Getting learning to stick

A learning transfer guide

What is learning transfer?

When a person can apply the skills and knowledge they have learnt at a training course to the world outside the classroom, this demonstrates that the learning has 'stuck'. This is called transfer of learning.

We invest lots of time and resource into learning and development as organisations and individuals, so it's really important that transfer of learning happens so everyone gets value out of their investment.

How do we support the transfer of learning?

There are a few ways that learners and line managers can help learning 'stick' and ensure transfer of learning happens.

The guide below describes some things that participants and their line manager can do to support the transfer of learning before, during and after a learning experience.

Participants
Getting the most out of your learning and development activities

Before
- Complete any required pre-work
- Prepare the space and time to participate fully
- Set the expectation that you will be unavailable while you are participating

During
- Be present
- Engage fully
- Choose your mindset
- Own your contribution

After
- Complete any provided post activities
- Plan your first 1:30 (one thing to work on for the next 30 days)
- Load into your performance development plan as a goal
- Share what you have learnt with your team and line manager
- Seek help to apply your learning or find out more if needed

Line managers
Supporting your people to get the most out of their learning and development activites

Before
- Take an interest
- Ask about the course and what's involved
- Offer support in terms of ensuring they have the time to participate fully
- Communicate the value of learning and development

During
- Ensure they have the space and time to participate fully with no interruptions

After
- Ask what they learned
- Support them to apply/practice the new skills, tools or knowledge
- Support them to share key learnings with the team
- Support them to develop a 1:30 plan
- Follow up to find out how they implemented the learning
- Discuss during 1:1s and consider creating a related development goal

Source: Diamond, K. (2023). Waikato Regional Council