Enacting the action research cycle involves not only the pre-step of articulating the context and purpose of the project and the main steps of constructing, planning action, taking action and evaluating, but also reflecting on content, process and premise issues in how the action research cycles are undertaken in the present tense. Both the action research and meta-learning are undertaken by individuals, teams, between teams in the interdepartmental groups and between organizations. The rigour of your inquiry is demonstrated by how you expose these activities to critique, and how your conclusions are supported by your development of theory or usable knowledge. We will now turn to how you as the action researcher can engage in knowing in action.

**Recommended reading**


Access a selection of author videos, encyclopaedia entries and recommended reading on this topic at www.uk.sagepub.com/coghlannandbrannick

**EXERCISE 1.1**

Enacting the action research cycles (from Figure 1.2)

1. Select an issue or problem that you have worked on in your team (or are working on).
2. What is the context of this issue? Why is it important? What are the stakes involved?
3. Describe how the issue was constructed. How did you decide that an intervention was needed or wanted, what was wrong, what the causes were? How did you deal with different meanings or constructions in the team?
4. What action was *planned*?
5. What happened when the action was *implemented*? What were the outcomes, both intended and unintended?
6. How did the team *review* the outcomes?
7. What was *then* constructed, planned, implemented, etc.?
8. What is the *meta-learning* from this exercise?

   (a) As you look back on this, what insights do you have about the *content* of the issue? Did the initial constructing fit? Had you named the right issue? What have you learned about this issue in your business or organization?

   (b) What insights do you have about process? How did the team work on the issue? What have you learned about how to plan, take action and evaluate?

   (c) Was there any challenge to existing premises of how you thought about things, anything in the event that challenged the team to ask different questions, see the issue in terms of a different category of issue or problem, and so on?