

Creating a culture of innovation

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supporting individuals to think creatively, strategically and with insight to develop successful and innovative services and support that deliver tangible benefits for people who use services

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Creating a Culture of Innovation

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1 Executive Summary

This report provides an overview and analysis of activities undertaken by IRISS, insights that have been gathered over the course of the Creating a Culture of Innovation project and a review of literature on encouraging creativity within organisations.

1.1 Aims of the Project

IRISS's project focused initially on two aims: to introduce individuals to using creativity tools in a project setting, and for individuals to design a process for ideas within their own organisations. As the project developed, different aims emerged. Firstly, that opportunities to discuss and learn about innovation were important to both groups, to enable them to understand how the tools could be applied in practice, and for informing them ahead of designing an innovation process for their organisation. Secondly, that tools that directly helped an individual be creative would not be useful without a way of sharing ideas and building supporting social networks. Thus, during project delivery the aims were amended to:

1. Designing a process for how innovation could happen in the organisation
2. Testing out and sharing tools for creativity and innovation
3. Introducing individuals to thinking on innovation

1.2 Methods

IRISS developed a programme of activities that intended to take participants in each session through divergent and convergent thinking on a variety of different topics, with the end purpose of collaboratively designing a plan for their department or unit. The activities were designed bespoke for each organisation after an initial period of research with each one.

The activities drew on futures thinking, service design and facilitation methods to engage the groups and take them through this process.

1.3 Conclusion

In both projects, evidence produced suggests that the project met the two aims: a process was designed collaboratively in both councils by practitioners, and tools were tested, iterated and shared. The third aim was met through designating time within sessions to inform individuals about thinking and approaches to innovation. The presentation of key ideas and theories on innovation did not seem to change group thinking, but provided useful frameworks for considering the internal processes and explaining the purpose of some tools.

1.4 Key Insights

- Spend time understanding the organisation, especially specific internal cultures and values, before starting a collaborative project.

- Leadership and buy-in from senior management is needed to ensure the project has traction with other staff, that the outputs are supported, and that it ties in with the strategic direction of the organisation.
- Social network analysis is useful for identifying people to be involved, and can often reveal hidden networks or individuals who are crucial to an organisation.
- Participants can and will co-produce an innovation strategy which is defined by their values and those of their organisation, when given the space and facilitation to do so.
- Project designers should expect the project to develop over time. Some activities may engage the audience, whereas others may be too complex and require an additional session or time.
- Run at least one 'try-out' session to test whether your approach, way of talking and type of activities work for an organisation. It also gives you an opportunity to test out culturally how individuals respond to activities and engage with the topics.
- Run your programme over a period of time. Too short and the project will feel like training, and the novelty of what you discuss with them will seem less salient.
- Ideas will often focus on internal challenges. If the focus needs to be on individuals who access support or external factors, spend time on this to encourage participants to consider wider challenges rather than everyday work issues.
- Sessions are very action orientated, and will produce materials and outputs. However, recognise that people generate ideas in a number of different situations and that the workshop environment can be quite a false environment.
- Ask individuals to complete small thinking or research activities in-between sessions. This work can add to the richness of context and ideas.
- Social workers are trained to be reflective, and are able to use models or theories with ease.
- Some aspects of an innovation strategy can be co-designed and some ideas can be co-produced, but some aspects, such as deciding where innovation needs to be focused, need to be leadership decisions. This is decision on direction rather than an approach that is taken.
- Tools are useful, but taking a group through a facilitated process is the most important aspect of a project like this.
- Innovation language is quite alien to social work, and often conflicts with more common language around the use of evidence-informed practice and outcomes-based thinking. Spend time to ensure that language is translated and explore the role of innovation alongside evidence-informed practice and in supporting outcomes-based thinking.

2 Introduction

2.1 About this Report

This report describes a project called Creating a Culture of Innovation carried out by IRISS in partnership with local authorities to examine how embedding a culture of innovation could be achieved.

This report documents the process for the projects, draws out learning, reviews literature on innovative organisational cultures, and suggests signposts for how organisations may want to consider encouraging a culture of innovation.

2.2 Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services

The Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services (IRISS) is a charitable company with a mission to:

...promote positive outcomes for the people who use Scotland's social services by enhancing the capacity and capability of the social services workforce to access and make use of knowledge and research for service innovation and improvement.

2.3 Innovation and Improvement Programme

Creating a Culture of Innovation is part of a series of projects from the IRISS Innovation and Improvement programme that focuses on overcoming barriers to innovation and demonstrating innovative working in Scotland's social services. The programme's overall outcome is that the lives of people who receive support will be improved by innovative organisational cultures, and that they will think differently and adopt ways of working.

This programme aims to work across five areas to meet this outcome, three of which are internal factors for encouraging or facilitating innovation, which are referred to as ABC:

A ATTITUDES are tangible and refer to individual and organisational attitudes to innovation and improvement. With an individual this can be demonstrated in how they perceive and value innovation and improvement, and with an organisation this can be demonstrated through tangible items (people, processes, supports, organisational structures) that enable innovation.

B BEHAVIOURS are intangible and refer to an individual's and an organisation's behaviours that can encourage or block innovation and improvement. With both individuals and organisations this can be understood through first hand research to identify organisational cultures and responses to ideas, responsibilities, and how space is made for innovation and improvement.

C CAPABILITIES are tangible and refer to an individual's and organisation's

capacity for innovation and improvement through knowledge (knowledge, understanding and access to information and training on innovation and improvement).

2.4 Background to Creating a Culture of Innovation

In 2010, IRISS commissioned a report on *Attitudes and approaches to evidence, innovation and improvement in social services in Scotland (2010)* within statutory, voluntary and private sector organisations operating in social services. This research has provided IRISS with insight into areas where support is needed, as well as highlighting the positive attitudes individuals have to innovation.

