

RULES FOR PLAYING ***'THE LEARNING GAME'***

Learning and development play an important role in our society. All sorts of changes take place rapidly. People will need to develop themselves continually to keep up with these changes. Nowadays lifetime-learning is required in all areas of life.

The intent of this game is to contribute to improving the opportunities and experiences associated with learning and development. These include formal study (courses or training-events), online learning as well as learning in the workplace and everyday life.

The main focus in the game is the person who is learning or developing. For reasons of simplicity we will simply use the words 'learning', 'student' and 'study' throughout.

The starting point in the game is the five factors that play a role in creating an optimal learning-experience:

1. **Learning motivation** (24 cards) : Why do I study? i.e.: 'to become (more) skilled in a certain area', 'to earn (more) money', 'to gain recognition'.
2. **Approaches to learning** (19 cards): How do I prefer to learn? Or: What sort of learning process do I use? i.e.: 'I learn by doing it myself', 'I prefer to learn in a group', 'I learn by reading about a subject'.
3. **Learning skills** (51 cards): What skills do I need to be able to learn effectively? To what extent do I already possess these skills? i.e.: 'distinguish between the significant and the trivial', 'make a connection between the subjects I am studying and my (work) situation'.
A distinction can be made between skills that are particularly associated with personal learning (card numbers 1-30) and skills associated specifically with learning in groups (card numbers 31-51) Some skills apply to both. You can, of course, also make your own categories of cards depending on the situation in which you want to apply these skills.
4. **Learning conditions** (41 cards): What conditions and what support do I need to learn in as pleasant a way as possible? To what extent are these needs met? i.e.: 'structured and comprehensible educational material', 'relevant and challenging assignments'.
A distinction can be made between conditions solely relating to me as a person and for which I am responsible (card numbers 1-7), and those conditions which are (partly) dependent on my environment (card numbers 8-41).
5. **Learning obstacles** (27 cards): Who or what is preventing me from learning? i.e.: 'I do not dare to ask for help', 'I feel insecure when faced with new things to learn', 'other people don't approve of me studying'.
A distinction can be made between obstacles associated with you as an individual (numbers 1-24) and those that are mainly caused by your environment (numbers 25-27).

Depending on the context, greater or lesser emphasis can be laid on one or more of these factors, on its own or in combination with others.

The Learning Game consists in total of 162 cards. There is also a blank card for each category for any additions you wish to make. You will also find a small bag containing 60 coloured counters, that can be used with some of the methods to show any agreements or differences among players.

The Learning Game is a useful aid for any person who wants to gain insight into how their own learning process works and who or what play an important role in the process.

It is also suitable for facilitators working with, or responsible for, the learning process of others i.e.: teachers, trainers, coaches, social workers and managers.

WAYS OF APPLYING THE GAME

The Learning Game can be applied in a number of ways. Use the following overview to choose a method that best suits the specific situation in which you are working.

Version for a single participant (either for use in coaching or self-development)

This version is designed to offer insight into all of the factors that can influence your own learning process or that of a person you are coaching. You may apply the game in (amongst other contexts):

- Individual learning problems: What causes them and how can they be overcome?
- Personal coaching: How can the tutor facilitate as smooth a learning process as possible?
- Work situations: Who or what is needed to apply learning in practice?
- Choosing a context for learning: What is best-suited to the specific learning profile (the combination of learning motivation, preferred approaches to learning, learning skills, learning conditions and learning obstacles) of the person in question?

Learning Method 1 is appropriate for all of these situations. This method can also be applied when tutoring a learner.

Versions for groups or teams

As a facilitator you may want to open a conversation about the learning processes within your target group. One option is to use the game to assess a particular study, course or training session and to find out where there is room for improvement. If you are struggling to identify where to look for improvements, you can make a start using Method 5: 'Learning Conditions'. On the basis of the outcome of that activity you can then decide whether and what other components of *The Learning Game* you might usefully apply in your specific situation.

In the applications mentioned below the *basic* method of play is always provided for tutors and the *alternative version* for learners.

All methods aim to offer insight into the potential learning process of the target group and/or aim to look for possible improvements in that process.

Suggested group or team applications of *The Learning Game* include:

1. To enable tutors to share the various forms of learning motivation they identify within their target group and the effect of this motivation. Method 2 is most appropriate for this application.
If you want pupils, students or employees to become more aware of their learning motivation, use the alternative version of Method 2.

