

Guidance on Using the Learning in Regeneration Skills Pack in Community Learning and Development Contexts

CLD Twenty Minute Challenges

Introduction

Linked Work and Training Trust went on behalf of Scottish Centre for Regeneration to Dumfries and Galloway, Inverness and Glasgow to ask people in the CLD sector what they thought of the Skills Pack and how they might use it. To facilitate this we gave them a *Twenty Minute Challenge* and asked participants to have a look at the Skills Pack and come up with ideas of how they might use it with groups they work with and how they might use it to develop their own skills.

What follows is a set of mini-challenges which shows the discussions and dialogue that CLD workers are having on how to use the Skills Pack around Scotland. These are full of ideas that may help you think through how you might use the Learning in Regeneration Skills Pack in the future. The table summarises the themes of the challenges and which section of the Skills Pack each highlights.

If you want to find out more about this excellent resource, require a copy of the Skills Pack, wish to progress any ideas you have or are unsure how you might do this or require some more support then please contact:

learndirect scotland	08456 000 111
Scottish Centre for Regeneration	0141 419 1690

*Community Capacity Building (CCB)

*Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Twenty Minute Challenges	Theme	Learning Elements	Purpose	Sections of Learning in Regeneration Skills Pack
1	Sustainability for Organisations	Needs assessment Developing Learning Plans	CCB CPD	Section 2 Section 3
2	To help others learn	Helping others to learn Learning Styles	CCB CPD	Section 4 Section 8
3	Working with colleagues in community planning groups	Helping others to learn Coaching Continuum STEER Model	CPD	Section 8
4	For colleagues and partnerships	Deciding what you want to achieve	CPD	Section 3
5	For developing community management committees	Organisational development Developing a learning culture Developing a learning policy	CCB	Section 7
6	For reflecting and learning	Deciding what you want to achieve Meetings Needs	CPD	Section 3 Section 5
7	Agreeing the learning contract with groups	Valuing what you've achieved Reflecting on our practice Reviewing Agreeing the learning contract Setting the objectives Write a learning log	CCB	Section 6
8	For one-to-one coaching	Identifying training needs Training needs analysis One-to-one coaching	CPD	Section 2 Section 8
9	For identifying the skills within the organisation	Identifying training needs within an organisation	CCB	Section 7

Challenge 1 – Sustainability for Organisations

Learning Elements



Skills Pack

Needs assessment / skills audit
Developing learning plans



Section 2
Section 3

Task

Participants were asked to look at the Skills Pack and think about how they could encourage more organisations which haven't used it to do so.

Purpose

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
and
Community Capacity Building (CCB)

Challenge

Those involved in the challenge felt that, first of all, they would work on familiarising themselves with the Skills Pack to find out more about it, then work towards developing **learning plans** for themselves and then support other staff members to do the same. One participant said,

*"I would do a **needs assessment**. Thinking about the bits in the pack that meet the challenges the projects I am working with are facing. One of the biggest issues we have is sustainability for the projects and I can see how the Skills Pack could help a lot of them to look at this. For example, we could find out what the project needs are in relation to skills by identifying the skills people don't have but which the organisation needs. We could do this by sending out a survey to ask organisations if they feel that they've got the right skills and at the same time address sustainability issues as well".*

Case studies are another useful resource to have. We could find out how groups or projects have actually been using the Skills Pack and put those case studies on our website to demonstrate:

- what they used in the pack?
- what they learned as a result of using it?
- what were the benefits for the organisation?
- what level we used it at?
- was it used it for all members of staff?

We could possibly run an e-network and maybe some sort of discussion forum so that people can start to talk to each other about how they have used it.

Challenge 2 - To Help Others Learn

Learning Elements



Skills Pack

Helping others to learn
Learning styles



Section 8
Section 4

Task

Participants were asked to look at the Skills Pack and pick a section that they hadn't looked at before and talk about what caught their eye, was relevant to their situation and how they would make a start in helping others to learn.

Purpose

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and
Community Capacity Building (CCB)



Challenge

The participants had not previously looked at **Section 8, *Helping Others to Learn*** and were pleased to discover a section that briefs you on how **to motivate** other people to use it. One said,

“I thought this section and **Section 4** was very interesting. It suggests people **learn in different ways**”.

Another added,

“While some people find it easy just to work through the pack, I generally feel people benefit from workshops, even short ones of about 30 minutes. Since the Skills Pack is straightforward and easy to read, it would perhaps make it even more helpful for some if a worker helped them to work through it, identifying areas for improvement. We need to understand that some people can't find the motivation to sit down to do this type of activity on their own”.

Many of the participants felt that it would be quite useful to choose specific sections to adapt to specific organisations or roles. No matter what type of regeneration activity you are involved in as the Skills Pack is varied and not every bit will apply to everyone.

