

Action Research	On How Eugene Fernandez uses the framework to help organisations with Leadership Development.	26th November 06
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A major challenge within organisations is to equip the workforce with the skills and behaviours that are necessary for sustaining a dynamic organisation. Melbourne Business School has been assisting organisations to achieve such behavioural change for over 50 years,

One methodology that we are beginning to see more applications for is referred to as 'Action Research'.

"Action Research is about getting people to solve problems that don't have a simple answer," explains Mt Eliza Executive Education Associate Program Director, Eugene Fernandez.

"This is a system that works because it gets people from various groups across an organisation to start to talk and engage with one another. It breaks down barriers," he explains.

"Our experience is that Action Research enables organisations to develop a more resilient, committed and innovative culture that dynamically responds to change."

"What we do is get groups of senior managers together and ask them what their burning issues and problems are," says Eugene.

"In Action Research we say to managers that they need to build themselves into a community of learners in order to question and challenge organisational sacred cows."

"In the end, the group Designs, Operates, Observes and Reflects on the problem, called a DOOR", says Eugene.

As a methodology, it is an extension of individual 'Action Learning' which Melbourne Business School is renowned for.

A simple definition of Action Research is "The way groups of people can organise the conditions under which they can learn from their own experiences and make this experience accessible to others" (McTaggart, 1991).

Eugene has been using this methodology to great effect with a number of organisations that have previously made long-term investments in learning and development without achieving the behavioural change that they were seeking.

Rather than introducing new content, the Action Research approach allows participants to reflect on the learning experiences that they have had previously (both formal learning and their own real life experiences). Through this reflection, participants are able to identify previous barriers,

A key element in the Action Research process is the formation of project teams that are focused on projects that deal with a real organisational issue or intractable problem. These projects give the teams the energy they need to sustain a long-term process of change.

To discuss how Action Research may benefit your organisation's learning and development approach, please contact Eugene Fernandez on 0423 669 531