

knowledge about learning organisations

Organisational culture (d)

Learning organisations have strong cultures that promote openness, creativity, and experimentation among members. They 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.

Research and new evidence incorporated into practice – questions

- How are research findings known about in the organisation?
- How are such findings used in day-to-day practice? How are such findings cited in policy documents?
- Is there research mindedness for all? That is, is there a culture within the organisation of review, assess and change?
- Are time and resources allowed for individuals to keep up to date with new evidence?
- Is information easily accessible? Who has access to the Internet, subscription to journals, new policy guidance, legislation etc?
- How far are service users involved in the review process?

Illustrative examples

- One local authority holds half-day seminars on specific research findings, which are also open to other agencies, including the voluntary sector. This makes them accessible to a wide range of workers.
- Another local authority 'gives' staff reading days to concentrate on specific areas. The learning is discussed in supervision and shared with the team at team meetings.
- Some organisations have attempted to set up service user forums but often without much success. Further thought needs to be given to the most effective ways of involving users in the review process and learning from places that are doing it well.
- SCIE is currently exploring ways of ensuring greater access to research-based materials produced by the Centre for Evidence-Based Social Services (CEBSS), Research in Practice (RiP) and Making Research Count (MRC).

Useful reference

- Lewis, J. (2002) 'Research and development in social care: governance and good practice', *Research and Policy Planning*, vol 20, no 1, pp 3-10.

Websites

www.rip.org.uk

www.ex.ac.uk/cebss/

www.uea.ac.uk/swk/research/mrc

Use the information and questions on the cards to think about a place of work as a learning organisation.