The lessons management process: collection and analysis

Speed read

- There are four steps in the lessons management process: collection, analysis, implementation and monitoring and review.
- The first step, collection, gathers information to inform step two, analysis.
- A key goal of lessons analysis is to determine the primary causes (or root causes) of the observations and insights.

Key points

One approach to synthesising observations, analysing for insights and identifying lessons is the OILL process (observation – insight – lesson identified – lesson learned).
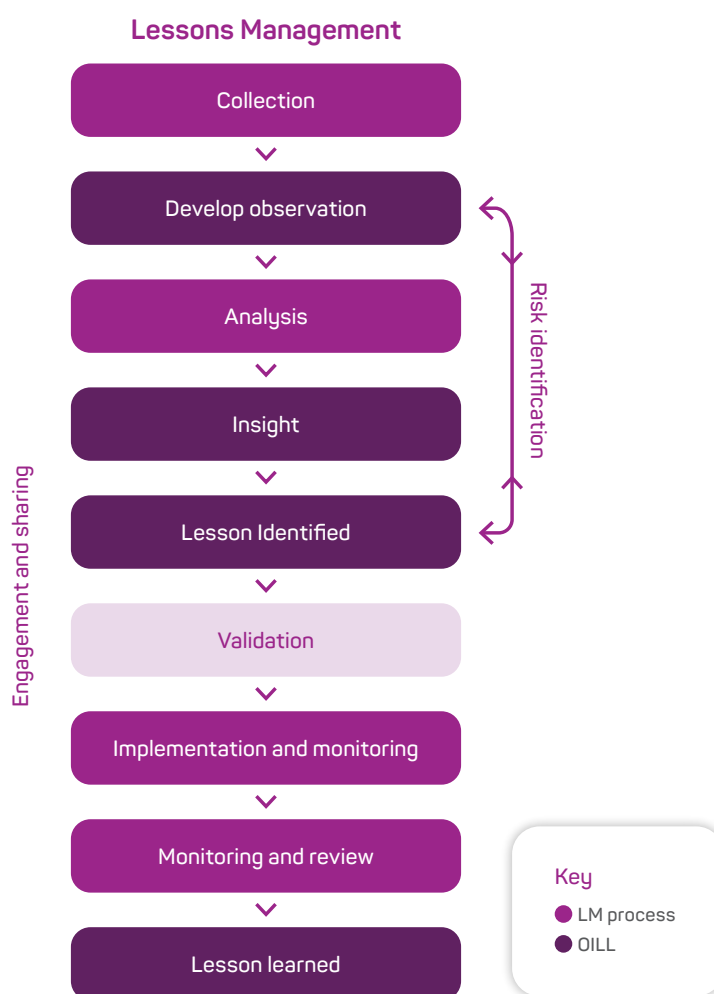
Lessons Management

Collection

Develop observation

Analysis

Insight

Lesson Identified

Validation

Implementation and monitoring

Monitoring and review

Lesson learned

Risk identification

Engagement and sharing

Key
- LM process
- OILL

Figure 1: Elements of a lessons management process

Observations are the basic building block of the lessons process. Good observations are essential to being able to identify appropriate, quality lessons. Common observation collection activities include interviews, debriefs, facilitated learning analysis/ learning reviews, post-event analysis, post-operation review after action reviews (AARs).

The structure of an observation consists of the following parts:

1. **Who?**
   - Who did the observation come from?
   - What is their position, role or agency?
   - Do not use names. This is not about identifying, blaming or shaming individuals.

2. **When?**
   - This gives context of the circumstances and how far in the past it occurred. It also allows comparison with other experiences from the same event.
   - What was the date?
   - Did the activity have a name?

3. **Where?**
   - Where did the activity occur?
   - Was it in specific terrain, an operations centre, as part of a project or during an exercise?
   - This allows comparison with other experiences in the same sort of location or environment.

4. **What?**
   - This is the detail of what occurred, what was seen, heard or felt and the impacts (i.e. This is what happened and was observed, and it had this impact and/or result).

5. **Suggested solutions?**
   - Participants may have suggested solutions on what has been or could be done to address the issue, or they may have already implemented change.

Analysis involves the review of the collected data to identify trends or themes that an organisation may use to define its learning opportunities. This informs possible solutions, strategy development and implementation options.

Analysis includes, as a minimum:
   - data coding (single or multiple codes)
   - grouping similarly themed observations to develop an insight (or support an existing insight)
   - analysing observations within an insight to identify, the root cause
   - verifying insights with subject matter experts
   - developing lessons identified and prioritising and/or authorising outcomes.

Take action

- Explore the Lessons Management Webinar Series
- Reflect on the lessons management case studies

More information

- *Lessons Management Handbook* (AIDR 2019)
- Lessons Management Collection highlights key resources, information and examples to guide a consistent approach to lessons management in Australia

This brief is part of the quick guide series produced by the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience (AIDR). Quick guides for other handbooks in the collection can be found on the knowledge hub: knowledge.aidr.org.au

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