



Action Learning News

The International Foundation for
Action Learning - UK

June 2009

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Dear Reader,

Welcome to the first electronic newsletter of IFAL (The International Foundation for Action Learning) - UK. I hope that you find it a valuable resource and a great way to meet - in person and virtually - others using AL.

This issue includes an article by Albert Barker, a long time friend and colleague of Reg Revans. There are details of some exciting events to look forward to and a link to the new IFAL group on LinkedIn. There is also a special offer for you if you're an IFAL member and you haven't yet subscribed to the excellent 'Action Learning: Research and Practice'.

I look forward to meeting you at an action learning event in the very near future.

Best wishes,

Sean Cunningham
Chair
IFAL-UK

[Contact us](#) for details of how to join IFAL and how to contribute to the newsletter.

[Welcome to the IFAL group at LinkedIn](#)

quick links

[About IFAL](#)

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[IFAL members offering AL services](#)

AL Resources:

[CIPD](#)

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Events

Revans Academy

Writing It Down - Writing It Out - Writing It Up: Researching and Evaluating the Practice of Action Learning

Monday 29th June from 10.00am to 4.30pm

Venue: Manchester Business School

Fee £250

[More details...](#)

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**IFAL Workshop**

**The Secret Life of Groups (NOW FULL)**

Led by Christine Thornton

Tuesday 7th July 2009 from 11.45am to 3.30pm

Venue: Directory of Social Change, London (near Euston)

Fee £50 (£35 for IFAL members)

For details, please contact [Jan Hall](#)

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IFAL Seminar

"What is the Spirit of Action Learning?"

Tuesday 18th August at the Institute of Leadership and Management, Stowe House, Netherstowe, Lichfield, Staffs WS13 6TJ

You are invited to a one day seminar in the beautiful surroundings of Stowe House, a Grade II listed house with gardens. Using an 'Open Space' approach we will explore what is meant by Action Learning - a highly topical discussion given continuing moves towards professionalising the role of AL facilitator.

Stowe House is a few minutes' walk from Lichfield City railway station, 35 minutes' train journey from Birmingham New Street. It is also easily accessible by car.

Time: 10.30am to 4.30pm. Fee £15 plus lunch

For details, please contact [Fiona Scrase](#)

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**ALF (Action Learning for Facilitators)**

**Models of Action Learning: Exploring the Core and the Edges**

Thursday 17th September 2009 from 10.30am to 4.30pm

Venue: Directory of Social Change, London (near Euston)

ALF is a quarterly meeting organised by and for experienced AL facilitators. The format normally includes discussion of the meeting topic, followed by work in sets. For details about ALF, please contact [Janie Wilson](#)

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IFAL AGM and Annual Conference

Tuesday 27th and Wednesday 28th October 2009

Venue: The Scottish Youth Theatre, Glasgow

A date for your diary - topic to be confirmed.

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## **Henley Business School**

### **2nd International Conference**

#### **Action Learning: Assessing the Value**

Monday 29th March to Wednesday 31st March 2010

Venue: Henley Business School, Henley-on-Thames, UK

Fee £400 +VAT (early bird rate for bookings before 31st December) includes two nights' accommodation and meals.

For more details please contact [Helen James](#).

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**Is there an AL-related event which you would like to advertise here?
Please contact us with your copy.**

Events: reports

IFAL AGM and Workshop: Appreciative Inquiry and AL

The IFAL AGM on 7th January was preceded by a workshop lead by Geoff Allan, introducing and practising Appreciative Inquiry and considering its use in action learning and in other contexts. [Read the report...](#)

Article: Deeper Action Learning by Albert Barker

Professor Barker reflects on the true purpose of action learning. We miss the point, he believes, if we see it as a simple problem solving technique. albeit a highly effective one. Nor is it enough to describe it in terms of set theory and format. He argues that in "the fathomless intimacy of the set" can we truly begin to confront what it means to be better, both as individuals and as societies. [Read the full article...](#)

AL Adverts: Sets and Services

Action Learning: Research and Practice

Free online access for IFAL members

For those of you interested in reading articles from the journal Action Learning: Research and Practice, published by Routledge, we are delighted to offer IFAL members an exclusive voucher giving you access to the online content of the journal. This voucher will unlock the journal's archive for 24 hours allowing you to browse and download articles of interest. Just [visit](#) and enter the voucher code **V48HRSA0001282D**. Your 24 hours will start once you have entered the voucher (which is valid until the end of 2009).

For more information about Action Learning: Research and Practice visit www.tandf.co.uk/journals/actionlearning . Don't forget that as an IFAL member you can receive the journal 3 times a year at a special reduced annual subscription of £36 via the [web form](#).

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**Looking for a Set to join?**

If you are looking for a Set to join, or if your Set is looking for new members [SetMatch](#) is a free service which helps you to find or form a Set near you. We also have a directory of experienced AL facilitators.

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New Members for Set in Central London

I run an Action Learning Set for professional managers and board members, from the public and voluntary sectors. We have two spaces for new members to join in July, starting officially in September.

This particular Set has a range of professionals, from private healthcare, charities, the NHS and private entrepreneurs. Meeting six weekly in central London, near Euston, as a facilitated Set, this is a particularly supportive and positive group of individuals. All are at Director, CEO or Executive Board level. The longest serving member has five years' attendance - and the newest has just joined. Some previous AL experience preferred.

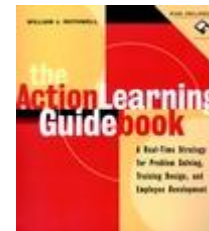
If you would like more information, please contact [Dorothy Larios](#).

**Would you like to put an advert here to look for Set members?
Would you like to advertise AL-related services? [Contact us for details.](#)**

AL Resources

The Action Learning Guidebook by William J Rothwell
published by Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer 1999

A highly practical guide absolutely packed with resources (flowcharts, checklists, questionnaires) to help with introducing and using AL in organisations. Rothwell shows through a combination of clear explanation and case studies how the use of AL helps organisations to find and resolve difficult problems, while at the same time, offering individuals and teams opportunities for professional and personal development. He addresses potential barriers to using AL and how these may be overcome. He also covers how to recognise situations appropriate for AL, much detail on evaluating AL programmes and a



thoughtful chapter on how to use an AL team to design training. The appendix includes a useful example of a 'Critical Incidents' log for facilitators. A new edition (with a CD instead of the accompanying diskette) would be very welcome.

Next Action Learning News...

Action Learning News will be issued four times a year; in March, June, September and December. **The deadline for items for the September newsletter is 20th August.**

We want this to be your newsletter, so please let us know what you think and what you would like to see included. If you would like to contribute an article, find others to form a set, or advertise an AL-related event or service please [contact us](#) for details.

**AL
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"Our real need is to look at the reality around us and say 'Why is it that I am so unable to do anything about the mess we are now in?'. And to ask 'Could I meet other people elsewhere who are also saying the same?'. We will not make progress until individuals recognise that they have difficulties in doing what they are doing. The only way to understand those difficulties is by discussing your troubles... and your inabilities with others who are ready to talk about theirs."

Reg Revans