

Learnership – Course Outline

Day 1: Learnership and Mindset

What does it mean to be a skilful learner?

In recent years, there has been an increasing focus on what quality *teaching* looks like. Schools and systems worldwide have developed standards that describe what teachers should be doing in the classroom.

But what about what *students* should be doing in the classroom?

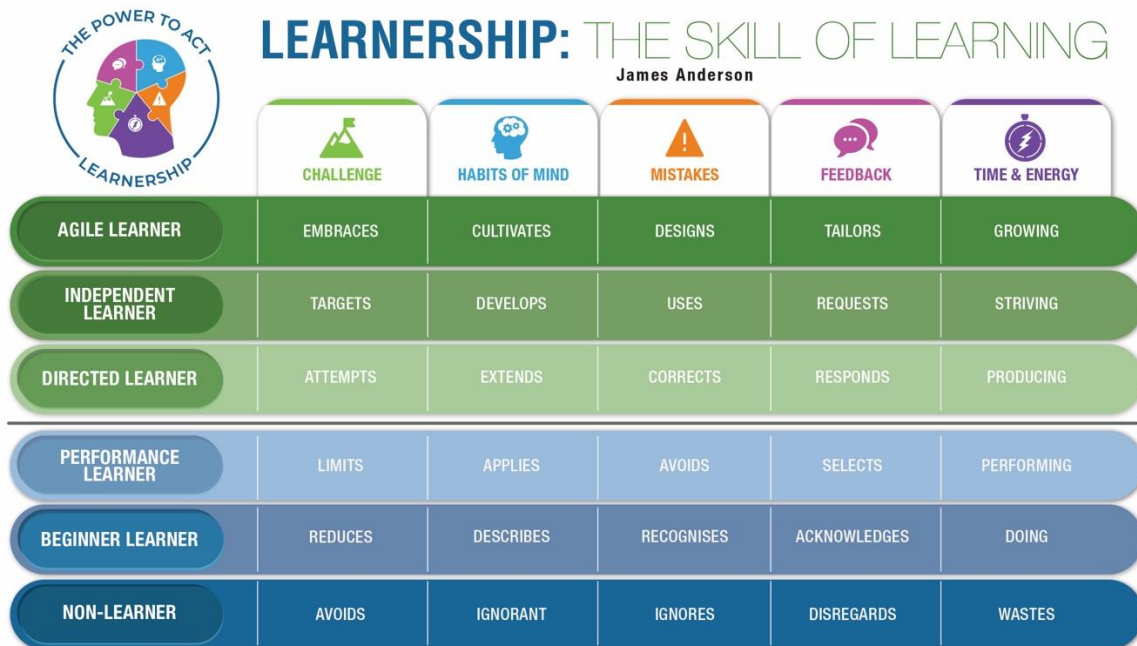
Too many of our students are passive learners. They avoid challenges. They focus on completion rather than improvement. And they waste or make poor use of their time and energy in the classroom.

These learners need to be led (and sometimes dragged!) through the learning process. This often leaves teachers exhausted, drained of energy, and feeling as though they do all the hard work for their students.

Skilful learners, on the other hand, embrace challenges. They look for every opportunity to develop their abilities. They understand and take charge of the learning process, investing their time and energy in becoming better learners.

Skilful learners energise the teacher *and* the classroom! The result? A dynamic, rich learning environment.

In this module, we'll describe quality learning as "Learnership". Think of *Learnership* in the same way you think of *craftsmanship* or *leadership*. It denotes skilfulness in the process of learning.



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We describe Learnership using the Learnership Matrix. We investigate learning in terms of how students respond to challenges, develop sophisticated learning behaviours, respond to feedback and mistakes, and invest their time and energy in the learning process.



We will set the bar high as we describe the Agile Learner – someone who understands they are capable of growth and how to achieve it. These learners go beyond succeeding in the academic world to become antifragile and thrive in the rapidly changing world at large.

Importantly, we set the scene for the coming modules, where we will learn the pedagogy that improves Learnership in our classrooms.

After all, we will only achieve improved learning outcomes when quality teaching practices are matched with quality learning behaviours!

Mindset – The Key to Developing Skilful Learners

Professor Carol Dweck’s work on Mindset is the foundation of Learnership.

Someone with a Fixed Mindset doesn’t understand themselves as a learner. They believe learning is about *discovering* their abilities. Teachers will hear them say things like, “I’m just not good at...” or, “I’m more suited to...”

On the other hand, someone with a Growth Mindset understands that learning is about *creating* their abilities. These students take charge of the learning process to develop the qualities and skills they need to become who they want to be.

It’s not until students understand themselves as learners who create their talents and abilities that they can ask, “How do I become *really good* at creating those talents and abilities? How do I engage in this process of learning really well?” Only then can they truly start developing Learnership.

