

Editorial

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A very short edition this time around, just like the English summer (wherever that has got to!). The main meat in this number is an article which talks about the development of a programme of professional development which is intended to provide support to guided learning rooted in the practitioner's experience.

The SCiO survey said that we as a group/community or whatever we are have an interest in communicating what is going on and sharing new books of interest etc. Let's see if we can keep the momentum going?

Dave and Gordon

SCiO Development Day - all members welcome

The next SCiO development day is 10am, Sunday 4th July 10am till 4pm at Manchester Business School – Penthouse (10th floor).

Please let me know if you plan to attend and any topics that you want to discuss.

I have received the following from Tony Koryki, who plans to attend the development day and would like to use his slot on the day in this way:

Tony Korycki of BT has been working for 3 years as part of the Chartered Quality Institute, in the Deming Special Interest Group chaired by Alan Clark, to develop a "Model of Sustainable Organisation", which builds upon Deming's work. MoSO is accessible at: <http://www.thecqi.org/MoSO>

and its purpose is to stimulate useful questions leading to new thinking and action, which build and embed sustained success.

The Deming SIG group is seeking input to the validation of MoSO, so Tony would like to run a development meeting session, using a couple of discussion groups and a simple survey. SCiO has particular expertise so could offer valuable insight to a number of specific areas of MoSO, for example the System of Profound Knowledge, Systems Thinking and Transformation.

This session would take about an hour, if you the participants are up for contributing in this way.

Jane Searles

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Sunday 4th
July 2010 ,
members only
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Manchester
Business
School**

SCiO Professional Development Programme

“so what have you learnt that you didn’t already know from work?” the reply was “Nothing”.

A different model of professional development

A professional who was just finishing a master’s course at one of the UK’s leading business schools, was asked “so what have you learnt that you didn’t already know from work?” the reply was “Nothing”. This was a mature student who was trying to use an academic course for professional development. One year, a lot of work and several thousand pounds later and the result was.... nothing.

Part of the problem here is that in management, academe almost always follows practice. The academics and business schools learn from practitioners, so whilst they are usually in a position to teach what is common practice, they rarely have access to the leading thinking that can help experienced practitioners develop beyond that.

For professionals working in an organisation it is usually difficult to think outside the constraints of “normal” practice for their organisation. Developing new skills requires an environment that supports new thinking and new practice.

So, the SCiO Professional Development Programme is being designed to address these issues by providing a learner led environment where learners can work together to develop their skills supported by a range of experienced practitioners. Development, by professionals for professionals. It is explicitly about developing professional practice in systems approaches and in dealing with organisational issues. It isn’t and isn’t supposed to be another academic qualification.

Development structure

The SCiO Professional Development Programme has been designed to provide practitioners who wish to understand, analyse, transform or design organisations with the skills they need. The programme is aimed at both change agents internal to organisations and external consultants. The programme is designed to give participants a thorough grounding in a set of systems based methodologies for tackling a wide range of organisational issues in a holistic

way.

The structure of the programme is modular and most modules are workplace based, providing immediate benefits to both the learner and their organisation. Learners work in learning sets to address real issues that their organisation faces in a supported and structured way.

Development modules are built around three themes and three levels.

The three themes are:

1. Technical Organisational Analysis & Design-Skills
2. “Craft” Intervention Skills
3. Systems Theory

The three levels are intended to take practitioners through a structured approach to their professional development. This begins with working with case material at level 1, through working on their own material within their own work situation at level 2, to working with their colleagues at an enterprise level i.e. beyond the boundary of their immediate control at level 3. Each level involves progressively higher levels of risk and responsibility and engagement with the learner’s organisation.

At level 1, topics are general in nature. At level 2 they tend to be more specific with both function specific topics and topics focused on particular systems discipline.

Theory

The theory theme will be dealt with by learners working through in their learning groups a set of basic systems and cybernetic theories, finding real life examples as evidence that they can recognise them and counter examples (looks like an example but isn’t – evidence that they can tell difference as well as similarity). Example to be peer and coach reviewed.

.....continued on p3

Organisation Analysis & Design Skills	Intervention Skills
Viable System Model – Structures 1	Gathering information 1 & 2
Viable System Model – Dynamics 1	Recursive thinking 1 – recognising levels
System Dynamics 1 & 2	Transparency & Trust 1
Soft Systems 1 & 2	Selling systems approaches
Viable Systems Model 2 – Organisational analysis	Theory & Evidence 1 – boundaries & assumptions
Scenario Planning L2	Reflective Practice
Circles of Need L2	Transposing Theory 1 – Yo-yo model
Systems Minefield L2	Influencing 1
OMM L2	OMM support 1
IT & Organisation L2	Coaching 1
Finance & Organisation L2	Ethics & recursion 1
Risk Management L2	Facilitation 1
Operations Management L2	Gathering information 2 – accommodating multiple perspectives
HR L2	Recursive thinking 2 – operating at recursive levels
Performance Management L2	Theory & Evidence 2 – evidenced recursive reporting
Strategic Risk L2	Transparency & Trust 2 – partnership working
Strategy L2	Transposing Theory 2 – Practice -> theory -> practice
Governance L2	Influencing 2 – confrontation analysis & mediation
Change Management L2	Covert operations
Project Management L2	
Marketing L2	
Organisation Design L3	
Enterprise intervention L3	
Multi-agency intervention L3	
Multi-agency design L3	
Wicked Problems L3	

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A Genuinely Learner-Centred Approach

Level 1 technical modules are / will be open group courses.

