

Workshop objective & discussions

To reach out to those adults who have been untouched by the learning society requires creativity, time, alliances and resources. BUT it has its rewards – once reached nothing can hold back the energy for learning that is released, and nothing can take away the enjoyment, confidence and self-esteem that learning brings.

This workshop explored the benefits and ways of using learners own stories as a motivational tool to reach new and different learners. The groups which met discussed their own experiences thus contributing to the information below.

1. WHY? Purpose of celebration? Why should we do any celebration?
 - Research; - social; - confidence & morale; -media

Discussion in the group and feedback from group.

Examples included: good feeling it gives individuals; Pride of siblings; Status of individual in the community and in the workplace; Raising awareness; Attracting/recruiting good staff; Good way of opening up new opportunities for staff who've been part of the team for a while and those who are new; opportunity to highlight investment in staff; Ability/empowerment and capacity building of staff; Encouragement of staff to take next step or 'first steps'; Broadening learning opportunities and access to 'learning opportunities' in different sectors or teams; reinforcement of positive self belief; As a reward

Talk briefly about: Press cuttings (bad press re: health and social care)

Examples:

- Concerns over trainees in night surgery – Almost half of emergency operations at night involve patients being anaesthetised by a trainee doctor (**The Times: pg18**).
- The truth about NHS hospitals – NHS hospitals are in crisis with most of the problems due to bad management (**The Daily Telegraph: pg18**).
- The NHS is sick and needs major surgery – Harriet Sergeant claims that mis-management has become endemic in the hospital service and this is related to centralised government control (**The Daily Telegraph: pg25**).
- New chiefs to fight dirty hospitals as alarm grows - Health Secretary John Reid ordered new 'bug buster' posts to be set up amid fears that 150,000 people could die over the next two years from medical infections picked up on dirty hospital wards (The Daily Mirror: pg20)

These examples hardly give people confidence in the health system, but more importantly do nothing for the morale of the adults working in the health sector.

Examples of other benefits could include: Social, health and economic benefits changing people's attitudes; boosting staff morale; raising awareness of issues affecting adults when returning to learn; raising organizations overall status with key policy makers and/or communities; helping people into employment; changing government

policy; signposting of learning journeys people have taken; highlighting to providers of education and training barriers to learning people from particular backgrounds (geographical or other) experience; motivate/encourage providers to develop new ways of delivery and/or partnerships with community based providers; CONFIDENCE

WHO could you celebrate? Start with video clips (x3)

We celebrate adults who have changed their lives in some way through returning to learning. Got ideas from the group : which included: Mums, dads, workers, sportsmen and women, married, artists etc, union representatives, cleaners, teams, local communities, community groups, projects etc.

Other examples included experiences of: tokenistic awards; hospital badges for long service; Particular innovations; recognizing changes within organizations – ‘small step’ celebrations.

WHAT could you celebrate linked to learners?

Examples: programmes, institutions, communities, individuals, organizational changes; records; community groups; patient groups; settings eg. Hospitals; learning journeys;

Not much discussion around service user celebration which got the group to start discussing.....HOW? Celebration moving into ACTION. Get ideas from group. Then add to with some ideas:

Could include examples we have done or others have done: Awards, Learners Forums, learning champions scheme, promoters of learning, enthusiasts, activists, advocates, researchers (pg 95), governance.

Maybe probe this more and ask group what they have had experience of - share with colleagues and the benefits they may have seen.

TIP: When setting anything up remember to consider:

purpose, membership, ownership and feedback (remember training)

HOW? Get the group to think of different opportunities to celebrate people they know. Some examples which came out included: campaigns; awards; own organizations schemes; teams; media.

Overall benefits:

Faced with challenges of attracting new and different learners ? The process of celebration may lead to a greater understanding of the communities who are currently excluded or unpersuaded about the benefits of learning and will better inform the planning of a relevant and appropriate curriculum.

Celebration can enlighten managers and providers about the real barriers people face about returning to education. Celebration can affect/contribute to cultural changes within an organization or communities.

Additional information:

Useful websites:

www.niace.org.uk/alw/2004

www.nhsu.org.uk

www.bitesizeintros.info

www.unesco.org/education/uie/InternationalALW/

www.healthliteracymonth.org

www.cilt.org.uk

HOW CAN LEARNERS/RESIDENTS GET INVOLVED?

Enthusiasts: existing learners who may be willing to talk to groups of potential learners about what the experience has been like for them/

Champions: learners who can speak on the radio or through the press to tell their story and to motivate others by their example.

Activists: members of communities who can be supported and trained to go out and research what people would like to have provided in their area.

Advocates: speaking at conference or seminars. Learners can promote the advantages of learning to a number of different groups and can highlight important issues to professionals.

Researchers: members of a local community who can, with support and training, conduct research that finds out about local issues and about what people want to have done about them

Governance: learners who act as learner representatives on committees or boards can feed back to others what is going on and can give insight into the way the provision is shaped, encouraging transparency in decision-making.

WHAT TO CONSIDER - TIPS

1. Try to involve more than 1 learner
2. Give a clear outline of the purpose of their involvement
3. Treat learners as equals
4. Don't use jargon or acronyms
5. Allocate one person as main contact so that queries can be addressed directly
6. If paperwork involved, ensure they are accessible and easy to follow
7. Make sure expenses are covered – transport
8. Make sure childcare costs are met if relevant
9. Make sure that if someone has to give up a day's work, there is compensation
10. Time the event to fit in with learners lives

Case studies:

Croydon's Fieldway local action group has recruited and trained 12 local people as learning promoters. The promoters act as informal advocates for local people, feeding through their requirements and suggestions to local learning providers. They work in pairs, planning and co-ordinating their own strategy. Their training includes planning, team building, communication and presentation skills, and time management. Each promoter has an individual learning account. This enables them to identify and meet their learning needs as they learn to define the demands of their role.

The learning promoters liaise with local community groups, parents' groups, churches, youth groups and refugee organizations. Local bi-lingual residents have helped design leaflets to support their work. The learning promoters have been particularly successful in involving local men in learning, highlighting the fact that much of the practical learning that men enjoy is often unavailable. The promoters success in research and consultation has attracted commissions from other organizations keen to build community links but lacking the 'on-the-ground presence' and trust which the promoters have developed with the estate's communities. To date, the learning promoters have contacted 2008 people achieving a 70 per cent increase in uptakes for learning.

Women's Resource Centre (WRC), Blackburn and Darwen is open to all women. It is situated on the doorstep of a large Asian heritage neighbourhood near the heart of the town and has a high level of use by Asian women. It has a strong reputation among Asian heritage women and is perceived as a great success.

WHY?

- set up after intensive consultation with local women
- relies on user feedback to keep its relevance and support
- women feel safe there, enjoy what they do and achieve what they want
- group programmes and drop in facilities

But key to success is building relationships through intensive one-to-one individual sessions and support.

Success of centre reflected through the centre rents space in College and the College runs exactly the same provision offered through the womens centre, but does not attract any women from this community.