

Virtual / Audio Action Learning

Practicalities and Tips

Pre-call setting up / briefing

- Individual calls before first meeting
- Deciding on the technology
- Positioning – *not just a conference call*
- Addressing hopes and concerns
- Kit

Contracting

- Normalise interruptions
- Verbal nods
- Confidentiality
- Focus
- Attendance
- Timing
- Silences

The process

- Be first on the line
- Ground rules – emergent
- Focus exercise
- Bidding
- Presentation
- Process review
- Break
- 2nd set
- Completion exercise

Benefits

- Expert listening
- Diversity
- Work, lead, facilitate virtually
- Carbon footprint, travel time, accommodation costs...

Challenges

- Preconceptions
- Presenter can feel isolated
- Spontaneity – interrupting
- Easier to cancel out
- Technology

Voice

- **What the voice reveals – Guardian experiment April 2007**
 - People become better lie detectors when they listen
 - When was someone lying, when telling the truth?
 - Watching television: less than 10% accuracy
 - Reading newspapers: 68% accuracy
 - Listening to radio: 73% accuracy
- **Pace, tone, volume, intonation, speed, silence, breath, content, intention, emotion**
- **Tuning in deeply**

Reflections on being a VAL facilitator

- **Prepare yourself**
- **Be present between sessions**
- **Position sessions**
- **More directive?**
- **Attend to each person**
- **Questions can seem harsher**
- **Pace can pick up**
- **Place – everyone needs to be virtual**
- **Sensing**
- **Warnings!**
- **Trust**
- **Aware of own virtual presence**
- **Creating a safe space**
- **Spontaneity**
- **Checking on silences**
- **Not necessary to have met**
- **Voice is only source of data**
- **Headset**

Conclusions

- **Different genre – not second class**
- **Set up is vital to success**
- **Global organisations – virtual future**
- **Environmental imperative**
- **Financial imperative**
- **Technological innovations**
- **Improved communications**