Intervention skills and level 2 & 3 technical skills modules will be based around learning sets with one or more coaches. A module will only be run when a group of learners has organised themselves and requested it be run. Groups can be formed from individuals from a range of organisations and backgrounds, or used as an internal development programme for a single organisation.

The coaches will:

- Provide learning resources including taught material where appropriate
- support the learners in their learning process
- support learners in their application of the approach to their work
- provide a part of the assessment of each learner.

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The Systems Minefield: a two day course for the systemically confused.

From page 3....

Learners will be responsible for:

their own learning

supporting the learning of other group members

providing part of the assessment of other learners in the group including indicative future learning needs

providing feedback on the support given on the programme

Client organisations will where possible / appropriate provide part of the assessment of individual learners and will be able to directly engage with the learning group at the end of the module to fully understand the implications of the work.

The aim of a learning set is to discover the big issues that each topic raises for the learners in their workplace and how they can use these in their professional work.

Individual learners will agree a learning contract with their group and the coaches. The contract sets down the learning objectives the learner needs to achieve in that module. The module is complete when the group have achieved their objectives, or when it has been agreed that the objectives are no longer appropriate and need to

be changed.

The assessment of individual learners within a module will be done by weighted assessment from the module coach, their peers and where possible / practicable, their client organisation.

Learners will be accredited on a 6 level scale:

- needs further training in technique
- can do the job with direct supervision / support
- can do the job without support
- can supervise others
- can train others to do the job
- can develop new practice in this area

A full brochure is currently being prepared. For more information on either the range of modules currently planned, or if you are interested on acting as a learning coach in those areas where you have particular skills, contact Penny Marrington, Patrick Hoverstadt, (patrick@fractal-consulting.com), Jane Searles. (jane.searles@btinternet.com)

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Forthcoming Meetings

Programme for SCiO Open Meeting on Mon. 5th July'10 at MBS

10- 4.30 in The Penthouse MBS West

Session 1: Jon Walker & Angela Espanola

Radical approaches to building a community utilising the VSM

This website for 'The Village', near Limerick, Ireland, encourages new community members to become part of a thriving and innovative community in Ireland's only ecovillage. Jon and Angela are regular visitors of this developing community and have helped them in their development.

The village is a not-for-profit organisation developing an alternative model for sustainable living. The ecovillage aims to provide a healthy, satisfying and socially-rich lifestyle while minimising ecological impacts. The 67-acre site includes beautiful and fertile land for growing food and trees to promote local food production and biodiversity.

The ecovillage also includes:

* over 100 low energy homes and 16 live-work units

* A solar- and wood- powered community heating system

* Pedestrian pathways lined with fruit and nut trees, and a streamside walkway

* 50 acres of land for allotments, farming and woodland

* A green enterprise centre and broadband

* A centre of education for sustainable living

* An eco- hostel for visitors

* A nearby train station and local car-sharing scheme

Jon and Angela will share their experiences of this venture. Their work has enabled the community to re-design their organisational structure to be far more effective, while maintaining core principles of democracy and the avoidance of command and control.

Session 2: Trevor Hilder & Aidan Ward :

Wealth creation - developments in electronic currency media

How should we measure wealth? Current methods broke down in 2008, and we need to think more deeply about how to do better.

The relationship between monetary systems and methods of identifying people, and how mobile phones might help.

Practical applications of mobile telephony to banking, with real-world examples, mostly in

the developing world.

iFeel - An experiment in measuring well-being, with an invitation to participate in the experiment.

The session aims to invite SCiO participants to become involved in the iFeel tool which is being developed and to do some exploration for themselves as a SCiO experiment.

Workshop: Michael Jacobs: Listening and Gathering Information

SCiO has made the strategic decision to create a Professional Development Programme for the Systems Professional. The structure will be a portfolio of development modules build around three themes, *Technical Skills, Craft Skills and Theory*.

Michael will lead a practical session on the craft skills of listening and gathering information, exploring why people have difficulty with this fundamental capability.

Most skill development needs practice. This

workshop will provide an example of the sorts of skills that people need to practice in order to be able to do any type of systems intervention effectively.

Michael works as a mediator and trains people in the ability to deal with conflict and difficult conversations, so he is in daily contact with people who struggle to hear what other people are saying. He uses many techniques, but emphasises that during an actual conversation, what matters is empathy and paradoxical curiosity.

Next Meeting
10am to
4.30pm

MBS -
Penthouse
Suite

£10 fee

Noticeboard

SCiO

Website: scio.org.uk/systems

Membership enquiries:

Jane Searles

Newsletter contacts:

Dave Mettam,

(dave@mettam.plus.com),

Gordon Kennedy

(kennedygordon85@yahoo.com)

Open Meetings

Doug Haynes

Calendar 2010

Upcoming Workshops

1Q10 (date to be finalised) - "The Systems Minefield"- An Overview of Systems Thinking and Practice": a 2 day systems thinking workshop for public sector purchasers

24th April: Beginners VSM Workshop, OU, Milton Keynes

Open Meetings (Mondays, open to all)

- 18th January
- 19th April (AGM)
- 5th July
- 11th October

Development Days (Sundays, members only)

- 17th January
- 18th April
- 4th July
- 10th October