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Agile learning in the company

There is a need for further training in your company,
but

- Your needs are very specific?
- The employees should stay in the company?
- The training should be flexible in terms of time?

Agile learning as a new training concept means

- Short-term learning opportunities
- Learning directly on the job
- Short, recurring learning episodes
- Self-organized learning in a team
- **Repeated reflection on the learning experience**

for the continuous development of the competence of your employees.

You can find out more on this website. It was developed by the [HoWARP](#) project

>Download the entire website as pdf<



How it works

Preparation: The client

- defines the learning team and the learning needs
- Determines the technical and methodological support (internal or external)

Kick-Off: Introduction to the project and the procedure

Planning the stage: clarifying the next steps

Working on the learning tasks: In a team, if necessary with support

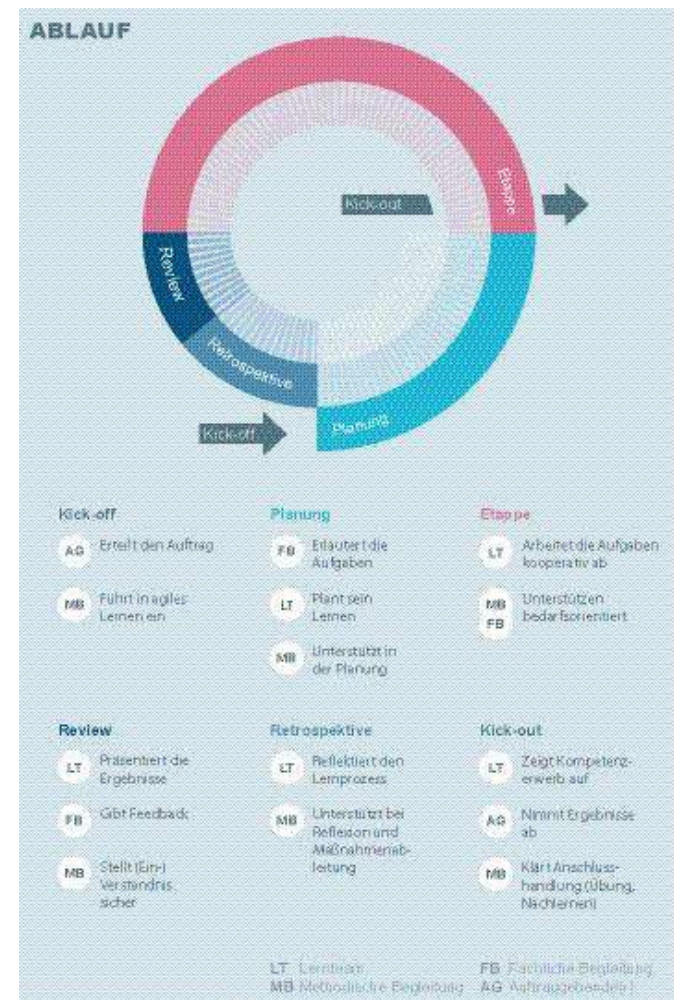
Review/evaluation: presentation of the technical results and feedback

Retrospective: evaluation of the procedure, changes if necessary

(further stages): again with planning, processing, evaluation and retrospective

Kick-Out: Presentation and acceptance of learning outcomes, conclusion

[Examples from practice](#)





The special

Agile learning in the enterprise:

- Is **needs-oriented**: relevant to the employees and the training needs in the company
- Is **action-oriented**: self-directed and uses experiences in the work context
- Is **agile**: short cycles of planning, training and reflection allow for quick adjustments
- Is **quality oriented**: Preparation and implementation with qualified support
- Is **project-oriented**: planned, structured and result-oriented like a project

Agile learning offers skills development that is truly aligned with the needs of the business and the employees.

Learning does not take place in a training centre, but in the workplace, based on problems from the job.

[Does that work for you?](#)



Background

In larger companies, there are managers who deal specifically with personnel development and further training. In small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), this is often a task of the management and is easily neglected in everyday life because the search for suitable further training is time-consuming and often unsuccessful.

Moreover, SMEs in particular have not only had good experiences with continuing education: it is rarely tailored to their needs. Conventional offers are intended to reach as many people as possible in a format that is as uniform as possible. This means that no short-term or special adaptation of content is possible. For many SMEs, however, there are only the seminars of large institutions because they cannot develop their own offers for their needs.

Poor experiences of employees with further training then often lead to it taking place even less in the future. Therefore, an approach is needed that is better suited to the needs of SMEs.

In Agile Learning

- the contents of the further training come directly from the company's needs
- learning takes place in repeated stages so that the content and pace of learning can be adapted to the needs of the company and employees at any time. In this way, the training is continuously optimized.
- the employees remain within the company during the further training.

[And this is how it works](#)



Advantages for companies

Traditional forms of learning	Agile learning
Medium and long-term planned further training offers	Short-term learning opportunities
Concentrated knowledge transfer in homogeneous groups	Short, recurring learning stages in mixed groups
Concentrated transfer of knowledge in one direction (trainer -> learner)	Repeated reflections in dialogue
off-the-job learning	Learning in everyday work situations
Predefined educational programs	Self-organized learning in a team
Selective increase of competences in the field of the educational programme	Continuous increase of competence in the working environment

[Examples from practice](#)



Checklist

Statement	Applicable	Not applicable
In my company the requirements change rapidly (e.g. due to technological innovations, new products and processes.		
Classical further training offers do not always fit the requirements in my company.		
The experience of our employees is also important for new hires		
We need continuing education programs that can quickly adapt to our needs.		
We need further training offers that provide solutions for concrete practical examples in the working environment of the employees.		
We need flexible continuing education offerings where we can put together individual elements as needed.		

