

Module 1 Topic 3 - Stakeholders and the Importance of Partnerships in the Learning City, Town and Region

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Topic Description

From the understanding of the why and the what of a Learning Community in Topics 1 and 2, this topic deals with the who and some of the how. It explores who the stakeholders are, what part they play and what their contribution is in the construction of the Learning City. Equally it explains how these stakeholders can come together in order to perform this task as well as improve their own performance and outlook. The detailed role and the lifelong learning characteristics of each stakeholder will be dealt with in later modules, but the case studies also embedded in this topic will demonstrate good practice where it occurs.

At some point you may wish to bring in an outside speaker from local government to outline stakeholder and partnership strategies in the city, town or region.

Topic Objectives

- a) To identify the main stakeholders in a learning city, town or region and discuss their role and responsibility in helping it to grow
- b) To demonstrate the need for interaction between city departments in a learning city
- c) To demonstrate the benefits of partnerships in the learning city both as a generator of new resource and as an enhancer of learning in the participants
- d) To identify the characteristics of a profitable learning partnership
- e) To show Case Studies of Good Practice at both city and individual stakeholder levels.

Lesson 1.3.1 – Who are the stakeholders in the city, town and region? (1- 16 hours)

Lesson Objective

- a) To identify the main stakeholders in a lifelong learning city, town and region.
- b) To develop their role in its construction

Suggestions for Learning Leaders

- a) Creative Discussion exercise. Ask for suggestions about who the stakeholders are in a city. List on the board or a flip-chart. Encourage to be wide-ranging. Aim for 25. Insert helpful clues – Which organisation provide learning in its broadest sense? Formal and informal learning? Where does learning take place? You should come to a list which includes the

following. (NB Each country has a different system of education and the list should reflect this)

Traditional Learning Providers

Schools and Colleges

Junior

Secondary

Tertiary College (16-18)

Universities

Vocational Education

Non-Vocational Adult Education

Teacher Training Institutions

WEA

Community Centres

Industry Education Centres

Hospitals

Local Government Administration

Staff and Management Colleges

Business Schools

Distance Learning Colleges

Open Universities

Home Tutors

Special Schools (maladjusted etc)

Non-Traditional

Churches

Sports Clubs

Uniformed organisations (cubs, scouts, guides etc)

Local Professional Organisations (eg chambers of commerce etc)

National/International Professional Organisations locally (Architects, RSA etc)

Special Interest Groups (ornithologists, rambblers etc)

University of the 3rd Age

Retired professionals (eg morbius)

Libraries

Museums

Galleries

Theatres

Trades Unions

Second Chance Schools

Individual Learning

b) Draw conclusions from this list. List much bigger than expected? Much learning going on? Formal and Informal? Many places? Whose responsibility?

c) Role-playing. Divide into groups of 3. Each group takes the part of a different stakeholder – from schools, universities, adult education, local government administration, the voluntary sector, business and industry – and puts together

i) five major contributions it can make to the building of a learning city, town and region and

ii) five points why it is the most important sector in the building of a learning city.

The stakeholder notes in **item 1 of the toolkit** will help, but only hand these out near the beginning if they are struggling, and normally 10 minutes before the end of the group discussion. Encourage them to be creative on their own account.

d) Bring together in plenary for group presentations – five minutes each to make the case.

e) Afterwards Summarise – main messages are that all stakeholders have a crucial part to play, that leadership is essential whichever sector is giving it and that there many possible creative contributions from all stakeholders.

Lesson 1.3.2 – Inter-sectoral partnerships and how they can promote Lifelong Learning in the City (1-2 hours)

Lesson Objectives

- a) To explore how different kinds of partnerships can improve the development of a Learning City, Town and Region
- b) To examine existing data on partnerships development in cities
- c) To study an example of good practice from London

Suggestions for Learning Leaders

- a) Hand out **item 2 of the toolbox**, ask them to read the actual Case Study and set the exercise as a group of 3 brainstorming-role playing exercise – one person acts as the school representative, another as the industry representative and a third as the coordinator. Ask the groups to produce as many ideas of beneficial projects between these organisations – both ways. Get them to aim for 20. After a time pull together into plenary and continue the brainstorming. Put up the subject of the brainstorm on the flip chart ‘What mutually beneficial projects would be possible between these two organisations?’ Encourage wild answers and lots of humour – aim for 100 possible projects in total .
- d) Categorise the answers into social, workplace, business, curriculum etc
- e) De-brief the brainstorm by handing out **item 3 of the toolbox** – what actually happened. Discuss with the group how this might be extended to their own situation. Emphasise i) that partnerships such as this create whole new resources for both partners and b) that creativity is the key.