In social services, the majority of individuals have a positive attitude to innovation with four out of five people responding that innovation is a significant part of their job. Only one in seven respondents had received training or staff development in innovation. IRISS identified a need to support individuals through training and practical tools that it designed to develop to develop innovative projects, and also provide signposting to places to look for information as many people responded that they lacked or didn't have access to places where they preferred to go for information.

These findings are supported by NESTA's report *Everyday Innovation* (2009), which researched enablers and barriers to innovation. A third of respondents cited autonomy and freedom in carrying out their job as crucial, and one in five cited insufficient training and development resources for innovative ideas as a barrier to innovation.

3 Internalising Innovation in Public Sector

This is a quick literature review of books, journals, blogs and papers on encouraging innovation and innovation processes. All the literature reviewed was selected for its focus on approaches that encourage innovation to flourish within organisations.

Much existing literature on creating innovative cultures refers to commercial organisations ie they innovate in order to define themselves in the marketplace or to sell more products. Although this applies to independent sector organisations providing social care, it does not apply to local authorities, and thus, the insights that can be drawn from literature are in some cases limited.

3.1 Defining Innovation

IRISS defines innovation as challenging the status quo: introducing new ideas, new ways of looking at things, and new ways of working that are different to what existed before.

Davila and colleagues (2005) add depth to this description of defining different types of innovations, an approach that is reflected in much contemporary literature on innovation. Three broad types of innovations are suggested, which are described by the impact on how an organisation operates rather than its impact on the world:

- Incremental: aligned to an improvement model, whereby existing skills and knowledge are improved upon. Incremental innovations are new ideas but do not require significant changes to how an organisation operates.
- Semi radical innovation: a new idea that requires a change in how an organisation operates (its business model), processes, services or products.
- Radical innovation: entirely changes how an organisation operates as it requires new knowledge and skills (rendering previous ones defunct) and renders current products, services, processes etc obsolete.

Although it is useful to consider these different types of innovation and recognise they require varying step changes in how an organisation operates, the lack of focus on outcomes is a challenge of social services, and more generally public services.

Jankel (2010) uses the same terms but as ways to define the innovations themselves and what impact they have. He defines the most extreme of innovations as radical (also referred to as discontinuous or disruptive innovations in other literature). Radical innovations disrupt the current way of doing things and will shift ideas or the sector in another direction, and will often mean the producer and the receiver have different relationships or act in different ways.

IRISS describes the opportunities for innovations in social services in the following areas:

- Product innovation
- Process innovation
- Service innovation
- Organisation structure innovation

- Policy innovation

Hamel (2007) defines some of the different opportunities for innovation within organisational management, which adds to IRISS's current thinking:

- Operational
- Product
- Strategy
- Management

And Joe Heapy in his address to the IRISS Forum 2011, adds further dimensions for innovation:

- Purpose
- Proposition
- Principles
- Platforms
- Processes
- Products
- People

Thus it is important to consider the following when defining innovation:

- **Definition of innovation** (bringing new ideas, new ways of looking at things, and new ways of working that are different to what existed before)
- **Level of innovation** (incremental, semi radical, radical)
- **Type of innovation** (product, process, service, organisation, policy, operational, strategy, management, purpose, proposition, principles, platforms and people)

3.2 Innovation Theories

In literature, the emphasis on innovation is on methods or strategies that specific organisations have implemented, rather than models that organisations can implement which may help them to generate different levels or types of innovations.

The theories that exist focus on the process for innovation, rather than on the context of innovation. For example, methodologies such as De Bono's Six Thinking Hats or the Double Diamond within design thinking both focus on the generation and development of ideas but do not consider the organisational context.

There is less emphasis on clearly defined theories of innovation that are comparable to theories of management or change. Wernerfelt's Resource Based View of Innovation (Lawson and Samson 2001) considers the resources at an organisation's disposal and how they can help them to achieve market share and focuses on organisational strategy. This could be a useful approach for considering how an organisation should decide its focus for future areas of innovation.

Importantly, the suggestions that can be drawn from examples of innovative organisations are the activities or structures they have implemented which have helped to generate a culture that is conducive to ideas emerging and flourishing.

3.3 Innovation Methodologies

A number of methodologies for generating and developing ideas are discussed in the literature. These methodologies are the closest to describing an approach that will generate different levels of innovation.

Open Innovation: Partnering with outside companies, management commitment to supporting ideas outside the current strategy and articulation of resources for support, often produces breakthrough innovations.

Design Thinking: Using design methods and processes for investigating problems, research that enables information to be analysed, generating ideas and prototyping ideas. Design Thinking's uniqueness is described as the ability of designers to empathise and focus on real experience. This methodology often produces semi radical or radical innovations.

De Bono Six Thinking Hats: Provides structure to thinking about problems by identifying six different states for thinking that can be used to generate and build upon ideas. There is no research to suggest what types of innovations are produced by Six Thinking Hats.

Systems Thinking: Considers problems within a wider (eco) system to understand how things interrelate (within an organisation these are people, structures, and processes) and the impact of changes upon other parts of the system. This method is often used within organisations, and as a result, there is little information about the types of innovations this approach to thinking produces.

Futures Thinking: A set of disparate tools that help individuals or groups of people to consider future scenarios. Tools such as Causal Layered Analysis can help uncover worldviews that can lead to radical innovations.

All these methodologies share a process that commences either at the trigger or idea stage, through to the implementation of the innovation using divergent and convergent thinking. Most of these methodologies also have stages in the process that enable the progression of some ideas and the cessation of other ideas.

Davila and colleagues (2005) value these stage gates as they can help to distinguish between ideas that have value for an organisation, identify incremental and radical ideas, and recognise the value of fragments of ideas.

