



JAZZ NORTH
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IMPROVISATION

Jazz North - Action Learning Sets for Artists

The idea of Action Learning sets is group, peer to peer coaching, encouraging the artists to work through their own goals and issues, and support them to develop and achieve targets within their own self-reflected areas of need.

Within the current circumstances the benefits of action learning are the sense of community, positivity and working productively towards the future. These sets can take place during restrictions via zoom, and further restrictions or alterations to the current regulations would not impact on delivery.

This ensures that artists have consistent and positive future focused project to engage with during these challenging times

What is an Action Learning Set?

An 'Action Learning Set' is a group of between 5-8 people, usually peers or at a similar level of experience. The group agrees to meet regularly over a fixed period, they come together to find practical ways of addressing the 'real life' challenges they face, and to support their own learning and development.

Set members are encouraged to find their own solutions to challenges and issues through a process of questioning and discussion, combined with a balance of support and challenge from the group.

There will be some ground rules, to ensure it's a safe and supportive environment for everyone. Over time, and as trust builds, the group learns together.

The facilitator is there to help shape the work of the group. They ensure that the ground-rules are followed and that the actions and learning are clarified.

It's not a space for offering advice, or guidance - although this might happen outside of the group.

What does a set do?

A typical set meeting might last 2-3 hours and might have a structure something like this:

- 1) Check-ins - the group feeds back on progress or changes since the last meeting - this includes feeding back on commitments they made at the previous set meeting.
- 2) Members will then express their interest in sharing or presenting an issue that they are dealing with that they would like to explore.

3) Each member will present their issue to be addressed - this will be discussed, the remaining set members should ask questions to help the presenting members analyse their issue or clarify the outcomes.

They should do this by asking open ended questions. It's important that members don't offer specific advice or opinions, or pivot the conversation to their issues, the focus should stay on the presenting members problem.

4) Once the group have discussed the issue, the presenter reviews their thinking and selects one or more courses of action to address the issue, which they then commit to. In doing so they are committing to take action and to be held accountable for those actions at the next meeting.

This process can then be repeated for other members, until everyone has shared their issues. At the end of the session the group - in particular the facilitator will offer some feedback on the process - will discuss the success of the session and what has worked well.

The presenter members then implement their actions in the time before the next set, ready to feedback at the check ins at the beginning of the next session. This process of accountability and support should foster learning, development and productivity amongst the group members.

Examples of open questions for the discussion could be:

Clarification – 'Are you saying that...?'

Understanding – 'Could you explain this issue a bit more...?'

Checking implications – 'You said before that.. so If that's so then what would happen if...?'

To explore possibilities – 'What would be the impact of?' or 'Would x,y,z ... be useful'

What are the outcomes?

The general outcomes of the sets will be:

- More productivity and proactive approach from artists
- Supportive and open artist community
- More focus on future planning and momentum
- Shared knowledge allows artists to learn from 'real world' examples from their peers
- Artists have a bespoke response to their needs within the set

Dates and Times

These sessions will run bi-weekly on Monday mornings.

Set 1

Monday 25th January – 9.30-12.00

Monday 8th February – 9.30-12.00

Monday 22nd February – 9.30-12.00

Monday 8th March – 9.30-12.00

Monday 22nd March – 9.30-12.00

Tuesday 6th April – 9.30-12.00 (*please note the change of day due to Monday 5th bank holiday*)

Set 2

Monday 1st February – 9.30-12.00

Monday 15th February – 9.30-12.00

Monday 1st March – 9.30-12.00

Monday 15th March – 9.30-12.00

Monday 29th March – 9.30-12.00

Monday 12th April – 9.30-12.00