Challenge 3 – Working With Colleagues in Community Learning Planning Groups

Learning Elements

Helping others to learn
Coaching continuum
STEER model



Skills Pack

Section 8

Task

Participants were asked to look at the Skills Pack and think about how they would present it to other staff as a resource for them to use.

Purpose

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Challenge

One participant stated, "I started off with a couple of thoughts. Coming from a community learning perspective, I would probably target one of the **community learning planning groups**. I would try to get them away from their normal business to an interactive session on various aspects of the Skills Pack, looking for **linkages with key policies and strategies for development** and enhancement of the work".

Another participant suggested that they would approach this by sitting down with colleagues from a range of different services, for example sports, arts, not just to share information but to use the Skills Pack to talk about practice, methods of working and look at opportunities for working together on projects or some joint provision. She said,

"I thought...about starting off with one section, maybe **Section 8**, the whole thing about **helping others to learn**. It suddenly dawned on me for one of our forthcoming meetings, I could get time to do a very quick introduction to the Skills Pack and do a very quick summative background on the main sections of the Skills Pack. This could lead to doing a session on for example, the **coaching continuum in Section 8**. When you're talking about **people in the workplace**, what is it that makes them tick? What is it that motivates them? What is it that gives them the wider perspective to contribute to the team effort and the ethos of the organisation? The **STEER model** was extremely useful in how to approach coaching in the workplace".

On the whole the participants in the workshop felt that if you are looking at work practice away from service delivery then the Skills Pack is useful for starting a discussion on the different ways workers can support each other's work ethic. It demonstrated to them that by taking even just one section of the Skills Pack there is enough to start a process, this could then be can cross referenced to other sections of the Skills Pack and used and developed as appropriate.

Challenge 4 – For Colleagues and Partnerships

Learning Elements



Skills Pack

Deciding what you want to achieve

Section 3 Appendix 2

Task

Participants were asked to look at the Skills Pack and think about how they might be able to use it for professional development for people in a partnership.

Purpose

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)



Challenge

The participants decided the starting point was **Section 3, *Deciding what you want to achieve.***

They also decided to use their knowledge of the LEAP for Health Framework and link this to the Skills Pack. They identified that sometimes staff don't have a focus on where they are going, and using the LEAP framework, they decided on an outcome which was:

'to deliver an understanding of the Learning in Regeneration Skills Pack to other staff members to enable them to successfully complete their personal development plans (PDPs).'

They then identified two outcome indicators. One was that most staff would become more knowledgeable in their use of the Learning in Regeneration Skills Pack and the other that they would become more focused in what they want to achieve in their personal development plans. They decided that they would organise a partnership meeting and issue invites to all partners. On the day they would do an introduction to the Skills Pack and a specific session on the benefits of PDPs and why they need to be reviewed regularly. They would then encourage the staff to do their own personal development plan in draft and encourage them to take it back to their respective line manager and work on it on a one-to-one basis.

Our outcome indicators are both measurable in that they're quantitative and qualitative. So by using the Skills Pack in conjunction with the LEAP for Health framework they are able to organise and facilitate a professional development event for people across the partnerships and, at the same time, provide the Skills Pack as a resource for people to continue to use in the future.

Challenge 5 – For Developing Community Management Committees

Learning Elements

Organisational development
Developing a learning culture
Developing a learning policy



Skills Pack

Section 7
Appendix 2

Task

Participants were asked to look at the Skills Pack and pick a section that appealed to them in terms of helping others to develop their own organisation.

Purpose

Community Capacity Building (CCB)



Challenge

One of the participants looked at **Section 7** particularly the part which is on **organisational development** and considered it from the point of view of training and advising voluntary management committees. There is clear potential to link this with the Big Picture which is a quality framework developed by SCVO for use by voluntary sector organisations. **Section 7** enables you to help community based organisations consider what their responsibilities are,

not, especially when combined with some of the elements in the Big Picture framework. He stated, “For example, there was a grid on **page 7** which is about *Process and Responsibilities: what’s the management committee’s responsibility, what was the manager’s responsibility and what was the staff’s?* This is the sort of thing that would be interesting to use with groups.”

For management committees there is also material in this section about **developing a learning culture** and **a learning policy** with your organisation. This is very useful as well. One participant said, “We’re hoping to revamp the training that we’ve done with management committees and we’ll try and do it over the summer using a lot of different materials including the learning culture questionnaire in **Section 7**.”

Challenge 6 – For Reflecting and Learning

Learning Elements



Skills Pack

Using the Skills Framework



Section 1

Deciding what you want to achieve



Section 3

Meetings needs



Section 5

Reflecting and turning knowledge into skills or into learning



Section 6

Task

Participants were asked to look at the Skills Pack and pick a section that appealed to them, identify why it did and how it might help them to reflect on, or do, their work.

