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Skills and Innovation for Adult Social Care

PROMOTING INNOVATION LEADERSHIP IN CARE: DIGITAL LEARNING PROGRAMME

MODULE 5: MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES TO FACILITATE INNOVATION

LAPIS RESEARCH PROJECT
LEARNING FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE PRACTICE INNOVATIONS AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT
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Learning objectives

Upon completion of this module you will be able to:

- **define** what innovative workplace culture is
- **identify** different steps for building culture of innovation in your organisation
- **recognize** funding opportunities for innovations

Importance of innovation in social care sector

While there is widespread recognition of the importance of innovation in health and social care, the term can mean different things to different people. In this module, we use the term innovation to cover both **invention** (creating new ideas, products, services or models of care) and **adoption** (implementing what has worked elsewhere).

Innovation has the potential to transform social care, improving outcomes and putting the sector on a more sustainable footing.

The crucial point is not whether the idea is the first of its kind or whether it will have an impact on all of the world. It is whether the idea is original and useful in your context. Is it different from what you've done before? Does it solve a problem? Will implementing it involve some level of risk? If the answers are positive, then consider it innovative.

Building a culture of innovation

We must first clarify what we mean by a culture of innovation and then explore its characteristics in the context of social care.

A culture of innovation means that the management team has an "open door" policy. It means that teams are given time to allow themselves to experiment and pursue their ideas. It means open, proactive, forums where employees can share what they've been working on and give ideas to each other.

Everyone's approach to innovation also requires a workplace that allows creativity. People need to feel free to collaborate with different departments and divisions; to share work that is still in progress; to ask "stupid" questions; to take calculated risks; to learn from their mistakes without being shamed.

Benefits from establishing culture of innovation

An innovative workplace culture benefits the company, the leaders, the employees and the consumers for whom these companies create. Here are some reasons for implementing an innovative workplace culture:

- ❖ **Map out a comprehensive course for improvement** - When employees pursue innovation-both in developing company products and in developing company processes-it can make performance techniques better and more efficient. It can also help improve the company's services it offers.
- ❖ **Assists in the elaboration of new ideas** - As innovations create new ideas, they become an immediate benefit to your organization. Developing new ideas helps a company stay relevant and often leads to overall growth.
- ❖ **Does lead to development** - A company's innovative culture can lead to its overall success and even to the growth of its workforce, as there is a greater motivation to work for the organization. Innovation also attracts users, which can lead to the company's brand growing.
- ❖ **Increase team performance** - An innovative culture creates a happier work environment, which can lead to more productive employees. Introducing innovative processes can significantly increase efficiency as your team finds new and better ways to work.
- ❖ **Cultivates an adaptive character** - Innovation can prepare any organization to adapt to its sector and market as they change. When the team looks for new methodologies or processes and creates new products, it may discover an innovative idea or anticipate a future problem it may face. Both can help adapt to a changing environment.

You can learn more about what factors shape a culture of innovation by watching the video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OkGzsxOk3_s

How to create an innovative culture

An innovative organizational culture is getting more and more necessary in a changing work environment. In this module you can find some steps you can follow to create an innovative culture in your organisation:

1. Encourage innovation from your employees

Encourage your employees to be innovative. You can inspire innovation with these methods:

- **Brainstorm:** Set up forums and foster an environment where your employees can freely share ideas and solutions. Share with employees the direction you want to take your organization and give examples of innovations you would like to implement.
- **Team Building:** Take time for team building exercises, such as a cooking class or word games. These activities encourage collaboration, which can help innovation.
- **Reward creativity:** Come up with even a small incentive for anyone who shares an innovative solution. This can help encourage your employees to think in new ways more often, which leads to innovation.

2. Build trust in your team

Establish credibility with your team to help build an innovative work culture. When employees feel trusted, they are more likely to share ideas and collaborate with their colleagues. Trust can also help improve communication between you and your team. This can give employees the opportunity to try new techniques and test their ideas, which can lead to innovation. Here are ways to establish trust among colleagues.

3. Explain that failure is an option.

Ensure your employees that failure has no consequences. If they are afraid to fail, it may prevent employees from trying alternative ways to achieve their goals. Sometimes failure can inspire innovation by offering new perspectives or revealing a problem that was previously unknown.

Activity 1:

Decide whether the statements below are true or false.

Statements	True/False
Innovative organizational culture is only for tech organizations	
Innovation culture means creativity and freedom to share ideas and solutions	
Innovative culture helps to develop an agile organizational culture	
Building trust in the organization is not one of the main factors in building an innovative culture	
Failure is an option	

Breakdown of answers:

- 1. False:** Innovation has the potential to transform social care, improving outcomes and putting the sector on a more sustainable footing
- 2. True:** Innovative culture means open, proactive, forums where employees can share what they've been working on and give ideas to each other.
- 3. True:** Innovation can prepare any organization to adapt to its sector and market as they change. When the team looks for new methodologies or processes and creates new products, it may discover an innovative idea or anticipate a future problem it may face
- 4. False:** Establish credibility with your team to help build an innovative work culture. When employees feel trusted, they are more likely to share ideas and collaborate with their colleagues.
- 5. True:** Sometimes failure can inspire innovation by offering new perspectives or revealing a problem that was previously unknown.

Creating a supportive innovation infrastructure

The structure of an organization has a direct impact on its progress.

Whereas the Organizational Structure consists of related elements (such as tasks and responsibilities) that would help achieve the organization's goals, innovation drives development and competitiveness. When it comes to innovation, the idea is only responsible for 1% of the solution, while the other 99% comes from the innovation team and the investment made by the organization in terms of time, money and persistence.

