## Tool 8-3. A Continuum of Learning Interventions

| Learning Intervention | Description or Explanation | Sample Applications | Appropriate (✓) | Feasible (✓) |
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| Natural experience | The individual or group is placed in the natural environment and learns through real-life trial-and-error events. You might also label this "life experience." | Internship, practicum assignment to a new team or taskforce, temporary job placement, duty rotation | | |
| Experiential learning | Very similar to natural experience. However, the individual or group also participates in structured debriefing sessions to reflect on the experiences encountered and draws conclusions or plans new courses of action. | Practicum, structured and mentored internship, field placement with coaching, on-the-job practice and work sessions, and supervised transitional work settings following training | | |
| On-the-job training (informal) | The individual learner assumes an apprenticeship role while working in an operational setting. Co-workers and supervisors informally provide guidance as needed on how to perform. | Apprenticeship program, job placement with orientation and coaching on request, ordinary job placement with instructions to co-workers to "help out" | | |
| Structured-on-the-job training (planned) | Similar to on-the-job training except that the operational work environment has been systematically organized and prepared for learning. The individual "learner" has a roadmap and learning plans to acquire work-relevant skills and knowledge with the assistance of trained lead workers, sometimes called structured-on-the-job trainers (SOJT). Self-evaluation and SOJT forms are usually built into the program. | Structured-on-the-job program, structured mentoring program for newly hired technical personnel, model learn-and-work environments | | |
| Simulation | The individual performs as she or he would in real life. The setting, however, is an artificial creation designed to resemble the natural environment. Simulations range from very realistic (high fidelity) to symbolic and abstract (low fidelity). In all simulations for learning, regardless of degree of fidelity, the critical elements of the job must be represented along with realistic interactions and outcomes. | Physically realistic simulators, virtual reality environments, psychologically realistic settings, in-basket exercises, war games, virtual labs, assessment centers | | |
| Role play | The individual assumes roles other than his or her own real ones or remains the same person but is thrust into settings that are different from the current one. In these novel situations, the individual acts out feelings, reactions, and responses to various scenarios or events. | Psychodramas; sociodramas; group role play for sales, counseling, or management; practice in handling social interactions of all kinds | | |

| Learning Intervention | Description or Explanation | Sample Applications | Appropriate (✓) | Feasible (✓) |
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| Laboratory training | This is similar to simulation training except that the laboratory does not necessarily re-create the work environment. The individual can practice a broad range of work activities, but not necessarily in normal job sequence. The laboratory offers a practice environment and set of experiences where error can be exploited as a powerful opportunity for learning. | Science experimentation, repair practice, hardware or software adaptation and troubleshooting, welding practice, medical experimentation and practice | | |
| Classroom training (live or virtual) | The individual acquires skills and knowledge through guidance from an instructor in a formal group setting removed from the workplace. With interactive distance learning, webinars and webcasts, the individual may be at the work site, but the session is not usually an integrated part of ongoing work activities. | Seminars, workshops, lectures, demonstrations, Internet-based classes, video and audio conferences, webinars, webcasts | | |
| Self-study | The individual acquires skills and knowledge through self-learning, guided by structured materials ranging from print to highly sophisticated electronic systems. | Highly directive programmed instruction, computer-based modules, web-based virtual labs, CD-ROM/DVD learning modules, embedded learning objects, web explorations | | |