In this module, you'll be challenged to think differently about Mindsets. You will be introduced to the Mindset Continuum and asked to consider how we teach “for” a Growth Mindset instead of “about” a Growth Mindset.

Your understanding of Mindsets will be further enriched as you are introduced to four Mindset avatars. These avatars – Searchers, Comparers, Cruisers and Resigners – represent specific student behaviours that can be observed in the classroom, indicating a fixed or low-growth Mindset. More importantly these avatars help us better target our Growth Mindset interventions

You'll then be given a Growth Mindset Style Guide. This collection of “nudges” helps teachers fill your school's classrooms with Growth Mindset Movers. These Mindset Movers encourage and nurture the development of increasingly growth-oriented Mindsets in students as they move along the Mindset Continuum.

Day 2: Challenges and Mistakes and Feedback

How often do you hear, “Is this good enough?” Or, “Is this going to count?”

Too many of our students take the easy path. They try to get by on the bare minimum of work. Their idea of success is to get the job done instead of challenging themselves to do it well. They fail to see the intrinsic worth of taking on challenges for the sake of the challenge.

Late US president J.F. Kennedy understood the value of challenges. In his famous speech announcing the USA’s commitment to send a man to the moon, he stated, “We choose to go to the moon ... not because (these challenges) are easy, but *because they are hard.*” In saying this, Kennedy emphasised that taking on this challenge had significant benefits beyond landing a man on the moon. By doing these “hard things”, the country could “organise and measure the best of their energies”. Kennedy recognised what skilful learners understand: that by stretching and challenging ourselves, we not only reach our goal, but we also grow in our ability to reach more difficult goals.

In this session, we explore the different types of challenge students take on. We distinguish between a student’s Comfort Zone, Performance Zone, Learning Zone and Aspirational Zone, and identify the different roles these zones have in learning.

We will explore pedagogies that help students recognise when they are in these zones and the strategies required to succeed in each. Importantly, you’ll develop strategies to help students recognise and value the benefits of stretching and challenging themselves, encouraging them to take on increasingly difficult challenges.

Of course, stretching beyond your best inevitably leads to mistakes. In this module, you’ll discover why the often-heard social media catchphrases of “celebrate mistakes” and “mistakes help you learn” are misleading and potentially harmful to the learning process. You’ll be introduced to the six different types of mistake learners make and explore the contribution of each to the learning process. Importantly, you’ll be given the tools to direct student actions to ensure they focus on correcting, not making, mistakes.



Mistakes are just one source of information to help us grow. Another equally important source of information is feedback. In this session you’ll learn simple strategies to help students learn the value of feedback and to cultivate the feedback they need to improve.

WHAT TYPE OF MISTAKE DID YOU MAKE?



Session 3: Habits of Mind and Effort

HABITS OF MIND

<p>1. Persisting</p>  <p>Stick to it! Persevering in task through to completion; remaining focused. Looking for ways to reach your goal when stuck. Not giving up.</p>	<p>2. Managing impulsivity</p>  <p>Take your Time! Thinking before acting; remaining calm, thoughtful and deliberative.</p>
<p>3. Listening with understanding and empathy</p>  <p>Understand Others! Devoting mental energy to another person's thoughts and ideas. Make an effort to perceive another's point of view and emotions.</p>	<p>4. Thinking flexibly</p>  <p>Look at it Another Way! Being able to change perspectives, generate alternatives, consider options.</p>
<p>5. Thinking about your thinking (Metacognition)</p>  <p>Know your knowing! Being aware of your own thoughts, strategies, feelings and actions and their effects on others.</p>	<p>6. Striving for accuracy</p>  <p>Check it again! Always doing your best. Setting high standards. Checking and finding ways to improve constantly.</p>
<p>7. Questioning and problem posing</p>  <p>How do you know? Having a questioning attitude; knowing what data are needed and developing questioning strategies to produce those data. Finding problems to solve.</p>	<p>8. Applying past knowledge to new situations</p>  <p>Use what you Learn! Accessing prior knowledge; transferring knowledge beyond the situation in which it was learned.</p>
<p>9. Thinking and communicating with clarity and precision</p>  <p>Be clear! Striving for accurate communication in both written and oral form; avoiding over generalizations, distortions, deletions and exaggerations.</p>	<p>10. Gather data through all senses</p>  <p>Use your natural pathways! Pay attention to the world around you Gather data through all the senses; taste, touch, smell, hearing and sight.</p>
<p>11. Creating, imagining, and innovating</p>  <p>Try a different way! Generating new and novel ideas, fluency, originality</p>	<p>12. Responding with wonderment and awe</p>  <p>Have fun figuring it out! Finding the world awesome, mysterious and being intrigued with phenomena and beauty.</p>
<p>13. Taking responsible risks</p>  <p>Venture out! Being adventuresome; living on the edge of one's competence. Try new things constantly.</p>	<p>14. Finding Humor</p>  <p>Laugh a little! Finding the whimsical, incongruous and unexpected. Being able to laugh at oneself.</p>
<p>15. Thinking interdependently</p>  <p>Work together! Being able to work in and learn from others in reciprocal situations. Team work.</p>	<p>16. Remaining open to continuous learning</p>  <p>I have so much more to learn! Having humility and pride when admitting we don't know; resisting complacency.</p>

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Source: Habits of Mind Across the Curriculum: Practical and Creative Strategies for Teachers. By Arthur L. Costa and Bena Kallick. Alexandria, VA. ASCD. © 2009. Reproduced with Permission. Visit www.ascd.org

Too often, students give up because “it’s too hard”. Or they shy away from challenges because they believe they aren’t smart enough.