3.4 Defining Culture

Culture is an important consideration for understanding how organisations can successfully encourage innovation. Various descriptions of organisational culture emerged within the literature review. The main themes that emerged were:

- That culture is a secondary item produced as a result of other actions: O'Tool (Osborne and Brown 2005) describes it as shared ideas, customs, assumptions, expectations, values and understandings. Other authors go further to argue that all components of organisational life are involved in the production of culture.

- Singular or multiple cultures: The literature suggests a broad divide in considering whether an organisation has one singular culture or a number of co-existing cultures.
- Different responses: Authors examined whether individuals act differently in response to culture in different situations or whether actions are predictable.

In the context of understanding the impact of culture on encouraging innovation, it is important to understand an organisation's unique culture, how individuals respond in different situations and whether multiple cultures exist. Furthermore, considering the difference between how people describe their actions and their actual behaviours is an important part of research.

3.5 Triggers for Innovation

Osborne and Brown (2005) describe two causes of change in public services that generate new ideas. The first, unforeseen crisis, is where systems and individuals have to adapt quickly to solve the problem. The second is political context, where new political mantras, delivered through changing policies or legislation, initiate change in the public sector.

This is a narrow view of the triggers for innovation in public services considering large-scale change that may generate large-scale national innovations. Social, technological, cultural or environmental changes can trigger innovations, and in a more sustainable manner. Geoff Mulgan's 2010 Masterclass for IRISS highlights a large number of triggers (also called prompts for innovation). The following list is drawn from a number of different resources:

User-based research: Identifying and responding to unmet wants, desires or needs of service users is a key trigger in the personalisation of services. This trigger requires the meaningful engagement of service users to reveal these insights. Service design often starts with user-based research before developing ideas in response.

Futures thinking: There are a variety of different futures thinking methods which consider the short-term to the long-term future. They all enable strategic thinking about the future through understanding how societal or environmental trends could affect service needs, using scenarios to test robustness of plans, or as way of planning a map of a preferred future.

Social audit: Is a methodology for identifying potential or required social impact, and designing policy and services in response.

Technology: Developments in technology such as increasing affordability, is becoming commonplace with service users and practitioners, or a break-through technology that is able to perform a particular task, is also a trigger for innovation.

Political: A mandate from a new political party in power, a court decision, or European Union requirements, can all lead to changes in government legislation

that enforces change through the law. Alongside this, national strategies are a secondary, 'softer' political power that mandates changes.

Systems thinking: Considering how the different aspects interrelate and impact on one another.

System failure: An approach of identifying aspects of a system that unintentionally cause it to fail and responding to those failures. This aspect of systems thinking is reactive, whereas in general, the approach is proactive.

Failure demand: An approach to dealing with failings in a service, product or process. The approach is often associated with manufacturing, whereby changes are made as a result of reacting to failings.

Financial triggers: Internal organisational factors for innovation include financial changes. Organisations must respond to **increased costs** associated with delivering a service or product increase above the expected cost or inflation, or face a deficit in their operating costs. A **reduction in the budget** available meaning that services/products can no longer be provided at the same level also encourages change.

Positive deviation: Used to describe organisations, projects or services that are succeeding despite the odds. Positive deviation is the approach of understanding how this happens and usually involves comparing the 'deviant' with similar models which are not succeeding.

Other sectors or countries: Learning, replicating or interpreting successful approaches from other sectors or countries can help trigger innovation.

Data: Local data analysis that includes service user feedback, staff feedback, qualitative and quantitative data on service effectiveness can also be a trigger for innovation or new thinking.

Societal trends: Can be a trigger for innovation and are often related to political triggers. The equalities movement, changing expectations about the ability to control services, and increased access to a varied marketplace, are triggers for understanding what kind of services or frameworks may be more successful into the future.

Organisations are likely to focus on a small number of these triggers, and indeed the triggers they focus on often reflect their values as an organisation.

3.6 Managing Innovation

As Davila and colleagues (2009) deftly put it, how an organisation manages innovation and what it wants to innovate, influences the types of innovations created. Across the literature there is an awareness about the importance of managing innovation and a variety of different management techniques are suggested. These different techniques focus on actions that organisations can implement rather than models for management:

- Letting risk happen by encouraging individuals to be responsible with ideas
- Appropriate use of personal networks among colleagues where there is mutual trust and respect
- Harnessing opinion leaders
- Learning from and building on the experience of success locally and elsewhere
- Understanding and thinking through the motivators and barriers among key staff, and working specifically to deal with these
- Timing interactions carefully to optimise the chances of persuasion
- Empowering staff who are already keen to change
- Frequent rotation of managers
- Continual training of staff
- Decentralisation of decision making
- Encouragement of multiple experiments by staff
- High tolerance of failure
- Openness with the organisation towards a diversity of viewpoints.

3.7 Barriers to Innovation

Disincentives for encouraging innovation include some of the following from Davila and colleagues (2005), all of which are very relevant to public services or social innovation:

- Current portfolio is largely incremental innovations, which restrict the creativity and thinking about the opportunities for ideas
- Innovation metrics only use capital return tools, and as such, the value added in terms of user experience, social impact and awareness building is not included.
- The (disputed) role of the public sector in long-term public health, wellbeing and protection.
- Funding is available annually or intermittently, rather than when funding support is needed.
- Innovation is measured on efficiency rather than on the value of the innovation portfolio.

4 Project

4.1 About

The project focused on working within two organisations on internal-focused processes. The project facilitated individuals through an innovation process to serve two purposes:

- to introduce individuals to using the tools in a project setting
- for individuals to design a process for ideas within their own organisations.

IRISS' aim in this process was to design and test a variety of the tools and approaches that could be used in social services to increase creativity and support organisations intending to innovate.

4.2 Set up

Both projects were developed in agreement with the head of departments. The two projects came about through in the first project IRISS seeking a project partner and in the second project, being approached to work with the department.

