



Facilitate collective feedback

The challenge

As soon as a project is over, people tend to turn their attention to the next thing on the list. Yet, this attitude limits considerably what we can learn from our experiences. Indeed, we learn from what happens to us whether we want to or not. However, observation shows that many of our conclusions are erroneous! And for good reason: we usually have only a partial view of the situation. Moreover, we tend to reconstruct our memories to boost our self image. A good way to avoid these traps is to discuss what happened with those involved and identify the lessons that can be drawn from the experience.

Build a collective story

Narrative techniques are extremely effective in comparing individual perceptions and arriving at shared conclusions.

1

Collect the facts

Each person involved naturally has a partial view of the facts. Combining these viewpoints gives a **more reliable and complete picture of what actually happened over the course of the project.**

- What was the problem or objective? How was this articulated?
- How did events unfold? What was the starting point? What thinking and initiatives were conducted? Where did things get stuck? What were the intermediate results and inflection points? etc.
- What was the outcome? What are the various repercussions?

2

Recreate the experience

Once the basic facts have been established, discussing how the concerned individuals actually felt about the project can help **identify the dynamics that led to the final outcome.** Indeed, understanding individual feelings and perceptions sheds light on the dilemmas encountered as well as the **human and political dimensions.**

- How did each individual experience the various episodes? When did they feel discouraged, enthused, doubtful, etc.?
- What were the most remarkable moments, collectively speaking? What types of feelings did people have at those times?
- What small notable things happened to various individuals? Did someone get help from a third party to resolve a problem? Did somebody demonstrate a useful reflex or do or say something particularly motivating or discouraging at a certain point? Etc.

3

Share key lessons

Discussing key lessons is a good way to help people actively **transform the experience into a learning opportunity.** Comparing different perspectives also leads to more reliable **conclusions.**

- If we had to do it over, what would we do differently? e.g.: Communicate more intensively, treat the conflict differently, look before we leap, etc.
- Individually speaking, what three important points could be drawn from this experience?
- If asked by colleagues facing a similar situation, what would be the first piece of advice we would give them?