Many of these students believe that if the current level of work is hard, the next level must be harder. And the level beyond that will be harder still, in a never-ending progression of increasing difficulty and struggle until the work eventually becomes impossible for them. So, rather than face these challenges and what the student perceives as an inevitable limit to their progress, they take the “path of least resistance” and choose the easy option.

Skilful learners understand they are in charge of developing their abilities. They are more metacognitive and have a sophisticated language of the Habits of Mind to describe how they engage in the learning process. As they encounter increasingly difficult tasks, these students shift their focus from *what* they are learning to *how* they are learning. They develop their Habits of Mind to make hard things easy and succeed at increasingly difficult tasks.

In this module, you will be exposed to Art Costa and Bena Kallick’s Habits of Mind in a new and exciting way. You’ll move beyond asking students to “use” the Habits to adopting strategies that help them develop and improve the way they engage in the Habits of Mind.

You’ll be introduced to the Habits of Mind Profile Tool. This new, powerful online tool allows you to evaluate your students’ Habits of Mind and identify their strengths and weaknesses. You will use the tool to create plans to develop your students’ Habits and measure and monitor their growth.

Additionally, you’ll be shown how to use the Habits of Mind Profile Tool to identify which Habits are required for specific tasks. These insights can help you determine how well matched a student’s Habits are to particular tasks, allowing you to accurately target teaching strategies to develop specific Habits.

Effort

When a student submits work that isn't quite up to standard, are you more likely to ask:

How much time did you spend on that?

OR

How did you spend your time?

The difference between these two questions is profound.

In schools and homes around the world, the concept of "effort" has become synonymous with time and energy. More effort means more energy. Working harder means working longer hours.

In this module, we'll redefine effort. Rather than asking *how much* time and energy a student spends, we'll ask *how well* that time and energy are spent. Are students wasting, spending or investing their time and energy? By asking this, our focus shifts from effort to efficacy.

Drawing on the previous modules on challenges and the Habits of Mind, we'll explore the Effective Effort Matrix. This matrix is a powerful and practical way to talk about effort with students.

When we recognise the four different types of effort, we become more deliberate and explicit in the way we praise, reward and direct our students towards the kind of effort required for different tasks. The four types of effort also provide a powerful metacognitive tool for students, enabling them to evaluate how they distribute their time and energy throughout a school day, week or year.

This module also introduces you to the concept of Motivation Calibration. Based on research by McKinsey and Co., we'll explore the importance of accurately judging the cost (effort) of growth and why some achievements cost more.

EFFECTIVE EFFORT MATRIX



Day 4: Learnership – The Teachers Role in Developing more skilful learners

How do you strategically develop better learners in your classroom?

Imagine your classroom is filled with students who engage in the learning process in increasingly skilful ways. These students embrace challenges, cultivate their Habits of Mind, and invest their time and energy in becoming better learners.

These “above the line” learners energise the classroom. They bring learning to life as they actively and skilfully engage in the learning process, achieving and exceeding learning expectations. This is what we expect to see as our students develop Learnership.

Learnership is a skill. And while highly skilled learners energise the classroom and take charge of their learning process, other students need more guidance.

In this module, we’ll pull together all the elements in the previous modules and answer the question, “How can teachers most effectively, strategically and intentionally develop student Learnership?”

Drawing on the Learnership Matrix, we’ll look at the different pedagogies most suited to learners of differing skill levels. When is it appropriate to set a challenge for a student, and when is it appropriate to allow them to choose their challenges? How do we shift a student who is inclined to avoid mistakes to one who will correct mistakes? And when should we teach the skills of designing mistakes and tailoring feedback?

Each stage of a student’s Learnership development requires a slightly different approach. We’ll explore five different approaches and the appropriate strategies for each. You’ll learn to identify your preferred or default approach and how to modify it to meet your students’ Learnership needs.

This concluding module brings all your learning together. You’ll complete this course with a deep and practical understanding of Learnership, equipped with a wide range of powerful tools to strategically develop your students’ ability to engage in the learning process more successfully.

This final module allows teachers to share ideas, discuss strategies, ask questions, and make the development of Learnership a central tenet of their teaching practice. And it will put you on the path to filling your classrooms and school with Agile Learners.