Initially insights about the department were gathered from the heads of department, followed by interviews with participants to understand how ideas happen and what barriers or opportunities there are to progressing ideas through to innovations.

4.3 Brief

Creating a Culture of Innovation was a project that aimed to support and enable individuals to think creatively, insightfully and strategically to develop successful and innovative services that deliver tangible benefits for service users. The project provided practical tools and approaches for application throughout the whole innovation process, which included ideation, project development and delivery.

4.4 Aim

The aims of the project were to:

- Provide organisations with useful tools that they can easily use to generate new thinking on problems and opportunities with a variety of stakeholders
- Encourage organisations to consider developing an innovation process.

4.5 Approach

In this project it was crucial that the participants bought into the process, and accepted IRISS as a facilitator. In designing the approach, the intention was to use methods that would enable the co-designing of an innovation strategy which built on the culture of the organisation. Importantly, the approach needed to be iterative to enable the group to consider particular issues that may have emerged, but be focused on the end aim of designing an innovation process.

The participant groups were comparatively small to the organisation (between 10-15 participants). The individual participants were all selected by the key contact in the partnership organisation, and all had qualities in common:

- They were well connected within their organisation
- They came from a diverse group of teams or localities
- They were motivated by ideas and prepared to take risks

To further ensure that the projects focused on the particulars of the organisation, IRISS commenced both projects with a participant research phase to identify the attitudes to ideas and innovation, behaviours around making change, and organisational cultures. One-to-one interviews were conducted with individuals to be involved in the project. Examples of the interview guides used can be found in the appendix. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and key themes drawn out.

A test workshop, initially with the participant group and secondly with a large organisation-wide group, enabled IRISS and the partner organisation to test whether IRISS's approach would be appropriate for the organisation and participants.

4.6 Project Sessions and Plan

4.6.1 Local Authority Unit

4.6.1.1 Interviews

Research interviews were conducted with 10 members of staff using a structure around the following areas:

- *Innovation*
- *User-Centred*
- *Personal*
- *Character*
- *Culture*
- *Landscape*
- *Direct feedback*

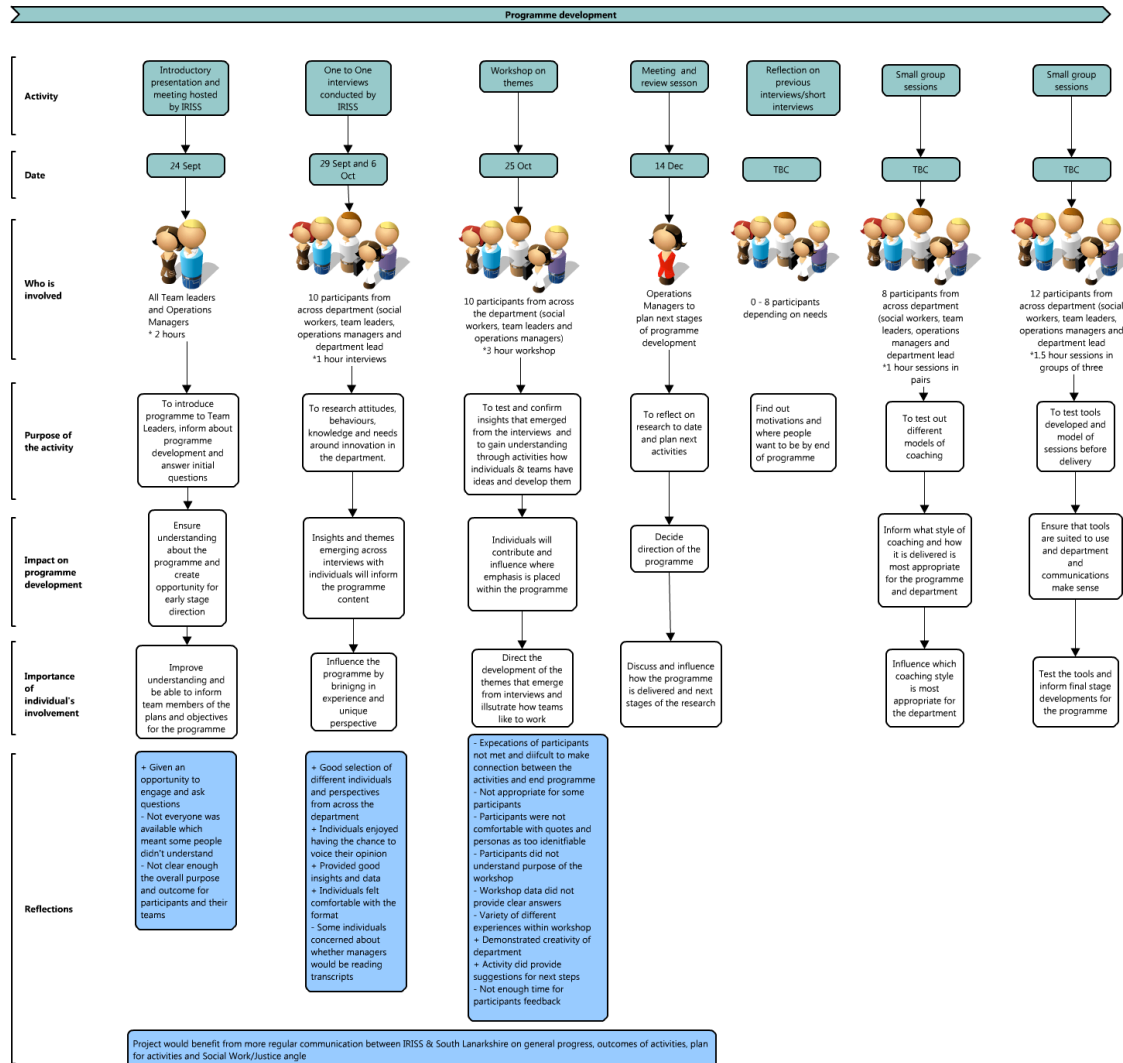
A sample interview guide can be found in the appendix.

