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Developing a CPD Framework in a time of organizational cultural conflict

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Developing a CPD Framework in a time of organisational cultural conflict

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The Open University

Life-changing Learning

Introduction

Empirical study concerned with the development of a CPD framework for a local authority children's integrated service

- Started in February 2016

- Represents next phase in a project that originally began as a Knowledge Exchange

# Methodology

Case study approach stratagem is being adopted allowing for:

- Empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within a rea life context using multiple sources of evidence (Robson, 1993)

- A prism effect that enables analysis to be undertaken at numerous levels (Eisenhardst, 1989; Drake et al, 1998; Luck et. Al., and Stake, 1995)

Journey to create a CPD Model
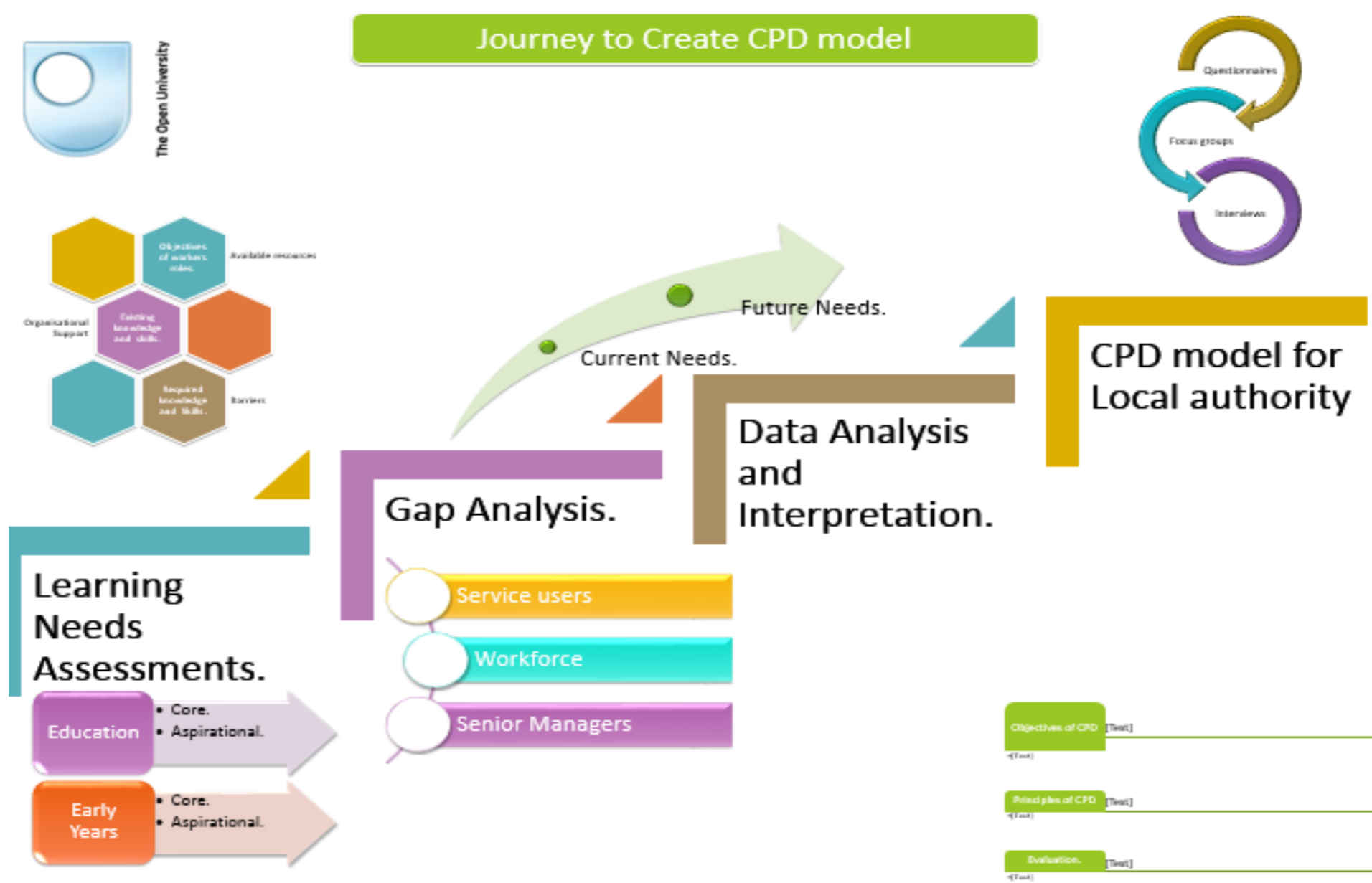
Children's Integrated Service

