

AAR Questions

An After Action Review is typically a 1½ - 2 hour structured session, in which four fundamental questions are addressed. These are shown below with some additional prompts. It can help to distribute questions ahead of the meeting to get participants to prepare replies; also to solicit inputs from those who cannot make the session.

What should have happened?

- Were the aims and objectives of the project clear and understood?
- Were the timescales, budgets and resources realistic?
- How well did contributors feel they understood their individual responsibilities?

What actually happened?

What went right?

- Did the various activities and tasks go according to plan?
- How good was the communication with stakeholders throughout the project?
- Overall, was the project considered a success?
- What are you particularly proud of having achieved?

What went wrong (or could have gone better)?

- Consider tasks, communications, outcomes as indicated above
- What didn't meet expectations?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the final deliverables?

Why were there differences (from planned and actual)?

- What factors contributed to success or failure in various tasks?

What lessons can we take forward?

- About this type of project in general – things we can learn from or improve
- About resourcing – the mix of skills
- About the tasks – technology, training, knowledge/information management
- About acquiring new skills or highlighting training needs
- About good practice
- About our approach or the project methodology used
- About anything else you can think of !