Themes were identified based on the transcribed interviews and notes taken in the meeting.

4.6.1.2 Session 1.1

This workshop was led by Snook, utilising the insights gathered from the interviews with staff. Based on the interviews, the participants were asked to use personas to storyboard ideas.

4.6.1.3 Redesign of programme of activities



4.6.1.4 Session 2.1: Introduction

The session focused on introducing IRSS to the group, introducing the participant group to the purpose of the series of sessions, building rapport in the group, building buy-in for the outcome and process, and using the Values Manifesto tool to encourage the participants to start to identify what is important to them and feedback on their experience of the session.

4.6.1.5 Session 2.2: Social network analysis

This session reviewed the previous session and focused on using social network analysis to understand how communication networks, identify gaps and where the group may need to plan to develop communication networks.

4.6.1.6 Session 2.3: Team working wants and needs

Using the future thinking tools, this session facilitated the group to define their wants and needs for ways of working in the future, and use techniques to personalise that vision and identify the key steps, barriers and enablers for meeting the vision.

4.6.1.7 Session 2.4: Triggers for doing things differently

Using a combination of: a didactic presentation, facilitation of the group to identify their own examples, and the futures thinking tool Causal Layered Analysis, the group were encouraged to use reflective techniques to consider where triggers for innovation may exist in their everyday work.

4.6.1.8 Session 2.5: Exploring technologies

IRISS promotes the opportunities that free social media tools offer for finding and sharing knowledge and learning. This session run by a member of IRISS' Knowledge Media team introduced the group – using a South Lanarkshire Council IT suite – to RSS feeds, social bookmarking (Delicious and Evernote), communities of practice (now called Knowledge Hub), and Twitter.

4.6.1.9 Session 2.6: Designing pilot activities

Reflecting on the content developed in the previous five sessions, the group were facilitated to incorporate this into a project to pilot their aspirations for ways of working. The group was facilitated to identify opportunities, such as free time, team meetings, events etc on which they could build their pilot.

4.6.2 Community Care Department

Initially the Community Care department invited IRISS to run a test workshop (session 1) with a group of team leaders to consider whether a full project would be appropriate. The brief for the day was to consider what would be useful for the team leaders tasked with generating project plans across eight different themes key to the council's change plan.

4.6.2.1 Session 1

An all-day session was delivered that focused on revealing values for the different themes which could help frame the project plans and enable team leaders to communicate about the themes more effectively across the department.

4.6.2.2 Session 2

In a larger afternoon workshop with approximately 70 members of staff, IRISS repeated the Values Manifesto and Future Headlines activities with larger groups from across Community Care.

4.6.2.3 Interviews

Eight interviews with senior staff were conducted to identify where innovation happens, what happens to ideas, how the culture influences attitudes to innovation, what barriers they perceive exist and what facilitators there are for innovation. All the interviews were transcribed and common themes were used to inform the design of the following sessions.

4.6.2.4 Session 3: Journey of an idea

During this session, the group were asked to consider a real idea and track the journey of that idea using barrier and facilitator cards (which were based on themes that emerged in the interviews). Following this, they were asked to generate an idea in response to a real problem and to use the cards to map out how this idea could successfully be progressed. The activity generated idea journeys that were based on the real context of the department.

4.6.2.5 Session 4: Innovation skills needs

Building on the innovation process developed in the previous session, participants split into four groups each representing types of roles (frontline practitioner, expert practitioner, corporate services, senior management). Groups developed personas based on these types of roles. Using these personas as a tool for greater objectivity, the groups worked through the innovation process to identify from the perspective of the persona:

- Skills that might be needed
- Information that may be needed
- Questions that may arise
- Involvement

The session closed with brainstorming of communication messages that would appeal to the different type of roles about the activities of the group.

4.6.2.6 Session 5: Innovation triggers and priorities

The final session focused on identifying where innovation is needed within the Community Care department. Individuals were introduced to the different types of triggers for innovation, and then identified where this already happened in their organisation and started to prioritise areas that need innovation. The session focused on understanding the triggers for innovation and the needs and priority areas for innovation of the community care department over the forthcoming 5 years, and how these priority areas are communicated to all staff will also be considered.

5 Working with Staff

5.1 Recruitment

Recruitment of staff to participate in the projects was completed in collaboration with the key person in the partner organisation. These were individuals with responsibility for staff management or development.

The projects tested two approaches to selecting staff, and both were based on number of participants who represented a diagonal slice of the organization, ie they were representative of the hierarchy of the department or section. We tested working with a group selected by the key person in the partner organisation, and a mix of senior managers and individuals identified through a social network analysis of the department. In both projects, a cross-section of newly qualified staff and experienced individuals was invited to join. All participants were invited by a key contact from the partner organisation to join the group.

IRISS used Stephenson (Coughlin, Wingard and Hollihan, 2005) social network methodology to analyse the hidden networks within the organisations. Stephenson has carried out extensive research within organisations and has identified seven distinct networks within organisations. These are networks that provide specific functions:

- Work directly with
- News/update
- Ideas/innovation
- Expert advice
- Strategic advice
- Development or learning advice
- Decision making

Social network analysis was used for one project at an early stage to identify who should be involved as a participant and how communications happen across the organisation. IRISS distributed an online survey to the department, with questions based on the above seven networks. 64 completed the survey and IRISS used social networking software to map the networks. This network map was analysed by the key person in the partner organisation and the IRISS project manager, and was used to identify individuals to join the group. At its largest, the group consisted of half senior managers and half individuals identified through the network map.

