

MIT Sloan School of Management: Action Learning Conference August 1 & 2, 2012 in Boston.

Abstract: Three ways of experiential learning.

1. From **others' experiences**: transmission in families and tribes (grandmothers, griots, prime school teachers...) but also job-shadowing (watching other do their work). lectures.
2. From **own experiences**: the reflective practitioner, accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL), practice analysis groups!
3. From **self-directed learning projects**: "looking for experiences": free-learners. In the seventies: traveling to foreign countries without knowing in advance exactly WHAT you were going to learn. In the education and training of young craftsmen since the Middle Ages journeys from one workshop to the other throughout Europe were included. There are still travelling journeymen today among German carpenters. In France the tradition is respected by the *compagnons*.

The outcomes are quite different between these three modes of learning. They should coexist!

1. **Transmission and learning from others' experiences** are important for time-space cohesion in societies and for people skills, especially if based on dialogue.
2. **Reflectivity and self-evaluation** as practised in learning from own experiences are of crucial importance and important factors of work-based learning. This is how one moves from the mastery of generic practices towards one's own style.
3. Intentional self-directed learning (mature learning) allows to be **proactive and to be the author of one's life (Ardoino)**. The contemporary situation in western countries with difficulties on the job market and the necessity to develop new competencies all the time makes this third form of experiential learning a condition for **sustainable employability** and sometimes for survival.

These three ways of learning demand different ways of teaching or tutoring as well as different sorts of course frameworks.

Most university teachers just know about **transmission** and teach in about the same manner in which they have been taught themselves.

To accompany critical reflectivity, self-evaluation and practice analysis demand a different stance. You have to become **facilitators of dialogue or do a counselling job**. It is often done in groups or in face-to-face conversation.

Concerning self-directed intentional learning: to initiate this quite demanding process, the best way seems to organize **empty habitable frameworks** meaning frameworks that give incentives for individual and group creativity: a platform for creation, but leaving others free to take and shape initiatives. Sometimes it needs a phase of co-creation to allow people to develop a sufficient feeling of self-efficacy before they launch their own initiatives.

Creative d rive is an example of EHF, a *novel writing competition* is another.

Marlis Krichewsky