

UNIT SUMMARY

What is the unit about?

This unit is about encouraging and supporting the identification and practical implementation of ideas in your area of responsibility. The initial ideas will primarily come from people who work in your area of responsibility, including yourself, and will focus on:

- new products and/or services;
- improvements to existing products and/or services;
- improvements to existing practices, procedures, systems, ways of working etc. within the team or those of the wider organisation or customers or suppliers.

The 'area of responsibility' may be, for example, a branch or department or functional area or an operating site within an organisation.

Who is the unit for?

The unit is recommended for first line managers and middle managers.

Links to other units

This unit is linked to units **B6 Provide leadership in your area of responsibility**, **C1 Encourage innovation in your team** and **C3 Encourage innovation in your organisation** in the overall suite of National Occupational Standards for management and leadership.

Skills

Listed below are the main generic skills which need to be applied in encouraging innovation in your area of responsibility. These skills are explicit/implicit in the detailed content of the unit and are listed here as additional information.

- Communicating
- Leadership
- Problem solving
- Thinking creatively
- Learning
- Motivating
- Reviewing
- Inspiring
- Analysing
- Decision making
- Providing feedback
- Information management
- Involving others
- Valuing and supporting others
- Risk management

Facilitating change

Encourage innovation in your area of responsibility

C2

OUTCOMES OF EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

You must be able to do the following:

- 1 Identify and, periodically, review the approach to and level of innovation within your area of responsibility.
- 2 Motivate all the people working in your area to identify ideas for new products and/or services and improvements and other potential sources of ideas and encourage the sharing of this information.
- 3 Respond enthusiastically to ideas from individuals or teams and provide constructive feedback.
- 4 Establish and operate a fair and open method for considering and selecting initial ideas for further development.
- 5 Discuss and agree ways in which selected ideas can be further developed and tested by individuals or teams.
- 6 Provide ongoing support, encouragement and resources to individuals and teams engaged in the further development and testing of ideas and help to remove any identified obstacles.
- 7 Identify, in discussion with the relevant individuals and teams, those ideas which could be practically implemented, providing help in drawing up and submitting business cases and plans in support of ideas.
- 8 Approve the practical implementation of ideas, based on the identified benefits, risks and required resources, when you have the authority to do so and monitor and review their progress.
- 9 Champion business cases and plans for ideas submitted by individuals and teams from your area to other people in the organisation and communicate progress and decisions.
- 10 Recruit and select creative people and encourage and develop the creativity of other people in your area of responsibility.
- 11 Encourage individuals and teams in your area to take acceptable risks in pursuing innovation and to make and learn from mistakes.
- 12 Ensure that the originators and developers of any ideas which are successfully implemented receive recognition for their achievement.

BEHAVIOURS WHICH UNDERPIN EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

- 1 You find practical ways to overcome barriers.
- 2 You encourage and support others to make the best use of their abilities.
- 3 You encourage and support others to take decisions autonomously.
- 4 You show integrity, fairness and consistency in decision making.
- 5 You inspire others, championing work to achieve common goals.
- 6 You make time available to support others.
- 7 You balance risks against the benefits that may arise from taking risks.
- 8 You constructively challenge the status quo and seek better alternatives.
- 9 You act within the limits of your authority.

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C2

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

You need to know and understand the following:

General knowledge and understanding.

- 1 The benefits of innovation to the organisation, customers and other stakeholders.
- 2 The difference between creativity and innovation.
- 3 How to identify the current approach to and level of innovation in a particular area, including any strengths that can be built upon, any weaknesses that need to be addressed and any obstacles to innovation that need to be removed.
- 4 How to select and apply different methods for motivating people to generate and develop ideas.
- 5 The different potential sources of ideas for new products and/or services and improvements.
- 6 The importance of communication in innovation and how to encourage communication across your area of responsibility.
- 7 The potential obstacles to creativity and innovation and whether and, if so, how they can be removed.
- 8 Key stages in the creative process.
- 9 Key stages in the innovation process.
- 10 How to provide constructive feedback on ideas to teams and individuals.
- 11 How to establish and operate fair and open methods for selecting initial ideas for further development including providing reasons why particular ideas are not being taken forward.
- 12 The range of ways in which initial ideas can be further developed and tested including setting guidelines or parameters for the use of resources, the level of acceptable risk and the reporting of progress.
- 13 How to recognise and manage risk in innovation.
- 14 How to develop a business case and plans for the practical implementation of an idea and how to support others in doing this.
- 15 The characteristics/traits/competencies of creative people and how to recognise these.
- 16 How to unlock creativity in yourself and others.
- 17 The resources required for creativity and innovation, particularly time.
- 18 How to learn from mistakes.
- 19 How to recognise the achievements of the originators/ developers of ideas which have been successfully implemented.

Industry/sector specific knowledge and understanding

- 1 The sector(s) in which your organisation works.
- 2 Information sources on innovation in your sector(s).
- 3 Current and emerging political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal developments in the sector(s) and in related sectors.

Context specific knowledge and understanding

- 1 Your organisation's strategy, if it has one, for innovation.
- 2 The approach to and level of innovation in your area of responsibility.
- 3 The role of innovation in your organisation's culture.
- 4 Organisational guidelines and procedures for developing and implementing ideas.
- 5 The limits of your authority.
- 6 The needs of your customers.