2. To enable tutors to share the preferred approaches to learning, apparent within their target group and explore the extent to which they take these into account in their learning design. Method 3 is most appropriate for this application. If you want pupils, students or employees to become more aware of the approaches to learning that work best for them, use the alternative version of Method 3.
3. To enable tutors to share the learning skills their target group needs in order to learn successfully, use method 4. If you want pupils, students or employees to become more aware of the learning skills that are a prerequisite to their own successful learning and of the extent to which they possess these skills, use the alternative version of Method 4.
4. To enable tutors to share the learning conditions their target group needs to learn successfully and explore whether or not these conditions are adequately met, use Method 5. If you want pupils, students or employees to become more aware of the learning conditions that are important for successful learning to them individually and the extent to which these needs are met, use the alternative version of Method 5.
5. To enable tutors to share the learning obstacles that they come across within their target group and to explore how they can handle these as effectively as possible, use Method 6. If you want pupils, students or employees to become more aware of their own learning obstacles and how they can cope with them, use the alternative version of Method 6.

DIRECTIONS FOR PLAYING THE GAME

1. We recommended you try out the game on your own before using it with others so that you can experience the way the game works yourself and anticipate the likely impact it may have. This will also make it easier to assess what level of support or coaching might be needed for the individual or the group to gain most from the experience.
2. Always ask participants to explain, in their own words, what meaning they attach to the description on each card. This is important to prevent any misunderstandings.
3. You may choose to vary the number of cards that the players select, as you see fit. The optimal number of cards depends on the amount of time available and the amount of information you want to lay out on the table.
4. In each situation in which the game is applied, consider whether or not there are descriptions on any of the cards that are inappropriate for the context. If so, discard these cards before starting the game.
5. By way of preparation you may find it useful to consider the various factors that play a part in the learning process, and the way they influence one another. This should help give you a sense of the kinds of things that go well or less well in the learning process.

For example:

- What elements of a given learning situation are most pronounced?
 - What elements of a given learning situation are least pronounced?
 - Are there any elements that are interconnected and hence influence one another? If so, which are they? What impact do they have?
 - What conclusions can you draw? Which parts of the game are most appropriate for the application for which you are using it?
6. The maximum number of participants per set of cards is six. When working with a larger group, we recommended you split them into subgroups, in which case you will require further sets of cards.

Method 1 'YOUR OWN LEARNING PROCESS'

Purposes

1. To offer an insight into those factors that influence the learning process.
2. To investigate ways of increasing enjoyment of learning and/or of improving the learning results.

Prior conditions

1. The player is looking for the opportunity to reflect on his or her learning process.
2. Number of participants: 1 (+ coach).
3. Required: the complete set of cards.
4. Estimated playing time: circa 20 minutes per part.

Procedure

1. Discuss the aim of playing this game with your student. This method can be applied to:
 - Individual learning problems: What causes them and how can they be overcome?
 - Personal coaching: How can the tutor facilitate as smooth a learning process as possible?
 - Work situations: Who or what is needed to apply learning in practice?
 - Choosing a context for learning: What is best-suited to the specific learning profile (the combination of learning motivation, preferred approaches to learning, learning skills, learning conditions and learning obstacles) of the person in question?
2. Discuss, with your student, which parts of the game are most appropriate in their situation. If you are not quite sure where to start, you might begin with the 'learning conditions'. These often give a good insight into the whole learning process, which will help you then decide which parts to work with subsequently.
3. The procedure for the various parts of the game is as follows:
 - a. **Learning motivation.** Select the learning motives that are most relevant to you. Discuss the results. Potential insights include:
 - What is your most important motivation for learning?

- Have you identified learning motives that you were not previously aware of? If so, what are they? What effect do they have?
 - How strong is your learning motivation? Give a rating on a scale of 1-10. What is the importance of the level of your motivation?
- b. **Approaches to learning.** Select those approaches to learning that best represent how you find it easiest to learn. Discuss the results. Potential insights include:
- Which of these approaches to learning are used in your (current or planned) study, course or training session? What impact do they have?
 - Which of these approaches to learning are missing (partially or entirely) in your study, course or training session? What effect would it have, were they to be used?
- c. **Learning skills.** Discuss what you would like to focus on with your tutor: personal learning (numbers 1-30), learning in groups (numbers 31-51) or both. Select those learning skills that you need in order to be able to learn successfully. Form two rows: one row with learning skills that you already possess and one row with learning skills that you only partially possess or do not have at all. Discuss the results. Potential insights include:
- What strikes you when you review the list in general?
 - From which of your learning skills do you profit the most? In what way?
 - Which of the learning skills that you only partially possess gives you the most trouble when studying? In what way?
 - How could you improve any learning skills that you do not currently master?
 - What could you do to restrict the impact of any partial or missing skills?
- d. **Learning conditions.** Select those conditions that are a prerequisite to enjoyable learning for you. Form two rows: one row with learning conditions that are met in the study, course or training session, and one row for those where this is not (or is only partially) the case. Discuss the results. Potential insights include:
- What effect does each of the learning conditions you require have on your learning process?
 - For each of the learning conditions that is not met, what effect does this have on your learning process. Can you influence this learning condition yourself? If so, discuss with your tutor what exactly you can do to improve it.
 - Which of the learning conditions has the most positive effect on your learning process?
 - Which of the learning conditions that is not being met (in whole or in part) has the most restraining influence on your learning process? How can this be dealt with as quickly as possible?
- e. **Learning obstacles.** Select those learning obstacles that cause you trouble. Discuss each one in turn. Potential insights include:
- In which situations does this learning obstacle appear?
 - How does this learning obstacle effect you (and, if appropriate, your learning group)?
 - Has keeping up this learning obstacle any advantages? If so, what?
 - How might you tackle this learning obstacle? Who or what could support you in this?

