

# Making it happen

## The benefits of project management for action research

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## The action research project

- **500 teachers in a large FE college**
- **Aim= more innovation and sharing good practice**
- **All teachers planned an experiment to meet an identified need for their learners**
- **Experiments took place over an academic year**
- **End of year dissemination event**
- **Capture of learning points and resources**

## Why project management?

- **Challenge of planning a large scale project**
- **Concerns about communication**
- **Sense of risk – going into the unknown!**
- **Desire to capture learning and outcomes**
- **Interest in developing skills for other initiatives**

## Project management training

**ILX group: PRINCE2 Foundation and Practitioner exams**

<http://www.ilxgroup.com/prince2-training.asp>

**CMI Dip in Programme and Project Management**

<http://www.managers.org.uk/training-development-qualifications/personal-development/qualifications/diploma-programme-and-project>

## What is project management?

***Project management is the planning, delegating, monitoring and control of all aspects of the project, and the motivation of those involved, to achieve the project objectives within the expected performance targets for time, cost, quality, scope, benefits and risks***

***Managing Successful Projects with PRINCE2, 2009***

## Planning

***The purpose of plans is to facilitate communication and control by defining the where and how, by whom and estimating the when and how much***

*Managing Successful Projects with PRINCE2, 2009*

### **Project Manager**

**Overview project plan**

**Stage plans**

**End stage review**

**End project report**

### **Researcher**

**Experiment outline**

**Steps**

**Experiment review**

**Experiment outcomes**

## Communications

### Stakeholders

***They are the people involved in or affected by the project.... If you do not enter into dialogue with all the people you need to, the level of risk will increase.....***

Newton, 2005

#### Project Manager

Dialogue pre-project

Posters and flyers

Portal

Forums

#### Researcher

Peer coaching

Online records

Video clips, resources

Evaluation feedback

## Risk Management

**A *risk* is an uncertain event or set of events that, should it occur, will have an effect on the achievement of objectives.....*Risk management* refers to the systematic application of procedures to the tasks of identifying and assessing risks, and then planning and implementing risk responses**

*Managing Successful Projects with PRINCE2, 2009*

### Project Manager

Risk workshops

Scores (P,P,I,S)

Responses

### Researcher

Prompt questions about risks

Coaching conversations

Action planning

## Capturing the learning and outcomes

***As the project's outcomes and benefits are often only realized after the project has closed, it is unfortunately easy for projects to become focused solely on creating products***

*Managing Successful Projects with PRINCE2, 2009*

### **Project Manager**

**Focus groups, surveys**

**Good practice pack**

**Dissemination event**

### **Researchers**

**Evidence of impacts**

**Own resources online**

**Summarise own findings**

## Did it work?

- **Evaluation data averaged over 80% very good/good scores, in terms of satisfaction with the project**
- **Project came in on time and on budget**
- **Some teachers carried on research work through Masters degrees or dissertations on teaching qualifications**
- **Conference papers and events related to the model have encouraged other colleges to adopt it**
- **See link for other T&L outcomes**

**<http://www.lsrn.org.uk/meeting/presentations-lsrn-conference-december-2009>**

## What did we take away from this?

### Project Manager

**Structured approach to planning**

**Awareness of what to focus on at each stage**

**Confidence in making it happen**

### Researchers

**More open to experimentation**

**More open to dialogue with colleagues**

**More focused on assessing impact of their interventions**

## Support from LSN

- **Events about action research and project management**
- **Training sessions in project management**
- **Training in Solution Focused Coaching**
- **Coaching sessions for the project leader**
- **1:1 planning sessions for the project leader**
- **Bespoke consultancy packages**

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