If at least two of these statements apply, agile learning is interesting as a form of further training for your company

[This is how an implementation could look like in your company](#)



Experiences

Agile learning has been used with, among others:

Logos of Bayer, MAN Energy Solutions, Invivo, Knauer

Examples of competence development with Agile Learning

[Learning on real tasks](#)

[Project management for professionals](#)

[Designing work processes efficiently](#)

[leadership development](#)

[Agile learning internationally](#)

For more in-depth information on these and other examples, see [Agile Learning in the Enterprise](#)



Example 1: **Learning on real tasks**

Starting point: A department has been given a new area of responsibility that required additional knowledge and skills.

The following steps were taken:

- Interviews were held with HR, supervisors and departmental staff, and a brief job analysis was conducted.
- Narrowing down specific learning topics where there was a current need:
 - Correspondence between obsolete and current material designations
 - Spreadsheets with if/then rules and across different worksheets.
- As learning tasks, material lists and worksheets from daily work were used, which were suitable for exemplary processing.
- These learning tasks are worked on in small groups, alternating between technical input, exemplary individual work and intermediate stops with comparison of the learning results, and finally a reflection on the learning process.

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Example 2: **Project management for professionals**

Starting point: Technical specialists were to acquire additional skills on the basis of current projects. In addition to project management, this also included dealing with interfaces and overarching functions in the company, e.g. controlling, quality assurance, purchasing.

The following steps were taken:

- First, joint preparation of a study that was equally relevant for all work areas. In the process, the team learned about and used basic elements of project management (including work breakdown structures, work packages, structure and sequence planning, time and cost control).
- Afterwards, each member worked on a real project from their own area. The individual work was synchronized and compared in the intermediate stops. The team presented the respective work status to each other and gave each other collegial feedback. Coaches provided in-depth technical and didactic input as needed.
- At the end, the team jointly presented the results of the projects to their superiors - which, from a technical point of view, went far beyond what they had already done.

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Example 3: **Designing work processes efficiently**

In the starting point: A recently formed division with young, committed employees was to handle several large customer projects per year, with a volume of up to several million euros. The most important processes in the workflow were clarified at the start of the project, but there was also a need for development in the

- *Clarification of the starting conditions ("on-site inspection")*
- *Bringing forward processing steps to avoid peak loads before project completion ("frontloading")*
- *Saving the experience gained at the end of the project ("Lessons Learned")*
- *Introduction and use of agile methods*

Procedure:

- First process optimisation procedure tested in stages on internal processes
- Evaluation of experience and development of a commonly accepted approach
- Application to current, success-critical customer projects

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Example 4: **Further training to become a manager**

Starting point: After a company merger, specialists are to become managers: Conducting staff appraisals, organising staff selection and development, helping to shape organisational development, etc.

The following steps were taken:

- Identified the most important learning areas together with the management and prioritised them with the group
- With a part of the coming leaders the most important new competences worked out: Conflict skills, group facilitation, communication methods.
- Appropriate learning occasions (new structure for a work meeting, setting up a digital exchange platform) used for learning
- For these learning occasions, tasks and intermediate products (e.g. paper on meeting rules, schedule) are set and worked on in stages.
- A managing director evaluates the work results in the reviews.

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Example 5: **Agile learning internationally**

In an international medium-sized company, new hardware and software was to be introduced simultaneously in several countries for the quality assurance of current and new products. For this purpose, technical specialists were to receive identical comprehensive training at all participating locations.

The roll-out took place in the following steps:

- Qualification of professional attendants at the main location in 6 learning stages within 2 weeks
- Local trainings over one week at the participating locations, professionally supervised by the previously trained facilitators
- Repeated, work-accompanying consolidation over several weeks
- Supervision and monitoring of the entire training by an expert in agile learning

(Entnommen aus: https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007%2F978-3-662-62013-7_3.pdf)

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Implementation

Companies can and should plan and prepare agile learning together with experienced facilitators. They are needed as development partners before the start and during the short learning cycles in order to

- To define the training needs together with the companions
- Provide learning spaces and time at the workplace
- Exchange experiences and practical knowledge
- To evaluate the result

You are welcome to get [assistance with](#) this!



Preparation

To prepare organizationally for agile learning, companies must:

- Provide a learning space for their employees
- Provide specialist tasks from the work context
- Offer professional / content-related support if required
- In larger companies: ensure coordination between departments (e.g. specialist departments and HR department)

You are welcome to get [assistance with](#) this!



Support

The following partners of the [HoWARP](#) project in Germany, the Netherlands and Austria are available for queries and for support in the implementation of your agile learning project



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Further information

The HoWARP project

This website comes from the project "Action-Oriented Continuing Education in the Workplace" (HoWARP). The project works on innovative, agile forms of continuing education in the workplace and is co-financed by the EU within the framework of the "Erasmus +" programme.

The project objectives are

- Development of a practice-oriented combination of the approaches "action-oriented learning" and "agile learning" for further vocational training
- Workplace-integrated learning in the company, involving the trainers / instructors / supervisors
- Orientation towards direct applicability in companies

In sum: the creation of a procedural standard to which educational institutions can orient themselves.

Duration 01.09.2019 - 31.08.2022

[Project website](#)

[Project partner](#)

You can find more detailed descriptions and further examples of agile learning at

< [Longmuß, Korge, Bauer, Höhne: Agile Learning in the Enterprise](#)>.