4. Final review. Potential insights include:
 - Do the various elements of this game interact together in your situation? If so, in what way?
 - What conclusions can you draw?
 - What improvements should you make?
 - Are you going to take action as a result of the outcomes of applying this game? If so, what steps are you going to take? What's your timetable for completing them?

General remarks

1. If you are planning to use further elements of the game, you may find it useful to keep all of the selected cards on the table. Place the cards belonging to each element together. You will find it easier to see any connections.
2. How this version of the game maps out depends on the particular situation of the learner. The tutor plays an important supporting role.
3. This version of the game can also be played from the point of view as a tutor. In which case the focus becomes the group of learners for which the tutor is responsible.

Method 2 'LEARNING MOTIVATION'

Purpose

To offer an insight into the learning motivation of a specific group of learners and explore the consequences of their motivation (or lack of it) for their learning process.

Prior conditions

1. The players are all tutors and work with the same group of learners.
2. Number of participants: 2-6.
3. Required: all of the 'learning motivation' cards and the counters.
4. Estimated playing time: 30-60 minutes.

Procedure

1. Place the cards face up on the table. Write down a maximum of nine motives for learning that your target group have collectively.
2. Each of the players selects a colour of the counters. Indicate the cards you have chosen by putting your counters on them. Also place a counter in front of you so the other players know with which colour you are playing. The cards without a counter should be discarded.
3. Discuss the results. Potential insights include:
 - Which learning motivation is most common? What effect does it have on the learning process?
 - Are there many differences in learning motivation between members of the group? What effect does this have?

- Does the way the study, course or training-session has been designed match the kind of motivation the learners have articulated? If not, how might you improve it?

4. What conclusions can you draw?

General remark

This version of the game can also be used with colleagues who work with a different learner group or in another organisation. The purpose of the game then becomes one of sharing experiences.

Alternative version

This version can also be used with players who are in a similar learning situation. The purpose is to offer more insight into individual's own learning motivation and the effect that this has. If using this alternative version then simply adjust the earlier instructions in the following ways:

- At step 3 you can choose to discuss the result for each person or each card in turn. Potential insights include:
 1. What strikes you in general?
 2. Which learning motivation is the most important to you? What effect does this have on your attitude towards learning?
 3. Are there any motives for learning that you have now identified and of which you were unaware previously? What effect does this have?
 4. Are there big differences in the way you all see learning motivation? What effect does this have?
 5. Are there any motives for learning that you feel are not being taken adequately into account in your learning design? If so, what are they?
- At step 4 you may introduce the following extra question: Do you have any suggestions for improvement with regards to the design of this learning? If so, what are they?

Method 3 'APPROACHES TO LEARNING'

Purpose

To identify approaches to learning that match as closely as possible to the needs of the target group.

Prior conditions

1. The players should all be tutors and work with the same target group.
5. Number of participants: 2-6.
6. Required: all of the cards 'approaches to learning' and the counters.
7. Estimated playing time: 30-60 minutes.

Procedure

1. Place the cards face up on the table. Make sure that all of the descriptions can be read and that there is at least 1 cm of space in between the cards. Write

down a maximum of nine approaches to learning that you feel are best suited for the people you educate. Make a note against each if you feel you apply this approach to an adequate level for your target group.

