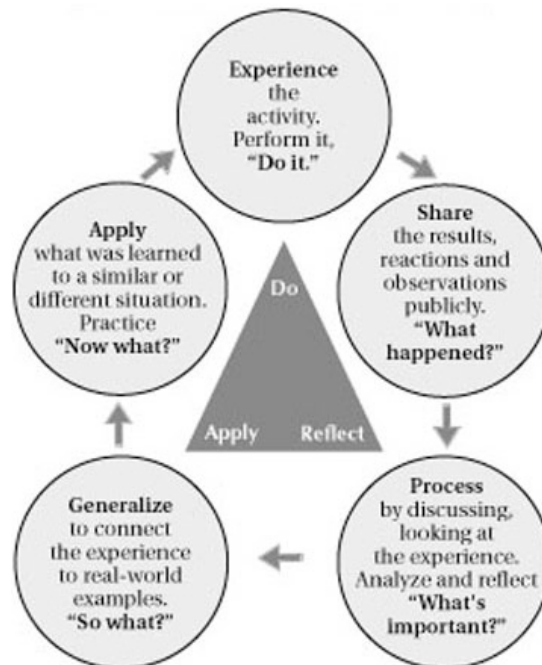




Learning by Doing

Youths learn best by being involved in the learning process, thinking about what was learned and then how to apply it to real life situations. This “doing” method is usually more successful than “showing” or “telling” youth how to do something. Phrases like experiential learning or authentic learning are also used to describe the learning by doing model. To help youths get the most out of learning experiences follow these steps:

Experiential Learning Model



1. Experience – do an activity. For example, making a veggie sandwich teaches youth in a hands-on way how to prepare a healthy snack or meal.
2. Share – discuss the experience by describing what happened. For example, one of the process questions after making the sandwich is “What was it like to build your sandwich?”
3. Process – discuss the experience to identify common themes. For example, “Why is it good for your body to eat a veggies or a sandwich?”
4. Generalize – identify principles that can be applied in real-life situations. For example, “What can you do to make sure you eat veggies every day?”
5. Apply – use the principles to apply what was learned to another situation. For example, “What types of veggies will you choose to eat at school? At home? Other places.”

Completing the entire process helps youths gain meaning from what they learn and do. As the educator, you can help them better understand new experiences and what they have learned.

Adapted from “Learning by Doing” (LG783), University of Missouri Extension: Missouri 4-H Center for Youth Development.