Lesson 1.3.3 – Whole-City inter-sectoral partnerships and how they can work 1-16 hours)

Lesson objectives

- a) To reinforce the elements of good partnerships
- b) To present the Edinburgh Lifelong Learning Partnership as a Case Study

Suggestions for Learning Leaders

- a) Briefly recap the previous lesson on the Woodberry Down and IBM twinning scheme. Explain that this was a close one-to-one relationship between two organisations and that there are other models involving one to many and many to many.

b) Move on to a discussion of what constitutes a good partnership. Divide the group into threes and ask each to devise their own 5 key points which would define a good partnership. (Use poster sessions if there is time – each 5 points put up on the wall, groups walk around and tick which ones they considered important).

c) Bring together in plenary and group the points together. Distribute **item 6** and ask the class to identify those they had thought of and those they had missed. Debrief

d) Show **Item 7 of the tool box** – divide into groups of 2 and ask the class to complete the white boxes as they see fit. Bring together and compare notes.

e) Distribute **item 8** and ask for comments. Which particular organisations are in your city? How do they work together?

Point out that, in a true learning city, these are just some of the organisations that would be working together – which are the others? – police, finance, health, community organisations etc.

f) Divide the class into 6 groups, each representing one sector on the chart. Take one from each group and put together in circles. Ask the new mixed groups to discuss what each can do for the other in an innovative partnership within the city – this will be a series of bilateral negotiations. Pull the results together in plenary.

Toolbox for Topic 3

Toolbox Item 1

Stakeholders and Leadership (extracts from Lifelong Learning in Action – Longworth))

☒ **Local and Regional Government** . Since 90% of lifelong learning will take place in cities, towns and well-populated regions, local and regional government has a powerful and influential position at the heart of the communities under their control. Its representatives therefore need to acquire a deep understanding of the challenges that lifelong learning concepts present to the educational organizations they manage, and the changes that are needed to implement them. Indeed, many towns, cities and regions are now well on the way to becoming communities of learning. Southampton, Derby and Birmingham in UK, Espoo and Jyväskylä in Finland, Goteborg in Sweden and Adelaide, Ballarat and Bendigo in Australia come to mind as outstanding examples, and there are many others in China, Japan, USA and Canada. Equally, there are also many cities and regions which have not yet seen the connection between learning, prosperity and social stability, and have no plan to exploit that knowledge.

☒ **Universities and Higher Education**. As keepers of the intellectual traditions of a nation, they need to apply their considerable intelligence to act on behalf of the whole community rather than that section of it which affects their own sectional interest. It is they who determine the contextual basis of the assessment and accreditation strategies which separate 16-18 year old children into passing sheep or failing goats, with its knock-on effect on the nature and content of the curriculum. In many countries it is also they who train the teachers to administer this ageing and elitist system. But it is also they who have the intelligence and the knowledge to see that this does not fit into a lifelong learning philosophy and the power to change it to a friendlier, more personal, non-threatening, target-based system. In many places the Higher Education system is already highly active. The Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium, the Universities of Napier, Southampton, Stirling and Derby in the UK, Helsinki University of Technology and Tampere University in Finland, Auckland University in New Zealand and most of the Australian Universities are already widening their roles and leading the way into a lifelong learning future.

☒ **National Governments** themselves are principally responsible for creating a culture of learning within which everyone can feel comfortable whatever their age, aptitude, ability and inclination. To do so they will need to use the media both to deliver the truth about the need for change and to promote the appropriate responses to it. Many local and national organizations are highly active in promoting a similar message, but it needs to be the governmental stamp of authority to drive it home. Great strides have been made in Government thinking in most of the world's liberal democracies. Finland, Denmark, Australia, Spain and Holland are examples of countries where the full range of lifelong learning activities is addressed across the board in every sector, while UK, Germany, Sweden, Japan, South Africa and Singapore are implementing highly active and sophisticated strategies within a narrower focus on lifelong learning for adults.

☒ **Schools** , often the whipping boys for society's ills, are perhaps the most isolated of the sectors in that they appear to work from within their own little world of education and training, operating within its own rules and regulations, and insulated from what happens in the rest of the community. If they are to carry out the foundation work for learning

throughout life, they will need considerable help from everyone and every sector to help them do it. Here is where the most resources need to be put. In this book we have suggested many remedial actions, but the key to it all lies in sensitizing in-service teachers to the new tools and techniques of developing self-learning mindsets as a part of their on-going continuous education. Perhaps even more drastically, evidence of lifelong learning knowledge could be linked to the pay and promotional structure of the profession. Again there are schools in UK, Finland and Australia, many of them highlighted in this book, where lifelong learning is well understood and practised, but for the most part, as we have said elsewhere, this is the least developed sector of all. Part 2 of this book describes the crucial role that schools play in the development of a learning society.

