

## **Advising in Practice**

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Following an initial review of the skills of language advising (Kelly, 1996; Riley, 1997; Mozzon-McPherson, 2001; Rubin, 2007), this workshop will provide the opportunity for a practical exploration of such skills. In particular, it will focus on specific language learning scenarios and will enable participants to develop their skills of listening and communicating in a one-to-one advising dialogue.

One of the roles of a language learning adviser/counsellor is to build rapport, ask questions, listen and elicit the learner's language experience and self-analysis of needs, barriers, and facilitate the discovery of potential pathways to deal with identified language needs.

Advisers need to be skilled in leading a learning conversation. This conversation invites the learner to reflect on his/her own experience with a situation, issue or problem, gather information from a variety of sources, sort through options and decide on a course action, plan and implement it. When advising is approached in this way, it is the adviser's questioning skills that extend and enhance the learner's thinking processes. The learner does not become dependent; they develop independent critical thinking and, having come up with their own answers, they are empowered and learn to take responsibility for their actions.

Formal advising has a structure. It involves an agreement between adviser and learner, a clear framework for advising and a learning programme of support. In a formal advising relationship, there is discussion of expectations, goals and the process to be used. The frequency and duration of contact is agreed and ground-rules are established.

By the end of this session participants will have:

- acquired an insight into advising skills
- explored and practised some of the skills of active listening
- become more aware of how language can act as a pedagogic tool
- develop strategies for on-going language learning support