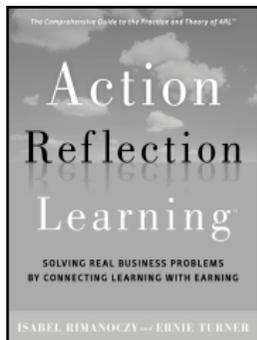


## BOOK REVIEW

### *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*

## CLASSICS CORNER

### Penny Puzzler Activity

Creative thinking depends on an ability to break unwritten rules. To stress creativity and “thinking out of the box,” Cindy Forbes gives each training participant 12 pennies and asks them to form a square with five pennies on

each side. After giving trainees an appropriate amount of time to solve the puzzler, she explains the solution. When the solution is explained, it helps participants realize their thinking was unnecessarily restrictive, she says. Forbes uses this exercise to discuss the benefits of finding creative solutions to problems.

*Forbes is the assistant vice president of MBNA American in Newark, Delaware.*

#### **Pennies Puzzler Solution**

Stack two pennies on top of each other for each of the four corners, then place one penny between each corner to form a square.

## Access Our Online Archives

The last year of *Creative Training Techniques* newsletters are available as PDFs on our website. To access them, you must be a current subscriber. If you have not received log-in information, contact us at [support@CTTNewsletters.com](mailto:support@CTTNewsletters.com), and we’ll send you a username and password. We have hundreds of creative tips in our archives, along with videos and audio!

We also need you to verify your information so we can notify you when we upload new articles twice a month.

And, if you have a question, post them to the forum, and Bob will answer them.

If you have any questions about online access, email us at [support@CTTNewsletters.com](mailto:support@CTTNewsletters.com) and we’ll get you answers quickly.