

Learning from experience

This group activity will encourage workers to reflect on and learn from challenges in the workplace. It will help them to understand what to do when they come across challenges in the workplace.

Workers to reflect on and learn from challenges in the workplace

Duration: 30 minutes

Resources: Set of five question cards (blue), set of answer cards (red), answer sheet and blank writing frame.

What core skills does this address?

- Self-management
- Communication skills

What Care Certificate standards does this address?

- 2.2 Describe how reflecting on their experiences has helped to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding

Introduce the activity

Explain that workers can develop their skills and knowledge by reflecting on and learning from real life situations. The process of learning from experience is called 'reflection'; and can be approach by asking yourself a set of simple questions.

Hand out the set of question (blue) and answer (red) cards.

The answer cards make up a short piece of reflective writing by a care worker in response to five questions. Ask workers to put the answer cards in the correct order to re-construct the reflective writing.

Then ask them to match the answer cards to the original question.

Ask workers to justify their decisions during the feedback discussion.

Feedback and discussion

Check that everyone has matched and sequenced the questions and answers correctly. Ask individuals to share their own examples of 'learning from experience'.

Ask them the same sequence of questions to prompt discussion.

You could use these questions to structure the discussion:

- in the case study the care worker realised that a small change in her practice meant that she could help her Mrs White enjoy more choice in her daily living. How do you promote such choices and independence in your own care work?
- have there been times when you have changed the way you work as a result of a particular incident?
- what generally do you feel helps you learn at work such as watching others, videos or practical demonstrations?
- in which areas do you feel you have learned most on the job since you started, for example how to talk to an individual who needs care, how to use equipment, how to offer personal care?

Question cards

What did you used to do?

Why did you do that?

Were you happy doing it that way?

What made you do it differently?

How have you changed the way you work?

Answer cards

When I was helping Mrs White get dressed in the morning, I used to go to her wardrobe and pick out a cardigan for her to wear.

I did it because it saved time. Mrs White was often confused in the morning. If I asked her which one she wanted, she often couldn't hear me very well.

No, I often felt that I seemed to be doing everything for her. She just sat there on her bed. And we are supposed to help residents be more independent.

One morning my team leader was with me. She took two cardigans out of the wardrobe and showed them to Mrs White for her to choose. I noticed that Mrs White smiled and soon pointed to the one she wanted.

I realise now I wasn't giving Mrs White much choice in everyday tasks like dressing. Asking her to choose gave us something to talk about and it seemed to save time too. In future I will try to involve her more in choices like this.

Learning from experience template

What did you use to do?

In the past I used to:

I was in the habit of:

Why did you do it?

I did it because:

I was trying to:

Were you happy doing it that way?

I often felt that:

I sometimes wondered if:

What made you do it differently?

I noticed that:

Someone suggested that:

How have you changed the way you now work?

I always try to:

In future I will try to: