ISTQB_CT-ATLaS_Hands-On-Exercise

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Document Control

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1 General

1.1 Purpose

ATLaS contains a hands-on learning objective which require candidates to practice the skills covered in the syllabus and body of knowledge.

Candidates participating in accredited training will practice the skills as part of the training course. Candidates self-studying to get certified need to organize the practice themselves.

This document suggests how self-studying candidates can approach this.

1.2 Scope

The suggestions in this document cover ATLaS-HO-1.2.1 (H2) Given a quality-related problem, provide quality assistance using one or more of the four important skills (change leadership, quality coaching, facilitation, and training).

1.3 References

[1] ISTQB_CT-ATLaS_Syllabus_v2.0

[2] ISTQB_CT-ATLaS_Body-of-Knowledge_v2.0

1.4 Document Responsibility

General responsibility of this document is under the ISTQB ATLaS Task Force.

2 Hands on exercises for coaching and facilitation

To self-practice change leadership, quality coaching, facilitation or training abilities setting up role play situations in peer groups can be helpful. In this exercise someone is set to help others solve a problem by means of coaching or facilitation. The people being helped are called clients in the context of this exercise.

2.1 Preparation Phase

1. For this exercise you need a group of at least 3 people. If there are more than 9 people, it is better to split them into smaller groups.
2. Select one person to act as a client who needs help from a coach or facilitator. Alternatively, you can select a small group of clients for a more challenging exercise. The client(s) need to pick a scenario, where a coach or facilitator is needed (see client role below).
3. Based on the scenario, decide whether the mode of intervention shall be coaching or facilitation (see role and checklists below). Accordingly select one person to act as a coach or facilitator.
4. At least one person should remain to act as an observer. They observe the interaction between client(s) and the coach or facilitator (see role and checklists below).

2.2 Interaction Phase

The interaction between client(s) and the coach or facilitator takes place within a timebox of 30 minutes. Observers do not intervene during this interaction but take notes using the checklist provided.

2.3 Feedback Phase

After the interaction observers and clients give feedback:

- Was the interaction effective?
- Based on the checklist: Did the coach or facilitator act within the assigned role?
- What could the coach or facilitator do differently to be more effective?
- Would the observers recommend a different choice of interaction?
  - Coaching vs. Facilitation
  - Interaction with a group vs. Interaction with individuals

When giving feedback, remember:

- Feedback is a gift
- If possible, provide concrete examples
- Giving feedback, say what you observed and how you interpret it. Do not present your conclusions as absolute truths.

After the feedback phase the coach/facilitator may share their own reflections.

This exercise should be repeated, and outcomes compared.

2.4 Roles

Client(s): The people being coached. They pick a scenario and invent a story where they are facing a related challenge and need help from a coach/facilitator. The challenge should not be too difficult as the focus of the exercise is on coaching/facilitation and not on solving difficult problems.

Coach/Facilitator: The person helping the clients through coaching or facilitation. He or she may do some quick research for ideas/practices that might help to solve the problem but should keep in mind that coaching or facilitation is not about delivering an instant solution.

Observer(s): The people observing the interaction between clients and coach/facilitator. They do not intervene during the interaction but take notes using the checklist provided. After the interaction the observers share their findings with the group and give feedback.

3 Checklists

Here are some checklists that can be used when observing and providing feedback on the important skills:

- Coaching
- Facilitation

3.1 Coaching Checklist

When coaching the candidate should:

- Listen actively to understand the problem.
- Help the coachee (i.e., the people being coached) to clarify their needs and the challenge they are facing.
- Help the coachee to become aware of their values, fears, and any limiting beliefs they might hold.
- Activate resources such as motivation, skills, personal strengths of the coachee
- Support the coachee in finding a solution and putting it into practice.
- Alternatively, if a solution does not present itself readily, engage in a collaborative dialogue to reflect on the problem and gain a deeper understanding and insight.
- Offer guidance and feedback.
- Foster trust by showing empathy and appreciation and by being authentic.
- Create a safe space for the coachee where it becomes possible to explore their fundamental values and limiting beliefs.

When coaching the candidate should not

- Jump to conclusions.
- Discourage from trying out improvement ideas.
- Do most of the talking.
- Trivialize the problem.
- Give detailed instructions.
- Solve the problem for the clients.
- Take over responsibilities of the clients.

3.2 Facilitation Checklist

When facilitating the candidate should:

- Outline the process the group will go through and introduce tools to be used.
- Help the clients to clarify the challenge they are facing and their different perspectives.
- Foster trust by showing empathy and appreciation and by being authentic.
- Guide discussions and collaboration between clients.
- Observe group dynamics and balance participation between clients (e.g., make room for more reticent group members).

- Pace the group so participants stay aware of the allocated timebox.
- Help clients to deal with conflicts and make difficult decisions.
- If a consensus cannot be reached, help the clients to better understand the differences dividing them.

When facilitating the candidate should not:

- Jump to conclusions before understanding the problem.
- Analyze too deeply before fostering an experiment.
- Trivialize the problem.
- Hide own motivations and observations if relevant.
- Take sides in case of conflicts between clients.
- Take over responsibilities of the clients.