Background

The emergence of children's integrated services began as a result of a deliberate policy decision by New Labour to redesign the welfare state, reduce social exclusion and develop a wealth creating economy (Frost and Parton, 2009)

- Laming Inquiry (2003)
- Every Child Matters (Chief Secretary to the Treasury, 2004)
- Children Act 2004
  - Emphasis on promoting and extending partnerships
  - Improving accountability amongst a range of services including health, social care, education and criminal justice

Children's Integrated Service

- Local authorities across England adopted a range of organisational structures and arrangements that reflected their local context
  - Merger between social care and education/education and social care
  - Merger between social care, education and health
  - Commissioning body made up of separate partners

- Integrated Children's System

- Common Assessment Framework

Children's Integrated Service

The development of Children's Integrated Services have been characterized by 4 broad problems:

- Organisational

- Cultural

- Professional

- Contextual

(Robinson et al.,2008)

Themes arising

'Us and them' culture

A lack of leadership across the piece because as I say, the leadership discussion is about social work. It's not about the 40,000 other children who are not open to social work that are being supported by the integrated workforce. It's all about social work caseloads. (Respondent B)

- The 'Us and them' culture has permeated all aspects of the organisation, including learning and development

No access to CPD for any others than social care. There are no courses offered by the Council that would address the needs of my team, we are not allowed to access external courses….certainly a feeling of they're special, we're not. The irony is that we are providing training to social workers but can't get our own training which is not playing well with my team (Respondent A)

All the talk in the Council is about statutory social work so they're always the priority. Every discussion is about them, their needs, their support. (Respondent B)

Themes arising

'Various sub-cultures

- Characterised by their own professional language
- Common assumptions (deep seated values and beliefs)
- Cultural carriers – this is maintained by the ongoing process of human interaction (Martins and Terblanche, 2003)

The clashing of sub-cultures at numerous levels making the overarching tasks of co-ordination and integration extremely difficult.

Themes arising

'Fixed mental models

We are trained to a very high level and that level of analytical thinking and sometimes, we don't' always see that level of training in other professionals. Probably within the local authority we are the most qualified people, um and with that brings a level of arrogance and high expectations. So when we sometimes see lesser qualified people who may not be as good at writing reports because they have not had the formal training to write reports as we have had, we might be a bit disparaging. (Respondent A)

Emotional attachment to a mental model that protects and values identity, conveys membership and belonging, whilst at the same time highlights differences (Schein, 1993 and Leadbetter et al., 2007).

Development of a CPD model

What to take into account:

- CPD is a contested concept (Friedman and Phillips, 2001)

- Cultural dimensions which are complex, conflictual and includes micro-politics (Eraut, 2004)

- The various professional sub-cultures that are within the organisation, with each having their own definition of what constitutes CPD, differences in career stage, preferred learning style, as well as individual ambition

- Flexibility in order to take into account policies (local and national); changing service delivery models and regulatory frameworks (Friedman and Phillips, 2001)

Development of a CPD model

What to take into account:

- Formal and non-formal learning (Eraut, 2000)

- The need to articulate the purpose of CPD

- The need for certain characteristics such as: consistency, suitability and self-reflection (Friedman and Phillips, 2000)

Ideal framework

Ultimately, the ideal framework should be built on existing knowledge and skills, and also an understanding and appreciation of the various sub-cultures, with a view to achieving a holistic approach that allows individuals to see beyond their role towards joined-up smarter ways of working which are realised through a myriad of formal and non-formal learning opportunities both within and without the organisation (Ahlgren and Tett, 2010).

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