In the second project, IRISS used social network analysis to identify how information was shared across the section, with a focus on the networks for expert knowledge and ideas/innovation. This network analysis was carried out in a workshop with the participant group, three sessions into the project. The participants each identified their networks and overlaid them on top of one another to understand a wider picture of networked-ness, the participants discussed the implications of what they could see.

5.2 Participants

Attendance was clearly defined as compulsory for participants, with exceptions made for annual leave or regulatory training. The participants were a consistent group of individuals throughout the project, and dates were identified in advance to enable individuals to plan their involvement into their schedules.

Emphasis was placed on the role of participants in the set up of the project, and reinforced by making attendance compulsory. Participants were informed of their responsibility in representing colleagues from the outset of the project, and brought their experiences to implement the outputs of the project. Individuals were all treated equally in the project; opinions, experiences and ideas were judged equal.

5.3 Conclusion

This project appealed to individuals who were motivated by new ways of working and change, and largely these interests were reflected in their initial recruitment to the groups. It was important to involve individuals who were motivated to make a difference through change, as although a project such as this can be used as CPD training, and there was a discussion of tying workshops into the Continuous Learning Framework, this did not happen. Participants did not perceive involvement on the project as training, possibly due to the sessions being very different from usual training. However, it was clear that individuals did utilise the learning, demonstrated by using the tools in their own work. This could have been developed further by including time-in sessions to explore how the learning could be incorporated into their roles. Individuals in both projects built stronger relationships with colleagues as a result of being involved in the projects.

It was important that participants felt responsible in their role. Throughout the project, attendance was high with absence pre authorised and individuals being prepared to explore and share their own experiences. Early in the project individuals expressed (first session) expressed their lack of experience in this area and the need for further clarification on the purpose of the project. More clarification could have been provided, perhaps through the opportunity to ask questions in advance, however, because of the complexity of the project the most successful way of informing the group was in session.

The approach appeared to have more impact when involving a group of participants from a department rather than one section. This is perhaps unexpected, as the effect could have been diluted in a larger department. The greater impact was reached perhaps as a result of a number of factors: the seniority of a number of the individuals involved, the project was tied into other change work which had a high visibility, and activities such as the kick-off work shop and research for the social network analysis involved a larger group than the participants. In comparison, in the other project, the section was required to work with a number of external statutory agencies that were not immediately obvious, but whose involvement may have supported the project.

Social network analysis proved to be an important and crucial component of both projects that helped to reveal hidden insights. There were several significant insights from the analysis:

- *Identifying individuals who play an important role in the sharing of knowledge and who colleagues go to for advice, but who are not in positions of responsibility.* Had we used an organisational hierarchy model to identify participants, it is highly unlikely that they would be identified and asked to join the group. These individuals were very involved and active members in the group.
- *Identifying individuals who are possibly over-burdened with requests for advice, knowledge or support.* These individuals were already recognised as important by the department or section, but it was not understood by management the number of people across other teams that they provided ongoing support to. Often these individuals provided advice to others they had previously line managed.
- *Highlighting a lack of social connections between certain teams and the rest of the department or section.* The social network methodology the project team employed does not identify isolated individuals as it only identifies individuals who are part of a social network – be that a network of two individuals or hundreds. This methodology is useful for demonstrating self-contained teams or sections within departments. The analysis did demonstrate the existence of teams that networked only with each other, and which other teams did not connect with. We didn't explore the historical reasons why this may have happened, but both organisations took this information and acted on it to ensure that isolated teams were more widely involved and engaged.

One of the project sites is interested in conducting the social network analysis again in the future, to ascertain the impact of large changes (individuals moving teams, merging of teams) on these networks.

5.4 Pointers

- Use social network analysis to identify individuals who are important communicators and are motivated by ideas. They are likely to want to share learning with their colleagues and more comfortable being involved in a project that is iterative and focused on change.
- A diagonal slice of an organisations works to ensure that you have a variety of experiences of roles from the organisation.
- Ensure the department Director and team leaders are involved and engaged to ensure that changes can be implemented, and the ideas generated through the project are feasible for the organisation.

- As a facilitator, it is important that the outputs are considered collaborative and the sessions are equal. Do not weight knowledge of one individual over another on the basis of their seniority.
- Allocate significant time at the beginning of the project to build rapport in the group. This is especially important if there is a variety of seniority in the group. Reinforce activities that build rapport through language and facilitation, and acknowledge the importance of the knowledge and experience that all individual's bring to the room.
- Build rapport in the group through team building exercises in all sessions.

6 Designing an Internal Innovation Process

6.1 Project Process

Both organisations IRISS partnered with were experiencing change. The drivers for change were both external (financial and regulatory) and internal (organisational restructuring and new department/section heads). The motivation for developing an innovation process was tied to these drivers with the intention to increase the impact of the pre-existing changes. IRISS spent time understanding these drivers through meetings with the department and section heads, and the nuances about what that meant for developing a project which would include tool testing, the introduction of ideas to individuals about innovation, and the design of an innovation process.

The project process design was intended to reflect the experience of how an innovation process could operate within an organisation, using a model that would facilitate divergent and convergent thinking of participants. Initially organisational research that looked at social networks and interviews with participants identified content that could be used in sessions. Both projects followed a similar process:

- Divergent thinking about aspirations for the department or section in the near future
- Convergent thinking on these future aspirations to agree a path forward
- Divergent thinking based on developing an innovation process
- Convergence on a process for innovation
- Identification of how differences and changes between now and the future process for innovation

The approach to the project process was to create a collaborative, safe environment, intended to involve all participants. Activities were focused on action rather than discussion, to reflect the purpose of an innovation process – to encourage action. The project approach drew on a number of approaches - service design, future thinking, creative thinking tools – to guide individuals through a process that was intended to support them to reflect on their organisation, experience and role, and build an innovation process.

