizational Learning
Systems Theory
GE Workout

- Argyris & Schön
- Organizational Learning
- OD & Systems Theory
- GE Workout Program

WIAL Action Learning

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Action Learning Process

- ▶ Problem / Challenge presentation (1-3 minutes)
- ▶ Two Ground Rules
 - ▶ Statements can only be made in response to questions
 - ▶ Coach works learning opportunities
- ▶ Consensus on problem, goal
- ▶ Problem analysis
- ▶ Strategies
- ▶ Action plans

The Power of Questions

- ▶ Cause us to focus and/or to stretch
- ▶ Create opportunities for deep reflection
- ▶ Challenge taken-for-granted assumptions that prevent us from acting in new and forceful ways
- ▶ The most useful information often requires questions that take courage to ask and are difficult to answer
- ▶ Lead to breakthrough thinking
- ▶ Contain the keys that open the door to great solutions

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What is Question Thinking? (QT)

1. Recognizing thinking as an internal question and answer process.
2. The questions we ask ourselves are at the heart of thinking (including decision-making), listening, and communication.
3. Learning about QT is important because QT impacts our thinking, feeling, relating, actions, and all our experiences and results in life.

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A Question Thinking Example



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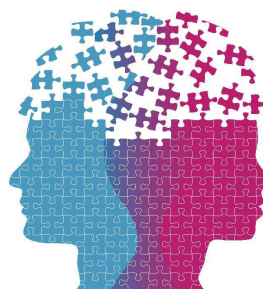
Mindset

“The term mindset represents the set of beliefs and assumptions we hold about ourselves, others and the world.”

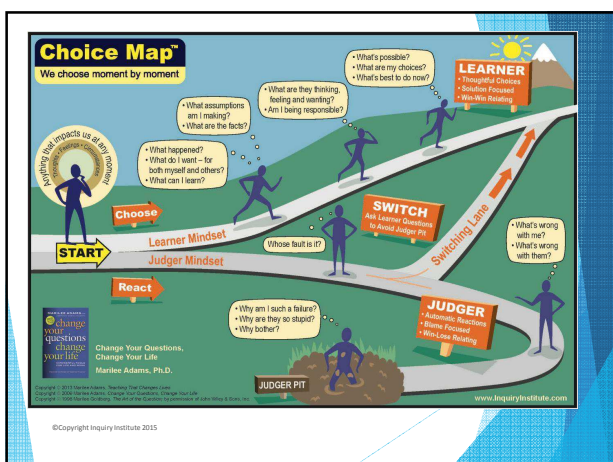
-- Marilee Adams

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Mindsets



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Learner and Judger Mindsets

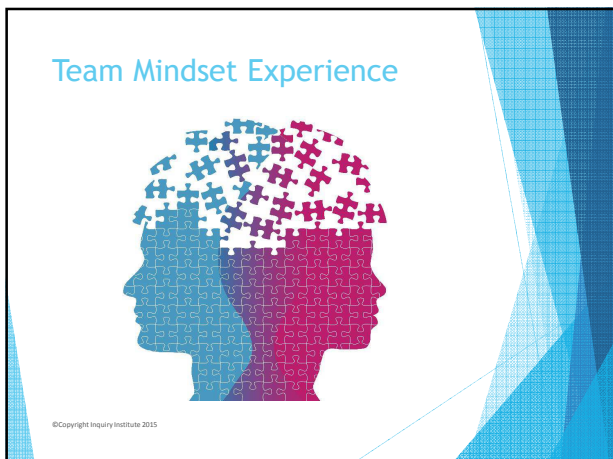
Judger is more:

- Closed-minded
- Certain
- Critical
- Judgmental
- Inflexible
- Siloed
- Problem focused
- Blame oriented

Learner is more:

- Open-minded
- Curious & Creative
- Appreciative
- Accepting
- Flexible
- Collaborative
- Solution focused
- Responsibility oriented

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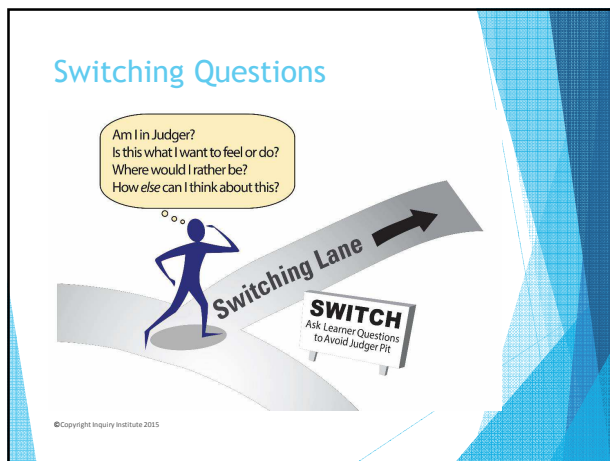


Team Mindset Experience

Group Discussion

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- ### We're All Recovering Judgers
- › Biologically Protective & Automatic (Fight, Flight/Flee, Freeze)
 - › Bridge to Empathy and Compassion (Self & Others)
 - › Judger thinking, feeling, behaving, and relating is a HABIT that can be changed (mostly!)
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The Five Questions

1. What do I want—for myself, others, and the situation?
2. Am I in Learner mindset or Judger mindset?
3. Am I *listening* with Learner ears or Judger ears?
4. What assumptions am I making—about myself, others and the situation?
5. Who do I choose to be in this moment?

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Action Learning Coaching Questions

How are we doing with ...?

Why is it important that we ...?

How do we want to make it happen within this team?

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Action Learning and the Choice Map

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Reflections

- › What are the implications for Action Learning
- › What are you taking away from today?

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