



**Action Learning Set
Session 1
30th September 2009**

Attendees

John-Paul Eatock – Head of Quality, Cornwall College

Rob Bosworth – Assistant Principle, Exeter College

Jenny Sparling – External Funding Co-ordinator, Petroc College

Paul Baxter - Business Innovation Co-ordinator, Petroc College

Andy Daw – Academy Head, Kingston Maurward

Matthew Porter, Sales and CRM Manager and Business Innovation Mentor, South Devon College

Claire Pearce, Manager of SW Business Innovation Accelerator Project, Cornwall College

Nell Brigham, Project Adviser, Cornwall College (Facilitator)

Apologies

Emma Hewitt, Knowledge Transfer Programme Manager, Plymouth University

Clare Rowson, Knowledge Transfer Partnership Manager, University of West England

Issue One, Petroc College

Pitching an appropriate salary level for KTP Associate / attracting good graduates

Suggestions:

1. Use a bonus system (with KTP you can build in a bonus structure to be awarded at the end of the project, this is common practice and could be a way of enhancing the basic salary)
2. Communicate the whole employment package, and it's benefits, clearly
3. Think strategically about how to manage recruitment, i.e. advertise the lifestyle and all the 'added benefits' to living in the region

Example

CC advertised to recruit for new staff members. It promoted the 'lifestyle' of living in Cornwall, but did not include specific job details or salary.

There were 104 responses and it was this advert that led to the recruitment of some of their current senior level staff members.

Action points:

1. Jenny to find out more about the 'Catalyst Project' – a government funded recruitment agency <http://catalystprogramme.org>

2. Jenny to contact J-P to find out more about the HR forum that meets twice p/yr, that is currently considering putting together a skills based database for the South West

Issue Two (Kingston Maurward)

Creating flexible contracts

Suggestions:

1. Again, look strategically at recruitment management
2. Ensure the 'buy in' of SMT – one suggested way of doing this is to bring in an external speaker
3. 'Variable Hours Contract' model. CC has begun to develop a 'bank' of specialised staff on 'variable hours' contracts. It allows capacity to be built (i.e. in Engineering) and is a way of capturing expertise. It also allows for speed and flexibility, as it only takes two weeks to recruit a 'Variable Hours' staff member. Each staff member only needs to undertake a CRB check and submit references once, and these are kept on file. They do not have to go through HR processes again. The revised contracts also include an 'internal recharge' system which enables staff members to carry out additional commitments under 'any other duties'. Their time is covered using staff under a 'Variable Contract'. CC has worked closely with the unions to develop the contracts. NB: employee's rights change after two years.

Action points:

1. J-P to circulate a standard 'Variable Hours' and 'Full Time' contract to the ALS partners
2. Andy Daw to contact Leanne Randall: HR Recruitment Manager CC, to discuss process of implementing a Variable Hours Contract and good practice –
Contact details: 01726 226724/07768670418 / leanne.randall@cornwall.ac.uk

Issue three (Cornwall College)

How to allow time for Curriculum Area Managers and academic staff to engage in Knowledge transfer activity, taking into account their teaching and management commitments esp OFSTED

(nb: this issue was misinterpreted during the discussion. The discussion was therefore focused on how to engage CAMs, rather than how to free up their time. However following discussion with J-P from Cornwall College, the following action points are still relevant)

Suggestions:

1. CC policy is to focus on building capacity for its staff members/BIMS. At this stage it has not allocated funds to cover remission of academic staff to deliver KT activity.
2. There are ways around this: one staff member is undertaking business support / KT activity as part of his MSc and therefore receives one day p/wk remission. However this is not the standard.
3. South Devon College are giving each Business Innovation Mentor, core and academic staff, two days remission per month to carry out the KT activity on

completion of their training. They are also given a bonus of £500. Petroc are considering following this model, however it is more flexible and the level of remission is likely to vary between staff members and individual circumstances.