2. Each of the players selects a colour of the counters. Indicate the cards you have chosen by putting your counters on them. Place a counter in the middle of the card in the case of an approach to learning that you already apply sufficiently. On the cards describing approaches to learning that you apply too rarely, place the counter on the side of the card. Also place a counter in front of you so the other players know with which colour you are playing. The cards without a counter should be discarded.
3. Discuss the results on a card-by-card basis. Possible insights include:
 - What effect does making insufficient use of certain approaches to learning have on the student, the group or yourself?
 - Why don't you use certain approaches to learning enough? Can you think of opportunities to so increase their use? Share your suggestions.General questions:
 - What are your general impressions?
 - Is the variation in approaches to learning with this specific target group significant or not? What effect does this have?
4. What conclusions can you draw?

General remark

This method can also be used with colleagues who work with different target groups or in other organisations. If this is the case, at step 3 discuss the conclusions each of you has reached, in turn, rather than discussing each approach to learning.

Alternative version

This method can also be used with players who are in the same learning situation. It is designed to offer more insight into their preferred approaches to learning. Adjust the instructions given above in the following ways:

- At step 1: write down a maximum of nine approaches to learning that you prefer. Note, for each, whether or not you feel sufficient use of this approach is made in the course that you follow.
- At step 2: Place a counter in the middle of the card representing an approach to learning that is used sufficiently often. For the cards with approaches where this is not the case, place a counter on the side of the card.
- At step 3 you can discuss the results per person or per card. Possible insights include:
 - What strikes you as a whole?
 - Which approach to learning do you prefer?
 - What would be the effect if those approaches to learning, that you feel are missing now, were to be applied?
 - Is there an approach to learning that is being used but that does not suit you? What effect does this have on you?
- At step 4 you may introduce an extra question: Do you have any suggestions for improvement for this course, study or training session? If so, what are they?

Method 4 'LEARNING SKILLS'

Purpose

To offer an insight into the learning skills a target group needs in order to be able to learn successfully.

Prior conditions

1. The players should all be tutors working with the same target group.
2. Number of participants: 2-6.
3. Required: all of the cards 'learning skills' and the counters.
4. Estimated playing time: 30-60 minutes.

Procedure

1. Discuss the aspect on which you want to focus: personal learning or learning in groups. For the former, use cards numbers 1 up to 30; for the latter use cards numbers 31 up to 51. You may prefer to use the first 30 cards followed by the next 20.
2. Place the cards face up on the table. Make sure that all of the descriptions can be read and that there is at least 1 cm of space in between the cards. Write down a maximum of 9 learning skills that you feel are essential for your target group.
Note against each skill the extent to which your students already possess it.
3. Each of the players selects a colour of the counters. Indicate the cards you have chosen by putting your counters on them. Place a counter in the middle of each card in the case of a learning skill that your students possess. For the cards representing learning skills for which this is not the case, place a counter on the side of the card. Also place a counter in front of you so the other players know the colour with which you are playing. The cards without a counter should be discarded.
4. Discuss the results for each learning skill in turn. Possible insights include:
 - What is the effect, on the learning process of your target group, of the learning skills that they currently possess?
 - What is the effect, on the learning process of your target group, of those learning skills that they do not (adequately) possess? What might you do to make any improvements to this or to mitigate any negative consequences?
 - Are there many differences in the target group, in terms of the extent to which each of them possesses the required skills? If so, what effect does this have? Could these differences be exploited in a positive way?
5. What conclusions can you draw?

General remark

This method can also be used with colleagues who work with different target groups or in other organisations. If this is the case, at step 3, discuss the results for each person in turn, rather than for each learning skill.

Alternative version

This method can also be used with players who are in the same learning situation. The objective is to encourage a conversation between players about the learning skills that they need in order to learn successfully and the extent to which they possess them. Adjust the instructions above in the following ways:

- At step 2 write down a maximum of 9 learning skills that you already possess. Write down a maximum of 9 learning skills that you feel are essential to learn successfully. Note against each skill the extent to which you already possess it.
- At step 3 discuss the results for each person in turn. Possible insights include:
 - From which of your current learning skills do you profit the most when studying? In what way?
 - Which of the learning skills that you don't currently master gives you the most trouble when studying? In what way?
 - What could you do to mitigate the negative effects of the skills you don't have? Share your suggestions.
 - What strikes you as a whole?

Method 5 'LEARNING CONDITIONS'

Purpose

To improve those learning conditions most supportive of effective learning.

Prior conditions

1. The players should all be tutors and work with the same target group.
2. Number of participants: 2-6.
3. Required: all of the 'learning conditions' cards and the counters.
4. Estimated playing time: 30-60 minutes.