6.2 Triggers for Innovation

The project introduced participants to the concept of triggers for innovation, which was presented as a framework for thinking about where new ideas are needed or how they can be inspired. These included triggers that the participants, especially frontline staff, are likely to encounter on a weekly basis. Individuals were asked to identify examples using this framework, and responded with examples, including the following:

- Societal trends: Changing demographics of Scotland with the increased number of people who may need support in older age and a great number of individuals with dementia.
- Positive deviation: a locality team that enabled better outcomes than other locality teams

Casual Layered Analysis (a Futures Thinking technique, that explores layers of social constructs in order to postulate alternative realities and futures - IRISS's Future Risks and Opportunities Toolkit) and brainstorming techniques were used to facilitate individuals to identify real triggers.

6.3 Designing an Innovation Process

Participants were asked in groups to generate an idea and use it as the starting point for designing an innovation process. This was described as 'designing the journey of an idea' from initial concept to a successful idea that is implemented.

The groups were facilitated to consider how to ensure that certain principles conducive to encouraging a successfully innovative environment were incorporated. Principles included a process whereby ideas were tested and developed through collaboration, iteration and based on real experience. Both groups included senior management and team leaders, and there was consideration given to how individuals with ideas could be managed.

Regarding barriers to innovation, IRISS presented the organisational research insights and themes back to the groups. The stages in the innovation process were shaped in one project by this external feedback – considering actions (or facilitators) that could overcome these barriers at each stage.

6.4 Roles in the Innovation Process

IRISS facilitated participants to consider their role within the process to ensure that it didn't become abstracted and that individuals felt a sense of ownership around the possible outcomes of the project.

In one of the projects, character profiles (personas) were developed by the group to represent common groups of staff (senior management, frontline staff, expert practitioners, corporate services). These character profiles were used to identify the activities that these types of roles could take responsibility for within the process, as well as identifying the types of messages or call to actions that these groups of staff would respond to.

6.5 Implementing an Innovation Process

At the end of the projects, the responsibility lay with the most senior person in the room to either push for the changes that were required as a result of the design process or to implement the process.

6.6 Conclusion

In both projects, responsibility for implementing the processes following project completion lay with the most senior members of the group. On reflection, considering it is perhaps easier to design a process than it is to make the changes, implementation should have been a part of the project. Although this poses a challenge, as these change activities are likely to take place over at least twelve months, but is more likely to be over two – three years. Another consideration is that change was already occurring in both organisations, and the design and implement of an innovation process had to operate at the same pace as these bigger activities.

Both projects resulted in a process design that was relevant to the scope of the project team and their reach. However, further impact, especially in the implementation stage could perhaps have been achieved through further scoping at the start of the projects to consider where within an organisation impact could be achieved. Additional people relevant to particular service user groups or functions within the organisation could have been brought in during the process to gain traction in the implementation. This was apparent in one project, where bringing in an individual from corporate IT could have served to direct the innovation process.

Surprisingly, triggers for innovation was a challenging aspect of the projects. On discussing this framework, participants were easily able to name examples, but struggled when having to incorporate these into a process for their own organisation. For the most part, only examples of workforce and organisational challenges were offered rather than examples for the people they supported. An important part of the process was to ensure that organisations focus their energies on where ideas are most needed. It may have been more appropriate to ask participants to consider these triggers for innovation in their organisation outwith a workshop environment.

Another area that posed difficulty was designing a project. Participants had no experience of balancing resources with scope in project design, of milestones and of project that will have a start and end. There are significant similarities between process and project design – a movement through activities – and so considering the design of a process was much easier.

Both projects designed a process for innovation, but neither considered what may be an appropriate methodology to use for generating and developing ideas. Although the skills used in different methodologies are likely to be found within a social work department, it may have been useful to reflect and consider if any particularly aligned with individuals behaviours, attitudes and skills. This may also have helped to add greater depth to plans for implementation.

Organisational change can be a positive experience for some individuals as it can help them to think about their roles. Involvement in designing a process for innovation involved individuals to consider future opportunities for their roles. The projects appeared to be accepted by the participants as important as both were closely tied into change already happening within the organisations. The projects may have been perceived as a positive commitment by the organisation to change for the better and involve individuals who are motivated by innovation to help shape thinking.

6.7 Pointers

- Follow up activities in workshops by providing resources and encouraging individuals to share with their peers to maintain momentum and build participants' thinking about how the process fits with their work.
- Facilitate multiple activities, including external events that encourage participants to consider other factors that could act as triggers for innovation.
- Ensure that individuals do not perceive that involvement or non-involvement in a project is linked to job security, especially in an organisation that is going through change.
- Projects that consider cultural change and implementing an innovation process should happen alongside organisational change
- If designing the process is the most important outcome of a project, ensure that activities that service this purpose are at the beginning of sessions.
- Early stage research is crucial to designing the project and also providing reflective content for the participants to use. Individuals appreciated the opportunity to explore innovation and the challenges they faced in a one-to-one setting with an individual external to their organisation, but with the ability to use their insights. When interviewing use a Dictaphone to record what people say and spend time understanding what people really mean when they describe experiences about their organisation.
- This kind of project should reflect the direction of the organisation.
- Define your outcomes early and consider which departments need to be a key part of the project design and delivery. Bring in people that could help with embedding when relevant.
- In set up, explore and define the organisation's approach and individual's thinking about the role of public services in innovating.
- Individuals understand process and how they want to work.
- Individuals will need support with designing a project.

7 Innovation Knowledge

7.1 Increasing Understanding of Innovation

A key part of all the sessions was to introduce participants to thinking on innovation. This informative part of the sessions provided a set up for the following activities and discussions that would build the content for an innovation process.

