

social care
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Welcome

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Aim of the workshop

To explore the components that make up a learning organisation and the extent to which they promote better outcomes for service users.

The origins of the learning organisation

The 'brain' metaphor of the transmission of knowledge generated the concept of a 'learning organisation'.

What is a learning organisation?

‘Learning organisations aim to create a climate of continuous learning and improvement at individual, group and organisational levels.’

Christine Doyle, 2003

Characteristics of social care learning organisations

- Organisational structure
- Organisational culture
- Information systems
- Human resource practices
- Leadership

Organisational structure

Learning organisations:

- have managerial hierarchies that enhance opportunities for employee, carer and user involvement in the organisation.
- are empowered to make relevant decisions.
- have structures that support teamwork and strong relations both up and across the organisation.
- enable networking across organisational and hierarchical boundaries both internally and externally.

Organisational culture

Learning organisations have:

- strong cultures that promote openness, creativity, and experimentation among members
- encourage members to acquire, process and share information, nurture innovation and provide the freedom to try new things, to risk failure and to learn from mistakes.

Information systems

Learning organisations:

- require information systems that improve and support practice and that move beyond those used in traditional organisations where information is generally used for control purposes.

Human resource practices

- People are recognised as the creators and users of organisational learning.
- Accordingly, human resource management focuses on provision and support of individual learning.
- Appraisal and reward systems are concerned with measuring long-term performance and with promoting the acquisition and sharing of new skills and knowledge.

Leadership

- Like most interventions aimed at securing significant organisational improvement, organisational learning depends heavily on effective leadership.
- Leaders ensure that organisations and work groups have the capacity to learn, change and develop. They model openness, risk-taking, reflection, vision and empathy.

Food for thought

- To what extent do you think these components already exist in organisations that you relate to?
- What is helpful?
- What are the obstacles?
- How does the service user benefit from relating to learning organisations?

Using the Learning organisation cards

- Let's audit our organisations using the 'The informed service user and carer' cards.

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