The main questions of this section are: How exactly does organizational structure influence innovation? And how can we develop a system that fosters employee engagement for better innovation outcomes?

Studies indicate that the right infrastructure tools are important to accelerate learning and innovation. The four key infrastructure elements are open innovation, effective collaboration, virtual workplace and physical workplace design.

❖ Open Innovation

New trends show that seeking new product ideas from outside can significantly improve the flow of new opportunities. Applying the principles of open innovation can significantly accelerate the pace of innovation as well as its effectiveness. Open innovation means expanding the range of participants in the innovation process to all types of outsiders, including customers, suppliers, partners and community members, using ideas, critical thinking and advice.

❖ Cooperation

All those working in innovation agree that collaboration is vital to the success of innovation. Mastering and applying the principles of effective collaboration requires facilitation skills to help nurture new ideas and turn them into effective innovations, and the benefits can be significant.

❖ The virtual workplace

As we spend more and more time working and collaborating online with our internal colleagues and with external partners, customers and suppliers, the quality of our tools and our ability to use them can make all the difference to the productivity of our innovation efforts.

❖ The physical workplace

The key elements of effective innovation are thinking, creating, problem solving and collaboration, and we know that the workplace that best supports these is not the traditional conference room, but a work environment that is designed for innovation.

Activity 2:

Take 10 minutes and reflect on the current state of these 4 factors in your organization.

- What would you change?
- What would be your first step in that direction?

Managing innovation

'Innovation management' refers to the management of all the activities required to 'make something new', which in practice means coming up with ideas, developing, prioritising and implementing them, and putting them into practice, for example by bringing new products to market or introducing new internal processes.

Innovation management is basically the process of inventing and introducing new ideas and developing the business.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tugZG4nir08&t=106s>

The key aspects of innovation management

Collaboration

- *Teamwork is essential to getting things done. In today's global and digital 24/7 world, challenges are more complex; it's becoming increasingly important to bring more, diverse minds to the table and to break down silos.*

Ideation

- *Fresh, new ideas help your organization stand out. With intense competition for resources, organizations must differentiate in order to survive.*

Implementation

- *Organizations must engage the best people to champion their ideas and keep those great ideas moving forward.*

Value Creation

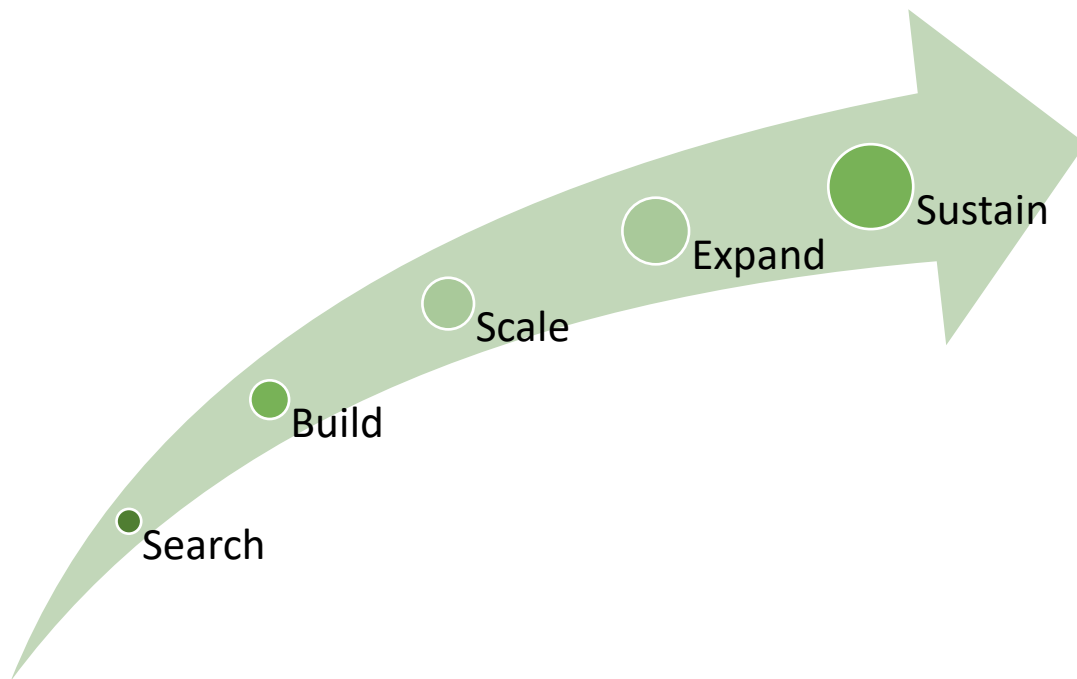
- *Value can be defined in many ways, such as incremental improvements to existing products, the creation of entirely new products and services, or reducing cost. Businesses seek to create value because their survival, growth and ability to compete in a rapidly changing market depend on whether they innovate effectively.*

Scaling up and implementing successful innovation

Given that innovation is responsible for around 85% of economic growth, it is undoubtedly important for the success of both individual organisations and society as a whole.

However, to achieve the level of impact that many seek from innovation, you can't just 'create something new' and then hope the results will come. You will need to commit to systematically pursuing those outcomes by turning viable ideas into products or businesses that create value - on a large scale.

To explain what it means to scale an innovation, let's first take a step back and look at the lifecycle of an innovation.



Scaling innovation is the process of expanding the presence and the use of the innovation to be as widespread as possible to maximize the impact the innovation can have. Traditionally, scaling innovation is seen as a matter of advancing the adoption, or the diffusion, of innovation.