Action points:

1. J-P contact Adele Dawson (Head of Skills, Innovation and Projects), South Devon College, to discuss above model with regard to the Falmouth Marine School, and discuss further how SDC free up the time of their academic staff
2. J-P to contact Jenny Sparling to discuss the model that Petroc is considering and whether this would be applicable to Cornwall College

Issue Four (South Devon College)

Mapping and agreeing resource requirements for a KT project with HR and Finance, and being flexible on invoicing

Suggestions:

1. Petroc College has a dedicated 'Projects' Team that hold a pre-project meeting before a new project is introduced, to carry out mapping exercises and agree on resources. Buy-in is therefore achieved early on in the process. These meetings involve HR and Finance.
2. At Cornwall College, HR and Finance Managers sit on the SMT Board and work together to agree on use of resources. SMT 'buy in' is crucial.
3. Petroc's Projects Team has flexibility of up to £5,000 before needing to inform the Finance department.
4. Invoicing is part of a well-embedded process at Petroc and forms part of the pre-project meeting.

Action Points:

1. Matthew Porter to follow up this issue with internal staff member Richard Stratford, Projects and Performance Manager, to clarify South Devon policy on this
2. Following this discussion, MP to contact Jenny Sparling to discuss Petroc's approach to engaging with HR and Finance via their pre-project meetings and dedicated Project Team

Issue Five (Exeter College)

How to receive a quick and responsive service from HR and Finance

1. Work in partnership with HR and Finance at SMT level and engage with them as 'critical friends'
2. Early communication to ensure 'buy in', understanding and commitment to KT
3. As an organisation, there must be commitment to being 'responsive' at a strategic level, for this to filter down. It is important to have a pragmatic and pro-active HR team to enable this.
4. SMT buy-in is key to making this happen, and an external speaker (i.e. Sa'ad Medhat of New Engineering Foundation) can be very effective in driving this message forward

Action points:

1. Invite Sa'ad Medhat, Chief Executive of New Engineering Foundation, to give a talk or presentation to the HR and Finance Teams about the wider picture of 'knowledge transfer', to begin process of HR 'buy in'.

Discussion Points/policy issues

1. Difficulty in recruiting sector specific specialists, as graduates use recruitment agencies in preference to responding to individual adverts, yet the cost of using a recruitment agency to access these databases is very high. This makes recruiting for certain specialist subjects, particularly engineering, very difficult.

Next Session:

Proposed date: Wednesday 18th November

Proposed venue: Duchy College, Stoke Climsland

Proposed time: am

Discussion: Strategic Advantages of Measuring the Impact of Knowledge Transfer Activity

Outline:

Pre session:

1. Issues will be circulated
2. Presentation topics will be identified to ensure each college has something to contribute and something to gain

Session:

1. Clarification of terms/ knowledge transfer 'jargon'
2. Each partner to give 5 minute brief on their college's KT activity / projects
3. Each partner to give 10 minute presentation on an identified issue regarding measuring impact: the strategic decision and strategic advantages
4. Open group discussion focusing on each issue, 10 mins per issue, with 1-3 action points to be agreed per issue

Contact details

Name	Role	College	Email	Tel
John Paul Eatock	Quality Manager (Falmouth Marine School)	Cornwall College	j-p@cornwall.ac.uk	01326 310312 / 07817 473810
Rob Bosworth	Assistant Principal for Skills	Exeter College	Matthew.Porter@southdevon.ac.uk	07595 120230
Jenny Sparling	External Funding Co-ordinator	Petroc	JSPARLING@ndevon.ac.uk	01271 338181
Paul Baxter	Business Innovation Co-	Petroc	pbaxter@ndevon.ac.uk	01271 338181 (new no. tbc)

	ordinator			
Matthew Porter	Business Development Manager / BIM	South Devon College	Matthew.Porter@southdevon.ac.uk	01803 540437
Andy Daw	Assistant Principal Employer Engagement	Kingston Maurward College	andy.daw@kmc.ac.uk	01305 215052
Nell Bringham	Project Adviser/ALS Facilitator	Cornwall College	Nell.bringham@duchy.ac.uk	01579 372316
Claire Pearce	Pathfinder SW Co-ordinator	Cornwall College	Claire.pearce@duchy.ac.uk	01579 372379 / 07879 298792
Emma Hewitt	KT Programme Manager	Plymouth University	E.Hewitt@plymouth.ac.uk	01752 588909 / 07786 332447
Clare Rowson	KTP Manager	UWE	clare.rowson@uwe.ac.uk	