



Facilitating Culture Change

Culture change doesn't happen on its own. It needs someone to lead and facilitate it - someone who is enthusiastic, persistent and willing to listen. These baseline characteristics are really important as they offer a foundation for engaging others in conversations about what is happening in practice. Turning these conversations into ideas and solutions for new ways of working that could influence the workplace culture require skills in facilitation that focuses on helping, encouraging and enabling others to do things differently.

So what do we mean when we talk about facilitation?

At its simplest level, facilitation is about making things easier. Harvey et al. (2002) looked closely at the role of facilitators in the context of getting evidence into practice and went on to show how facilitation can be seen on a continuum:

'Doing for others' ----- **'Enabling others'**

Whilst 'doing for others' may feel like you are making things easier or getting things done more quickly, this approach is less likely to result in a change in others or practice. Similarly, we know that simply telling people what needs to be different rarely leads to successful change.

People that effectively lead change in practice work in ways that are 'enabling'. In other words, working with individuals and teams, using approaches that build relationships, create a sense of ownership and that help people to find solutions and take action (Shaw et al., 2008). Working in this way may take a bit longer but is much more likely to help individuals and teams do things differently and continue to do this more often.

To get started, you could begin by thinking about how you currently work with others, where would you place yourself on the aforementioned continuum? If you identify things that you are doing for others, or circumstances where you feel you are telling others what to do, can you think of ways in which you could work that are more enabling?

A tool that you can use to help you think a bit more deeply about how you are working as a leader and facilitator is the 'Situational Facilitation' model developed by Hersey and Blanchard (1996). This model is useful because it can help you identify the styles of facilitation you use more or less or perhaps feel more comfortable with. In reality, it is often the case that a range of styles are needed and/or at times certain approaches may be more helpful.

To assess the styles you perhaps use more often, you can undertake the Situational Facilitation Activities 1-3. This starts with using [Situational Facilitation Characteristics Sheet \(Activity 1\)](#) to highlight the statements and words that you feel most reflect how you currently work. These are then transferred to the [Situational Facilitation Matrix \(Activity 2\)](#) where you will begin to see which styles you may use more often. Having completed this you can look at the [Situational Facilitation Strengths and Cautions Sheet \(Activity 3\)](#) and reflect on what this may mean for you

and how you work. Remember, this is not about identifying styles of facilitation that are right or wrong, rather this exercise can help you think about which styles are more appropriate for differing situations or helpful in achieving your aims and goals when working with others.

Finally, don't forget that, successful leaders don't work on their own, as you begin to think about your role as a facilitator, you could also begin to identify colleagues, other teams and people that can help and support. For example, a practice development team in your organisation or a learning and development department. Your patient experience lead, quality improvement team or research and development department may also be able to offer advice and support. Alternatively, you could start to work with other ward managers or team leaders or make contact with other care home managers.

References

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