



Comparative Research Network e.V.

Modern Educational Methods
LTTA 1 Critical Thinking Berlin
5th - 9th of July 2021
LEARNING JOURNAL

Learner Journal LTTA 1 Critical Thinking Berlin 5TH – 9TH OF JULY 2021

Why keep a learning journal?

Sometimes people's eyes can glaze over at the thought of keeping a journal. However, a learning journal can be:

- a “treasury of good practice”;
- help evaluate actions tried;
- a way of capturing things which have been learned;
- a way to demonstrate impact;
- it's not the only way but it is one way that makes you think.

The premise behind keeping a journal is that you cannot improve and change something you are not aware of in the first place! As a method of reflection, a learning journal can help you “slow-down” and evaluate a learning experience at your own pitch and pace.

What is a Learning Log?

A Learning Log is a journal which evidences your own learning and skills development. It is not just a diary or record of “What you have done”, but a record of what you have learned, tried and critically reflected upon. It is a personal record of your own learning. As such it is a document which is unique to you and cannot be ‘right’ or ‘wrong’. A Learning Log helps you to record, structure, think about, reflect upon, plan, develop and evidence your own learning. Its content may be very loosely structured and only of relevance to you. Once you have commenced a Learning Log you will find it a valuable and useful 'tool' to help your learning and to help you to think about and structure your own learning and translate it into your own action plan.

In your Learning Log you include details of what you did or how you did something then consider asking yourself questions such as:

- Did it go well? Why? What did you learn?
- Did it go badly? Why? What did you learn?
- How can you improve for next time

A Learning Log contains **your** record of **your** experiences, thoughts, feelings and reflections. *One of the most important things it contains is your conclusions about how what you have learnt is relevant to you and how you will use the new information / knowledge / skill / technique in the future.*

It may contain:

- Details of problems you have encountered and solved (or not solved).
- Examples of where you have started to try out and practice a new skill and examples of your own formal and informal learning.

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How do I 'do' a Learning Log?

Try to write something down after every new learning experience.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What you did• How well (or badly) it went	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your thoughts• What you learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your feelings• What you will do differently next time.
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Ask yourself questions such as:

- Have I achieved anything? If so, what?
- What progress have I made
- Have I put any theory into practice?
- How does what I have been doing lead to me becoming better at a skill?
- How can I use this to plan for the future?
- How can I use this to plan new learning?
- Experiences?

You will find that how you view something (your perception of something) changes over time. For example, you may have been trying to develop your communication skills and have had a bad or negative learning experience when something went wrong and you feel you have made little or no, or even backwards, progress. You may reflect upon this the next day and your thoughts and feelings may be mainly negative ones.

You can use your Learning Log to record courses you went on, books you have read, discussions you have had, internet sites you have looked at, television programmes you have watched. Your log should become something that is directly relevant to you and your learning.

Is there a 'best' or 'correct' way of producing a Learning Log?

The log should be relevant to you and your job / studies / role / activities. There is no 'right' or 'wrong' way of producing a Learning Log. Perhaps the 3 key questions when engaging in the process of producing a Learning Log are:

- Am I being honest with myself?
- Is this a useful process for me?
- Is this helping my own process of learning?

If the answers are 'yes' then your Learning Log is correct and right for you. If the answers are 'no', and you have genuinely asked yourself some of the questions previously mentioned, then perhaps a Learning Log may not really be of much use to you.

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How can producing a Learning Log and developing the skill of critical self-reflection help me?

Again, that depends very much upon you. Some people will get more out of engaging in the process of producing a Learning Log than other people will. Research has identified that reflection can help people to change. Some of the changes which have been identified are listed below.

Changes associated with reflection:

<i>From</i>	→	<i>To</i>
<i>Accepting</i>		<i>Questioning</i>
<i>Intolerant</i>		<i>Tolerant</i>
<i>Doing</i>		<i>Thinking</i>
<i>Being descriptive</i>		<i>Analytical</i>
<i>Impulsive</i>		<i>Diplomatic</i>
<i>Being reserved</i>		<i>Being more open</i>
<i>Unassertive</i>		<i>Assertive</i>
<i>Unskilled communicators</i>		<i>Skilled communicators</i>
<i>Reactive</i>		<i>Reflective</i>
<i>Concrete thinking</i>		<i>Abstract thinking</i>
<i>Lacking self-awareness</i>		<i>Self-aware</i>



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Pre-Reflection

Please answer the following questions:

<i>What are your expectations of this workshop? What do you hope to gain by participating in it?</i>	
<i>What is the one thing that you would most like to learn during the workshop?</i>	
<i>What kinds of experiences have you had in the area of the workshop?</i>	
<i>What are the topics most important to you in the field of the workshop?</i>	
<i>What do you want to bring into the workshop?</i>	



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Learning Log Day 1

Name of session	What was the session about?	What have I learned?	How will I apply this learning?	What was noteworthy/new/interesting ?



Learning Log Day 2

Name of session	What was the session about?	What have I learned?	How will I apply this learning?	What was noteworthy/new/interesting ?



“Hunt for the good stuff” journal – Half Time

Think of 3 good things that have happened in the last few days.

The good stuff	About the good stuff
<i>Good stuff 1:</i>	Why is this the good stuff?
	What does this good thing mean to me?
	How can I get more of this good thing into my life/work?
<i>Good stuff 2:</i>	Why is this the good stuff?
	What does this good thing mean to me?
	How can I get more of this good thing into my life?
<i>Good stuff 3:</i>	Why is this the good stuff?
	What does this good thing mean to me?
	How can I get more of this good thing into my life?



Learning Log Day3

Name of session	What was the session about?	What have I learned?	How will I apply this learning?	What was noteworthy/new/interesting ?



Learning Log Day 4

Name of Session	What was the session about?	What have I learned?	How will I apply this learning?	What was noteworthy/new/interesting ?



Learning Log Day 5

Name of Session	What was the session about?	What have I learned?	How will I apply this learning?	What was noteworthy/new/interesting?



“Hunt for the good stuff” journal – Final

Think of 3 good things that have happened in the last few days.

The good stuff	About the good stuff
<i>Good stuff 1:</i>	Why is this the good stuff?
	What does this good thing mean to me?
	How can I get more of this good thing into my life/work?
<i>Good stuff 2:</i>	Why is this the good stuff?
	What does this good thing mean to me?
	How can I get more of this good thing into my life?
<i>Good stuff 3:</i>	Why is this the good stuff?
	What does this good thing mean to me?
	How can I get more of this good thing into my life?