

Spiral of Inquiry

Spiral of inquiry had been developed in British Columbia, Canada, by Judy Halbert and Linda Kaser and the network they have supported (Network of Inquiry and Innovation). As with all inquiry methods this is a tool, which support practitioners to evaluate and adapt their practice driven by the learning needs of the young people they work with. It requires that practitioners ask questions of one's practice, which may be simple but can lead to profound changes in practice.

"Inquiry involves design, discipline and a critical focus on evidence that matters"

Halbert & Kaser (2013, p9)

References

Halbert, J. & Kaser, L. (2013) Spirals of Inquiry – for equity and quality: The BC Principals & Vice Principal Association : Vancouver

The Spirals of Inquiry network has a website which can be used for further information, <http://noii.ca/spiral-of-inquiry/>

The steps of the Spirals of Inquiry process are as follows;

2. Focusing

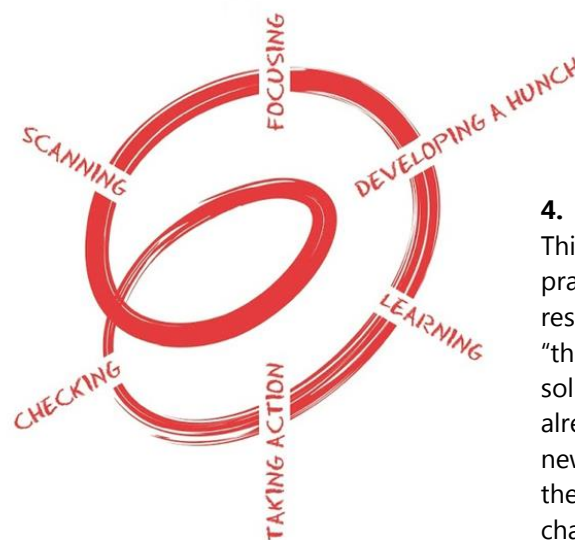
This phase is about gaining greater clarity about the situation for learners before deciding on a course of action. This involves listening to all the stakeholders in the situation to understand the differing perspectives before committing to actions.

3. Developing a hunch

Developing a hunch involves reflecting on the ways in which professional practice may be contributing to the situation for the learners. It requires the team to stand back and take stock of the key driver in the situation for learners.

1. Scanning

Involves the collecting a variety of rich evidence and considering useful information in key areas of learning.



4. New professional learning

This is the phase that advocates that practitioners should engage with research, as Halbert and Kaser state "the best innovation education solutions often draw on what is already known to develop something new that is consistent with sound theory and evidence" (p55). There are challenges within this phase which include ensuring that all practitioners have sufficient time to engage in new learning and that the professional learning is linked directly to their context with their learners in mind.

6. Checking

The final phase of checking is the time to check that the difference made was 'good'. The inquiry can only be thought of as 'good' if learner outcomes have improved. The key is to have a general agreement ahead of time about what evidence to look for and what

5. Taking action

Taking action is the phase that everyone has been itching to get to. It is the jumping across the knowing-doing gap and trying out new practice with plenty of opportunity built in for dialogue, observation, reflection and the opportunity to take risks and learn from mistakes.