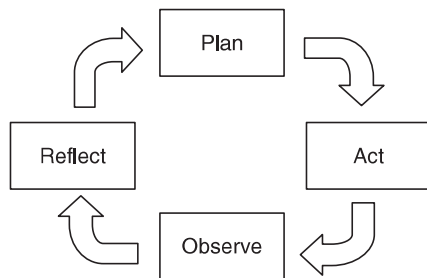


In a nutshell

This feature covers the essentials of sharing your knowledge with others and will help you to think about applying it to your own practice. This resource can be photocopied and used as a revision tool or a prompt for discussion with your peers.

The theory of action research

Lewin (1946) advocated the use of action research as a way of improving your own professional practice. This involves identifying an area of your teaching that you feel could be improved and then trying something new. Once you have put the new idea into practice you then reflect on how it went before making any modifications necessary and then experimenting again. The focus is on continuous improvement and so the underpinning idea is that action research is a cyclical approach that goes through repeated stages as illustrated below.



Source: Lewin (1946).

Putting it into practice

PLANNING

Firstly, identify an area of your professional practice that you would like to research. This could be something that you feel could be improved or alternatively it could be something new that you have to teach.

ACTING

Put together a plan for your chosen area. Think about how to improve the selected area and think about how you are going to measure the impact.

OBSERVING

Put in place the plan and see how it alters your teaching (this may be a positive or a negative change).

REFLECTING

Think about how the action research went – did it make a positive impact or negative impact?

STARTING AGAIN

Start the cycle again by making further improvements and seeing how they alter your professional practice.