

Title: **Walking as a tool for reflective practice**

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Session Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:

- Appreciate how walking and learning can be a useful tool for encouraging reflective practice.
- Undertake a walking and learning activity to reflect on a situation they have experienced, particularly one that went “wrong”.
- Reflect on how they could use this type of activity in their own practice.
- Understand how a walking and learning activity can be helpful in providing a structure to safely explore issues of failure and create positive change.
- Build relationships and network with colleagues
- Consider how walking and learning could be used within their own practice and institutional context.

Session Outline

Engaging in reflective practice is a key activity of educational developers and the staff and students we support. In the rapidly changing HE landscape, it is even more important to use reflection and review to consider different ways of working, make sense of the projects that we are working on and understand what works, as well as what fails. However, engaging in true, critical reflection may not always be easy or come naturally. Undertaking a walking and learning activity can provide a useful, structured approach for scaffolding that reflection and enable educational developers to work more effectively. It can provide a safe space to explore challenging issues outside of one’s “normal” working environment.

This session will explore the concept of walking and learning and how it can be used in a variety of settings. Participants will be introduced to the theory behind the approach and then engage in a structured activity on their own practice (Ingold and Vergunst (2008), Oppezzo and Schwartz (2014), Zundel (2013). The activity will encourage participants to focus on a failure or difficult part of their practice, to explore how walking and learning can engender reflection on “what goes wrong”; often the most difficult, yet arguably most important part of our work. Walking and learning is particularly suited to exploring more challenging issues as it takes participants quite literally out of their usual working environment and provides a safe space, both physically and mentally, to consider issues

from an alternative perspective (Senge, 1994). The bounded nature of the activity helps participants reach a conclusion and way forward.

Participants will be given a set of questions to explore during the walking activity and then asked to reflect on the usefulness of the exercise. This will foster collaboration and networking activities. Walking and learning can be usefully included into a variety of different practice settings. This session will give examples of where walking and learning has been introduced in institutions and enable participants to explore ideas for their own practice.

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

Overview of theory and walking and learning approach (15 minutes)

Introduction to the walking and learning activity and pairings (5 minutes)

Walking and learning activity in pairs (45 minutes)

Reflection and feedback on the activity (15 minutes)

Close and follow-ups (10 minutes).

References

Ingold, Tim and Lee Vergunst (2008) (eds) *Ways of walking: ethnography and practice on foot* -

Oppezzo, Marily and Daniel L. Schwartz (2014) 'Give Your Ideas Some Legs: The Positive Effect of Walking on Creative Thinking', *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition* 40 (4), 1142–1152. Available online at <https://www.apa.org/pubs/journals/releases/xlm-a0036577.pdf>

Senge, P. et. al. (1994) *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning Organization*

Zundel, Mike (2013) 'Walking to learn', *Management learning* (1350-5076), 44 (2), 109-126.