Purpose

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Challenge

One participant stated, “I was looking at it from a purely personal point of view. Having looked briefly at the **Introduction in Section 1**, I thought there were probably quite a lot of things I could improve on. However I thought the best place to start was **Section 3**, which is **deciding what you want to achieve** and that was actually quite helpful. It gives you a **structured** way to identify where your weaknesses are and how you can improve these. It also gives you some **training ideas** and an idea of how to think about the amount of resources you need to be able to undertake these, in terms of time and money which I have to say were a little bit daunting. However, when I went on to look at **Section 5, meeting needs**, the first thing it does is to take account of the fact that for many people and organisations finding the time and the money might be really difficult. So that was rather comforting”.

During the challenge the participants found the Skills Pack to be very readable and easy to whizz through. As one person put it, “I thought it was written in a way that encourages you to read on”. As the group discovered on reading through it, there are a lot of tips that you could pick up and put into practice which do not cost anything and by simply reading it, seeds were being planted in your mind. One participant discussed how she thought the idea about reflecting on things, which the group talked a little bit about, got her thinking about how few people spend time reflecting. Often this is because too many are too busy battling forward, but the general feeling was that it is important for us to think about and do this more. The idea of **reflecting and turning knowledge into skills or into learning** is a practical and useful activity to do and there is a lot of ideas and material on how to do this contained in **Section 6**.

Challenge 7 – Agreeing the Learning Contract with Groups

Learning Elements

Valuing what you've achieved
Reflecting on our practice
Reviewing
Agreeing the learning contract and
Setting the objectives
Write a learning log



Skills Pack

Section 6

Task

Participants were asked to look at the Skills Pack and pick one section that they thought would be a good place to start if you are working with community groups and organisations.

Purpose

Community Capacity Building (CCB)

Challenge

The participants decided on **Section 6: Valuing what you've achieved**. They expressed the view that they feel the need to be continually **reflecting on their practice** and **to be reviewing** the work they are undertaking with groups. This, for most, seemed to be the best place to start by going back to basics and looking at **agreeing the learning contract** and **setting the objectives**.



This section enables you to think about the whole process of working with a particular group. What was encouraging for the participants in considering this, was the realisation that some of them have been putting into practice the idea of **bite-sized chunks of learning**. The useful aspect of using the material in **Section 6** is that it shows you how to undertake regular reviews with groups and also how to **write a learning log** with your group. But the participants were careful to point out that when using the Skills Pack care would need to be taken to make sure that not too much jargon was used. As one participant put it, "The words were not words that we would use with groups that we were working with".

Challenge 8 – For One-to-one Coaching

Learning Elements

Identifying training needs
Training needs analysis
One-to-one coaching



Skills Pack

Section 2
Section 8

Task

Participants were asked to look at the Skills Pack and pick a section and think about either how it would help people personally to reflect on their work or how it would help them in their work.

Purpose

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Challenge

The participants looked at two sections; one was looking at **identifying training needs** in **Section 2**. This is obviously something workers are doing all the time and the other, was putting that into action and using **coaching** in **Section 8** to actually put the information across and **work with people on a one-to-one basis**. Those at the workshop expressed the view that they would very much like to be able to do this in their role. Depending on how flexible their role, for some it was very useful being able to work out how they could perhaps take the **training needs analysis** that little step further and work with people more on a one-to-one coaching.



Challenge 9 – Identifying the Skills in an Organisation

Learning Elements



Skills Pack

What skills do the committee have?



Section 7

Task

Participants were asked to look at the Skills Pack and pick a section which would potentially help them to work with a group that was losing its membership and a bit of its drive. Which sections would help them to think about what they are doing and where they want to go?

Purpose

Community Capacity Building (CCB)

Challenge

The participants created a scenario which outlined a community group which was identified as having quite a few problems for example:

- the group perhaps feeling unappreciated by the community
- group dynamics needing work
- committee members lacking in particular skills
- the committee unable to recruit new people
- the existing committee members feeling tired and weary

From this scene setting, the participants identified where they would start with this type of situation. The first step they felt was to find out **what skills currently exist within the committee**. They agreed that **Section 7, Appendix 2 (skills matrix)** was a good tool to use to identify organisational strengths and areas for improvement. Instead of just approaching it as a simple 'tick box' exercise, it is useful to use a practical activity to identify what people think about their level of skills. For instance, one way to do this is to ask people to stand in a line and place themselves on this line in relation to how competent they feel about a particular skill. This gets everyone participating and communicating with each other and one of the outcomes is that they get to know each other better. Once skill levels within the committee are identified then the organisational strengths can be identified and skill gaps worked on. This can help identify other people known to the committee who can bring the skills they need.