

Quick Reference on Learning Journals (1)

Question	Suggestions to Maximize Insights
Based on the current readings and your experience at the last module, what concepts, tools, processes or strategies are completely <u>new</u> to you?	Use Question #1 to summarize the <u>main themes</u> of articles and readings – according to your preferred format (i.e., bullet points, sentences, other). Think about what learning you want to START incorporating into your leadership practice and/or what behaviours you want to STOP doing.
What concepts, tools, processes or strategies with which you are already familiar are being <u>reinforced</u> as still valid?	Use Question #2, again to summarize the <u>main themes</u> of articles and readings – but taking the perspective of behaviours and ideas you want to KEEP (doing) as part of your personal leadership. It's good to reinforce what you are already doing well!
What <u>assumptions</u> have been debunked?	Use Question #3 to “step back” from what you “know”. Try to find other ways of considering your reactions to what you are learning. Adopt an “observer” stance as you challenge yourself to let go of assumptions that no longer serve you or others.
What are you learning about <u>yourself</u>?	Use Question #4 in a self-coaching way by <u>noticing how you are relating, communicating and impacting others around you</u> . Pay particular attention to who you are “being” (i.e., your unique qualities, traits, characteristics, gifts), not just what you are doing.
What, so far, in the way of concepts, tools, processes or strategies, will be particularly <u>helpful</u> to you in your job?	Use Question #5 as a “lead-in” to Question #6. Take time to reflect on <u>what information will be helpful</u> (i.e., immediately applicable and relevant) and why . Think about for whom it will be helpful and how it will serve them.
In what ways are you <u>applying</u> the learnings from this Roundtable in your job?	Use Question #6 to be <u>specific with yourself about how you are using what you are learning</u> . Application is the ultimate point of training, so try to get clear about what learning you are implementing, with whom and how.
What <u>messages</u> or questions do you have for the Planning Team?	Use Question #7 in the best interests of everyone – the organization, your team and you. Take advantage of this safe vehicle to <u>convey issues and concerns to the Planning Team</u> that you do not wish to raise in the larger group meeting forum.

“If you always do what you always did – you’ll always get what you always got.”
 (Unknown)

Quick Reference on Learning Journals (2)

“He who knows others is wise. He who knows himself is enlightened.” (Lao Tzu)
“There are voices which we hear in solitude, but they grow faint and inaudible as we enter into the world.” (Ralph Waldo Emerson)

Learning Journal Principles

- There is no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ way to journal
- It does not have to be ‘hard’
- Journal-writing is learnable
- Your Learning Journal is not supposed to sound ‘smart’ (though it often will!)
- There is no such thing as ‘being done’ with the insights you can gain

Benefits of Journaling

- **Deepens learning** – makes your Roundtable learning more ‘concrete’
- **Forwards action**; serves as a springboard for planning and implementing your ideas
- **Increases awareness** - of self and others – affording better communication (through listening), improved decision-making (through inclusion) and increased productivity (through inspirational leaders)
- **Businesses are looking for all the above!**

Reference Sources

Cameron, Julia. *The Artist’s Way At Work*. New York: William Morrow and Co. Inc., 1998.
Cashman, Kevin. *Leadership From the Inside Out*. Provo: Executive Excellence Publishing, 1998.
McGee-Cooper, Ann. *You Don’t Have to Go Home from Work Exhausted*. New York: Bantam, 1992.
von Oech, Roger. *A Whack on the Side of the Head*. Stamford: U.S. Games Systems Inc., 1990.

Tips and Techniques

- **Make time:** Making time to write is about finding balance in your life. Balance comes from setting proper boundaries.
- **Create space for yourself:** Your writing deserves the recognition of proper space. Make sure your surface is clean and your space dependable to do your writing.
- **Relax:** Deep breathing, guided visualization, relaxation music, aromatherapy and/or a twenty-minute nap contribute immensely to your insights.
- **Break away from your work:** Take at least 30 to 45 minute uninterrupted blocks of time for ideas to marinate in your subconscious mind (e.g., walking, gardening, doing what you enjoy).
- **Explore creative thinking methods:** Creativity guru Edward de Bono’s 36 books describe ways to access creativity on demand by utilizing techniques like lateral thinking.
- **Use technology and triggers to spark your creativity:** Computer programs (like Idea Fisher) use techniques such as mind-mapping to jump-start ideas.
- **Use both brain hemispheres:** Do not go by your ‘logical’ left brain alone when responding; access your ‘creative’ right brain as well.