



## TenStep Supplemental Paper

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### Action Learning

Action Learning is used worldwide as a practical yet powerful means to personal, professional and organizational development. It leverages the power of peers to learn together and to get things done at the same time. The process results in complex problem-solving skills, systems thinking and continuous learning.

One way of orientation through Action Learning includes holding ongoing meetings of a small group of peers, each of whom is committed to meeting real-life challenges and learning at the same time.

A facilitator can ensure that group meetings are tightly focused on action and learning. Each new employee uses a time slot in the meeting to get help from other employees. Employees can help each other by sharing advice and materials, posing questions and providing support for challenges - in short, they coach each other.

Company information could be provided at three levels: organizational, departmental, and personal.

1. Issues of interest to all employees can be tackled at the organizational level through group orientation. Some companies employ intensive induction workshops, varying in length from a fortnight to a year. These include briefings on the different aspects of the company's operations and key company policies and procedures. Corporate HR normally takes care of these workshops. Many companies follow this up with a role-clarity workshop to iron out potential role-conflicts.
2. Functional orientation is normally taken care of by functional superiors and complemented by the HR department. Functional orientation programs include formal or technical instruction, information on the department's functioning and its interface with other functions, the organizational hierarchy, job content, performance standards, and role responsibilities.
3. Behavioral orientation, perhaps the most crucial form of orientation, holds the maximum potential for off-line processes, such as mentoring, to complement formal instruction. As the new employees have diverse educational and social backgrounds, they often need more than official indoctrination to ensure a smooth cultural transition. Here, a senior manager can coach them on a variety of issues ranging from dress codes to the intractability of a boss. Co-workers with the same demographic background as the new recruits can complement this process.

Finally, an orientation program needs to be conducted regularly to check for discrepancies and suggest improvements.