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knowledge about learning organisations

Information systems (a)

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. 'Transformational change' requires more sophisticated information systems that facilitate rapid acquisition, processing and sharing of rich, complex information which enables effective knowledge management.

Good internal and external communication – questions

- What are the channels of communication? Written, oral, notice boards, newsletters, briefings etc. Do they work and how do you know?
- Is there any written strategy for communication within the organisation?
- Are there information systems in place which need reviewing and changing?
- Do the information systems really help and support the development of practice and improve the standards of services?
- Are the IT systems compatible throughout the organisation?

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Illustrative examples
- Carers and service users are increasingly using the Internet as a source of information about social care services. Some local authorities have easy access to the Internet for all citizens as a high priority for performance.
- Many care workers have little or no access to the Internet and are not aware of the free websites, such as SCIE's.
- Information systems need to be explained to all new staff, particularly newly qualified workers, and should be part of the induction process.

Useful reference
- Watson, M. (1998) 'Making sense of the internet', London: National Institute for Social Work.

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