



Learning to Learn E-learning Module

Developed by Dr Neil Thompson

Module Companion

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Welcome to the Avenue Media Solutions e-learning module on

LEARNING TO LEARN

This module companion e-book has been developed to serve as a study aid for people working through this e-learning module. It contains a general introduction about e-learning, followed by (i) pages laid out for the facilitation of taking notes as you work your way through the programme; and (ii) the exercises that form an important part of the learning programme.

Please note that this companion is for your personal use. However, if your employers have provided or funded this programme of learning for you they may ask you to produce evidence of your learning, in which case this document duly completed will stand you in good stead.

E-learning

We have the potential to learn in various ways – from attending face-to-face training events, reading books, articles, research reports and so on, watching a video or listening to an audio learning programme, supervision and reflective practice and from just doing our job or living our lives. Different people feel comfortable with different sources of learning and we all have our preferences. E-learning is not intended to replace any of the above ways of learning – and, indeed, often incorporates elements of them – but, rather, to complement and enhance our other learning opportunities.

The Avenue Learning Centre provides e-learning programmes (or 'modules') that are the equivalent of a full day's continuous professional development. However, it is not necessary to complete the module in one day. They are designed in such a way that they can be completed in small doses. That

is, you can dip into the programme for a while, then leave it to do other things and return to where you left off when you are ready.

Using the companion

This module companion has been prepared to help you get the most out of this *Learning to Learn* programme. We suggest you use it in the following three ways:

- To make notes as you work your way through the programme. This is particularly important if you are going to be completing the course over more than a week or two, as it is very easy to lose your thread in between the times you spend on the programme. It is also important to make notes based on *your* understanding of the issues covered, not just a summary of the course presenter's approach, but a record of what it means for *you*, in your particular circumstances.
- To complete the exercises contained within the module. Some people may be tempted to skip the exercises and just skip on to the next part of the programme. However, this is a temptation that must be resisted, as the exercises are a key part of the learning because they give you an opportunity to digest the information given and to make sense of it in relation to your own circumstances and your own learning needs. They encourage you to think about the issues and to understand them in relation to your own situation – without this there will be little or no learning. **NB** The exercises are not tests, so feel free to seek assistance from colleagues if this will help you learn.
- To serve as an aide-memoire. It is very easy to forget important issues and points of learning. Having a set of notes that we can refer back to at a later date is therefore very wise and potentially very useful.

So, you will need a printed copy of this e-book alongside you as you work through the online programme. After you have completed each exercise you can then return to the main programme page online to move on to the next part of the module when you are ready.

NOTES:

Lesson One: Why is learning to learn so important?

Exercise 1.1

Think about times when you have felt good about learning. What was it that made you feel good? What made it a positive situation for you? Think carefully about this and make some notes below.

Think about times when you did not feel good about learning, when there was something that made you feel uncomfortable, distressed or otherwise negative about the experience. What was it that made it so negative? Try to be as specific as possible and make some notes below.

By comparing your positive and negative experiences of learning, are there any conclusions you can draw? For example, are there any patterns that have emerged? Feel free to get someone to help with this if you feel that would enable you to get more out of the exercise.

Exercise 1.2

How do you use your knowledge in your work?

Do you do it explicitly (that is, are you aware that you are doing it)? If so, how?

If not, how can you know that you actually are drawing on your professional knowledge base?

How can you maximise the use of professional knowledge as a foundation for informing your work?
What specific steps can you take?

Exercise 1.3

Now that you have come to the end of Lesson 1, think back over what you have got out of it. Identify specifically the key learning points you will take away from it. Make some notes below.

NB Please do not gloss over it as you will not be learning to learn if you are not able to identify what was useful from the work you have done on Lesson 1. So, skimming over this defeats the object of what the module is all about. The exercise need not take you long, but you should find it helpful to identify explicitly a few key learning points.

Exercise 2.1

Consider the OTE model. Which aspect of this do you feel most comfortable with in terms of your own learning: observation, theory or experiment?

Can you think of any ways in which you could improve your learning by using your favoured approach more effectively?

Can you think of any ways in which you could improve your learning by exploring the use of the two approaches you feel least comfortable with?

Exercise 2.2

Bearing in mind the discussion of levels of learning in Lesson 2.3, can you identify any steps you could take to improve your ability to learn? For example, how might you use the idea of double-loop learning?

Exercise 2.3

Now that you have come to the end of Lesson 2, think about what you have learned from it. Jot down a few ideas that you have found useful and/or steps you will take as a result of what you have learned.

Exercise 3.1

We have seen that being exposed to new ideas is an important foundation for learning. What methods are available for you to be exposed to new ideas in relation to your work?

What can you do to (i) increase the range of opportunities available to you; and (ii) make the most of the learning potential exposure to new ideas offers?

(i)

(ii)

Exercise 3.2

Do you receive any form of coaching, mentoring or supervision? If not, what can you do to access this type of help? Who can support you in doing this?

If you do use this type of support, what can you do to get the most out of it, to capitalise on the opportunities it provides for learning? Who can help you to clarify this?

Exercise 3.3

Now that you have come to the end of Lesson 3 think carefully about what you have learned from it. Jot down a few key learning points and/or steps you will take as a result of what you have learned here.

Exercise 4.1

Are you an active learner? If so, are there any ways in which you could build on your strengths in this area? If not, what can you do to become a more active learner? Who would be the best person to help you with this?

Exercise 4.2

What have you learned in your life that has contributed to your sense of who you are or shaped your identity?

How might you build on these lessons?

Exercise 4.3

Now that you have reached the end of Lesson 4 think carefully about what you have learned from it. Jot down a few of the key learning points and/or steps you could take as a result of the work you have done in relation to this lesson.

Exercise 5.1

Of the six obstacles to learning we have looked at so far, do any of them apply to you? If so, what can you do to remedy this situation in order to improve your ability to learn? Who can help you with this? If none of them applies, what are the specific obstacles that can prevent you from learning? What can you do about them and who can best help you?

Exercise 5.2

What situations might make you anxious or defensive about learning? Think carefully about this, as everyone gets anxious at times, and this can be a significant barrier to learning.

To what extent is the culture you work in characterised by anxiety and/or defensiveness? How does this affect the potential for learning?

What can you do, in relation to your own anxieties and/or those of your organisation, that will help you to learn more effectively?

Exercise 5.3

Now that you have come to the end of Lesson 5 think carefully about what you have learned from it. Jot down a few key learning points and/or steps you will take as a result of considering a range of obstacles to learning.

Exercise 6.1

Consider the following factors that commonly motivate people to learn. Rate them in terms of the extent to which they apply to you, 1 being the strongest influence, 5 being the weakest:

- Promotion / career progression _____
- Improving my practice _____
- I enjoy learning itself _____
- I fear getting left behind _____
- I am part of a learning culture _____

Does this give you any ideas about how you might increase your motivation? Who could help you work this out and guide you in moving forward?

Exercise 6.2

How would you rate your confidence in relation to your ability to learn?

Low _____ Medium _____ High _____

If low or medium what can you do to boost it? If high, what can you do to capitalise on your confidence in this area?

Exercise 6.3

Now that you have come to the end of Lesson 6 and the module as a whole think carefully about what you have learned from it. Then identify the five most important learning points you have gained by studying this module and the five most important action points you intend to implement in order to improve your ability to learn.

The Five Most Important Learning Points

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

The Five Most Important Action Points

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

The Avenue Learning Centre

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