☐ Industry and business has less obvious, but no less important role. Successful companies turn learning into wealth-creation in an increasingly knowledge-based marketplace, a task which becomes ever more difficult as they pick up the pieces of failure in other parts of the system. They too have a part to play in contributing to the development of positive mind-sets both in their own workforces and in the communities in which they exist. Many of them have succeeded in doing this as they become Learning Organizations in their own right. There are many fine examples of companies exercising corporate social responsibility in the field of lifelong learning. Multinational companies such as IBM, BP, ICI, Hoechst, Microsoft and many others, have been innovative in many aspects of lifelong learning, including the use of technology, active learning methods, skills education and encouraging their employees to engage in the community. In many ways, companies have pioneered creative lifelong learning ideas, while the public learning providers in the public sector have taken several years to catch up. Lastly, as we have seen, a true learning community is not defined only by its learning providers. The informal education systems are as much a part of the lifelong learning scene as the school, college and university. Voluntary organizations, NGO's, professional associations, special interest groups, sports clubs, quangos, hospitals, individuals and all the departments of the city from health to social services, from finance to law and order, each have something to contribute to the growth of a lifelong learning culture. In Japan for example, every department of government has been required to produce its own lifelong learning action plan, while the European Commission sets a high priority on social inclusion as a part of the total lifelong learning effort.

Toolbox for lesson 1.3.2

Item 2 Introduction to the Woodberry Down/IBM Twinning project – A Schools-Industry pioneering scheme

Norman Longworth

Woodberry Down, an inner city school, had a rich ethnic mix within its catchment area and a high proportion of one-parent families. It is situated in a difficult area of inner London with an unenviable local crime record, where only the suicidal policemen patrol alone at night and where there is very little background of learning, never mind lifelong learning.

By contrast, the city location of the mighty IBM, 3 miles away was situated in one of the richest areas in the world, employs 700 highly trained professional people – systems analysts, salesmen, managers, experts on all aspects of computing, many of them commuting in from their four-bedroomed houses with large garden in the more affluent suburbs of London.

These two apparently incompatible organizations began to explore how one could help the other. So meetings were held at both places and a social evening arranged. As a result of this a coordinator, actually the wife of one of the IBM managers, formerly a social worker, was employed to see what could be done. She talked at length with the staff of the school and with the managers in the IBM location and how the skills and knowledge of one could be used to improve the situation of the other.

As result a series of joint projects and events took place over the next 2 years which changed the outlook of teachers and IBMers towards each other, broke down the stereotypes and provided valuable human, intellectual, social and financial resources for both the school and the work location. For example,

- teams of IBM people met with school-leavers to advise on interviewing skills, running mock interviews to point out to the youngsters how they could improve their performance
- The company commissioned and paid for a large collage to be constructed by the art class for display in the foyer of the city location. This provided a talking point for visitors (which included the then prime minister) and an increase in schools industry activities by other city companies.
- Each term a discussion session on a particular topic – leadership, management, computing in education etc – was held at the school and at the IBM location for an exchange of views leading to action eg teachers on IBM management courses, donation of computers and expertise.
- The full list is shown on the next page

The IBM Woodberry Down Schools-Industry Twinning Scheme - Projects

Staff and student visits to IBM to study curriculum areas - eg commerce students to administration departments; maths and business studies to computing department. One week work experience in these departments.

Reciprocal visits to the school by staff of IBM to give lessons on business and computing. IBM staff invited to contribute to debates on curriculum

A trust fund established for voluntary contributions from staff of both organisations for new careers centre and children to Welsh study centre

Cultural development - workshop for children given by IBM-sponsored Covent Garden Opera company at the school – childrens' visits to opera house and opera.

Scrap computer/typewriter parts and obsolete paper donation to the school

Contacts established in Spain to assist in Spanish exchange scheme

School staff attended IBM management and personal development courses

IBM staff organised interviewing scheme for older pupils at the school

Woodberry Down children joined the IBM sail training programmes;

Termly debates, attended by the joint staffs, alternately at each location.

IBM staff contributed to English, Maths and Science lessons and assisted with sports - high level players of tennis, cricket, soccer and rugby

'Understanding Education' sessions at IBM by Head and Senior staff

Joint seminar for government ministers on industry/education partnerships

Frequent exhibitions of childrens' work at the IBM location

Collage commissioned for display in the central foyer of the IBM location

The above projects were developed over a period of 4 years in a twinning relationship between Woodberry Down School in London, a school with multiple problems of deprivation, violence and low achievement, and the City Branch of IBM, 2 miles away, a centre of computing and business excellence. Under the leadership of its dynamic head teacher, Michael Marland, and a lively part-time coordinator in Margaret Banks, staff at both organisations were invited to cooperate in a series of projects which would improve the educational life of the school and the awareness of inner city education in the

company. 10% of the 700 company staff agreed to collaborate, representing 70 new occasional human resources for the school. 80% of school staff participated in one or other of the projects. As shown above, the scheme was a great success until the Inner London Education Authority was closed down by the Government of Mrs Thatcher and Woodberry Down school was no more.

Norman Longworth, Project Manager.