

BACK-HOME APPLICATION

Personal After-Action Reviews

If at first you don't succeed, stop and think. Then try again.

And when you do succeed, take a moment to reflect on what it was that made you successful—so you can do it again.

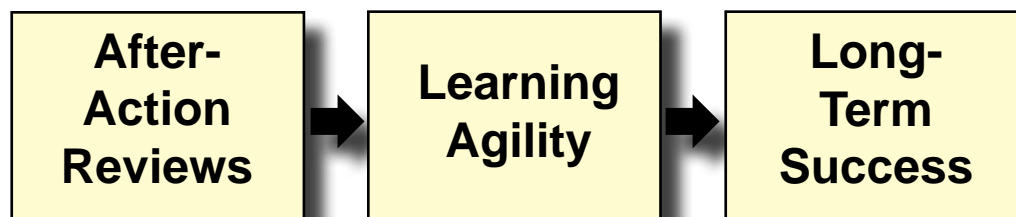
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After-action reviews are not limited to major projects. Rather, they are reviews we can do after any identifiable event. An “event” is anything that has a beginning, an end, an identifiable purpose, and at least one metric that can be used to assess performance. An event could be a key decision, an important one-on-one discussion, a group meeting, a workshop, a presentation, a report, a project hand off, a drawing, a negotiation, a finished part, an installed piece of software, a repaired piece of equipment, or even a day's work.

Before any meaningful event, write down what you expect to happen. After the event take a few minutes to ask yourself the following questions:

1. What was supposed to happen? (What was the expected outcome?)
2. What actually happened? (What was the actual outcome?)
3. Was there a difference?
 - If not, what led to the success?
 - If there was a difference, why was there a difference?
4. What role did I play in creating this outcome?
5. What have I learned for the future? What does this teach me about my strengths?

There may be times when you will think, “I don't have time to do this.” But do this at least once a day for one week, and you will conclude, “I don't have the time *not* to do this.”



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Personal After-Action Reviews

A. What is the action or event you anticipate participating in?

B. Pre-Action Expectations

1. What do you expect to happen as a result of your action or upcoming event? (Identify quantitative or qualitative measures wherever possible.)

C. After-Action Review

2. What actually happened? (What was the actual outcome?)

3. Was there a difference between what was expected and what actually happened?
— If not, what led to the success?

— If there was a difference, why was there a difference?

4. What role did I play in creating this outcome?

5. What have I learned for the future? What does this teach me about my strengths?