This informative component of the sessions encompassed both ‘innovative’ approaches or thinking, and ‘innovations’, to ensure that multiple perspectives were included. To provide the participants with a framework for thinking, innovation was defined by three levels: incremental, semi radical, and radical; and what can be innovated: products, processes, services, organisations, and the different methodologies for innovating such as open innovation and design thinking. Beyond this, the sessions were designed in order to increase thinking on innovation and explore some of the different (and in some case conflicting) ideas. A facilitative approach was taken, to encourage individuals to share their own experiences and perspectives.

Both partners provided similar information which focused on examples of innovation and ideas that reinforced topics that were being considered in the different sessions: barriers, management and triggers. Innovation theories and culture were not included as a discussion point in the activities as they were not relevant to specific activities and additional sessions with participants would have been required.

7.2 Conclusion

IRISS drew on thinking on innovation from a wide range of literature, where the language used suggested that assumptions were made about the audience and that they have an understanding and common perspective about the significance of recent innovations. Although IRISS interpreted this content for the audience, there were challenges presenting information from a very different sector. For example, IRISS would perhaps use the following examples to demonstrate radical innovation, but this was found hard to understand by the participants:

The Internet: An innovation that is more significant than Guttenberg’s printing press and as described by thinkers such as Clay Shirky, the internet represents a fundamental, enabling collaboration and a change in how business is carried out and services are delivered.

iTunes: as a transformation in the way that business is done – a technology that has resulted in a shift from a product - to service-based business that enables customers to have buy music and other media anytime day or night, as well as the ability to access the most popular to the most rare media.

The assumptions about perspectives found in the literature are valid for a certain audience – often urban, often technologically aware – but are not appropriate for the project audience. IRISS spent considerable time interpreting these ideas for the audience, and the audience engaged with examples given. However, the underlying assumptions behind the literature were not communicated, which limited the impact that sharing this thinking could have.

Furthermore, the literature did not refer to or provide examples of the impact on individual outcomes, which is the most significant factor for social services. The literature often focused on an organisation's market share, turnover or profile.

It is also worth considering that different organisations are at a different stages on the journey to being more innovative. In one organisation an idea may simply be incremental, in another it may be semi radical. It is important to recognize and respect that organisations will move at their own pace.

7.3 Pointers

- Innovation thinking and examples from around the world are important to share and discuss, but it is unlikely to change culture, attitudes and behaviours.
- Connect with an individual who is undertaking CPD and has an interest in organisational change. Share thinking with them on innovation thinking, to enable them to interpret meaning and significance within the organisation itself.
- Focus on thinking differently in the work that individuals do, rather than encouraging individuals to engage with various innovation frameworks.
- Individual outcomes should be the end point of a project which aims to influence organisational culture and encourage innovation. Ensure that all thinking has that end point in mind.

8 Testing Innovation and Creativity Tools and Methods

8.1 Workshops

All tools were presented by the facilitator in the workshops and involved working in pairs or small groups to either diverge or converge thinking on the design of an innovation process.

8.2 Innovation and Creativity Tools and Methods

Tools and methods were selected to facilitate the group to generate particular information or develop agreement on certain areas of the innovation process being developed. The purpose was to test the tools with these groups; all of them had been previously tested out internally in IRISS.

The tools used and methods used were taken from a variety of different methodologies, and included:

Futures Thinking

- Causal layered analysis
- Vision of the future
- Narrative
- Headlines for the future
- Visioning
- Roadmapping (identifying differences between now and future)

Design Thinking

- Value manifesto
- Defining needs
- Personas
- Barrier and facilitator cards
- Trigger cards

Ice breakers

- Give get
- Dot voting

Social network analysis

- Social network mapping

Matrix mapping

- Enablers and barriers (in and out of control)

Social media

- Social bookmarking (Delicious)

- RSS feeds/Google Reader
- Evernote
- Communities of Practice
- Twitter

8.3 Conclusion

Generally, participants were very comfortable using tools in a workshop setting to develop thinking or to aid reflection, which suggested that this is perhaps something they can relate to their work. The groups were reflective and engaged in how the tools could be developed, by providing suggestions and comments.

Individuals enjoyed the simple activities such as dot voting, but it was the medium complex tools such as the value manifesto (Piu, G 2011), personas and future thinking tools that individuals asked for copies of to try out with their teams their teams. The tools were not extensively shared, and reflecting on the project providing universal access may have been useful. However, there are challenges providing digital access to resources, especially in local authorities.

The most useful tools or methods were those that articulated feelings or experiences or offered insights into strategic matters. Interestingly, these types appeared to empower the individuals to take more of a lead in the sessions. This may be as a result of feeling more confident about the content – as it was their own - and as such, they had more a responsibility or right to lead. On a small number of occasions some of the groups appeared to take some of the activities less seriously. This seemed more related to the point in the session, rather than the tool or method, and this was usually identified quite late on in the session.

Tools/methods that proved most challenging were Causal Layered Analysis, which was initially perceived as complex because of the language used, but in working through the tool it became clear that this method reflected some of the approaches taken in social work to understand complex social situations.

The adoption of the use of social media tools also proved challenging, mainly due to limited access to or blocks to access in the local authority. Social media tools proved to be very popular with one of the groups and a number of the individuals started to use them in their personal life.

8.4 Pointers

- Individuals motivated by innovation and ideas are likely to enjoy using the tools.
- Package up tools for organisations to share with their workforce. Get agreement or access to something that allows the tools to be shared.
- Discuss how the tools and methods could be used in other settings with the group and how the methods may relate to social work practices.

- Use tools that help individuals articulate thoughts about values or aspirations they already hold.
- Use tools that help groups to define ambitions or values collaboratively.
- Do not use tools that individuals would be challenged to use on a regular basis within their own practice.
- Ensure that the project is two-way – that the process is designed but that individual participants are able to gather tools after each session and take them back to the office for use.

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