Procedure

1. Place the cards face up on the table. Make sure that all of the descriptions can be read and that there is at least 1 cm of space in between the cards. Write down a maximum of 9 learning conditions that you find important if your target group is to learn effectively.
Note for each condition the extent to which it is met in the learning situation for which you are responsible.
2. Each of the players selects a colour of the counters. Indicate the cards you have chosen by putting your counters on them. Place a counter in the middle of each card representing a learning condition that is met. For those cards representing learning conditions that are not (entirely) met, place a counter on the side of the

card. Also place a counter in front of you so the other players know with which colour you are playing. The cards without a counter should be discarded.

3. Discuss the results for each learning condition. Possible insights include:
 - What is the effect, of those learning conditions that are currently met, on the learning process of your target group?
 - What is the effect of those learning conditions that are not currently met, on the learning process of your target group? Discuss what you could do to make any improvements.
 - What current existing learning condition has the most positive effect on the learning process?
 - What learning condition that is not currently met (completely), is the greatest constraint on the learning process? How can this be addressed as soon as possible?
4. What conclusions can you draw?

General remarks

1. This method can also be used with colleagues who work with different target groups or in other organisations. If this is the case, at step 3 discuss the results for each person in turn, instead of for each learning skill.
2. The learning conditions are a good starting point for scrutinizing the learning process in a specific situation. Important conclusions can be drawn from this about other factors (learning motivation, learning skills, approaches to learning and learning obstacles) that play a role during the learning process. If you spend time examining the results of the learning conditions, you will find it easier to identify which other parts of *The Learning Game* to apply.

Alternative version

This method can also be used with players who are in the same learning situation. The objective is to encourage conversation between learners about the learning conditions that are required for effective learning. Adjust the instructions above in the following ways:

- At step 1: write down a maximum of 9 learning conditions that are a prerequisite for effective learning. Note whether and to what extent each is met in your learning situation.
- At step 3: discuss the results for each learning condition in turn. Possible insights include:
 - What is the effect on your learning process of learning conditions that are met?
 - What is the effect on your learning process of learning conditions that are not (entirely) met. Can you influence these learning conditions yourself? If so, discuss with one another what you can do to improve them.
 - What existing learning condition has the most positive effect on your learning process?
 - What learning condition that is not currently met (completely) is the greatest constraint on your learning process? How can you address this as soon as possible?

- At step 4 possible insights include:
 - How would you describe the learning climate in terms of weather (i.e. sunny, cloudy, misty, frosty)?
 - Do you expect your learning situation to change? If so, how? How could these changes be described in terms of a weather forecast?
 - Do you have any suggestions for improvements for your tutor(s)? If so, what are they?

Method 6 'LEARNING OBSTACLES'

Purposes

1. To raise awareness of the learning obstacles amongst members of your target group.
2. To share suggestions for dealing with learning obstacles amongst members of your target group.

Prior conditions

1. The players should all be tutors and work with the same target group.
2. Number of participants: 2-6.
3. Required: all of the cards 'learning obstacles' and the counters.
4. Estimated playing time: 30-60 minutes.

Procedure

1. Place the cards face up on the table. Write down a maximum of 9 learning obstacles that you know bother your students.
2. Each of the players selects a colour of counters. Indicate the cards you have chosen by putting your counters on them. Also place a counter in front of you so the other players know with which colour you are playing. The cards without a counter should be discarded.
3. Discuss the result for each learning obstacle in turn. Possible insights include:
 - Which of your students' learning obstacles, troubles you the most?
 - In what situations or in which students does this learning obstacle appear to be most troublesome?
 - What effect does this learning obstacle have on the student, the learning group or you, the tutor?
 - How can you deal with this learning obstacle? Who or what could support you in this? Share your suggestions.

General remark

This method can also be used with colleagues who work with different target groups or in other organisations. If this is the case, at step 3 discuss the results for each person in turn instead of for each learning obstacle.

Alternative version

This method can also be used with players who are in the same learning situation. The objective is to encourage conversation between students about their learning obstacles and what they can do about them. Adjust the instructions above in the following ways:

- At step 1: write down the learning obstacles that you experience. Which one of them bothers you the most?
- At step 3: You may discuss the results for each person in turn. Possible insights include:
 - In what situation or in working with which individual do you experience this learning obstacle?
 - What effect does this learning obstacle have on you and, by extension, the group?
 - Does this learning obstacle have any advantages? If so, what are they?
 - How can you deal with this learning obstacle? Who or what could support you in this? Share your suggestions.

OTHER CARDGAMES

The Learning Game forms a series together with *The Feedback Game*, *The Development Game*, *The Motivation Game*, *The Values Game*, *The Feelings Game* and *The Quotations Game*. More information you can find at: www.kwaliteitenspel.nl

Distribution

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