

Provide learning opportunities for colleagues

UNIT SUMMARY

What is the unit about?

This unit is about supporting colleagues in identifying their learning needs and helping to provide opportunities to address these needs.

Encouraging colleagues to take responsibility for their own learning is an aspect of this unit as is your role in providing an 'environment', for example, in your team or area of responsibility, in which learning is valued.

For the purposes of this unit, 'colleagues' means those people for whom you have line management responsibility.

Who is the unit for?

The unit is recommended for team leaders, first line managers, middle managers and senior managers.

Links with other units

This unit is linked to units **D3 Recruit, select and keep colleagues**, **D5 Allocate and check work in your team** and **D6 Allocate and monitor the progress and quality of work in your area of responsibility** in the overall suite of National Occupational Standards for management and leadership.

If your organisation is a small firm, you should look at unit *K1 Make sure your staff can do their work* which has been developed by the Small Firms Enterprise and Development Initiative (SFEDI) specifically for small firms and which **may** be more suitable to your needs. You can obtain information on the unit from SFEDI on tel 0114 241 2155 or at the SFEDI website (www.sfedl.co.uk).

Skills

Listed below are the main generic skills which need to be applied in providing learning opportunities for colleagues. These skills are explicit/implicit in the detailed content of the unit and are listed here as additional information.

- Coaching
- Demonstrating
- Providing feedback
- Mentoring
- Motivating
- Setting objectives
- Prioritising
- Planning
- Empowering
- Reviewing
- Leadership
- Valuing and supporting others
- Information management
- Communicating

OUTCOMES OF EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

You must be able to do the following:

- 1 Promote the benefits of learning to colleagues and make sure that their willingness and efforts to learn are recognised.
- 2 Give colleagues fair, regular and useful feedback on their work performance, discussing and agreeing how they can improve.
- 3 Work with colleagues to identify and prioritise learning needs based on any gaps between the requirements of their work-roles and their current knowledge, understanding and skills.
- 4 Help colleagues to identify the learning style(s) or combination of styles which works best for them and ensure that these are taken into account in identifying and undertaking learning activities.
- 5 Work with colleagues to identify and obtain information on a range of possible learning activities to address identified learning needs.
- 6 Discuss and agree, with each colleague, a development plan which includes learning activities to be undertaken, the learning objectives to be achieved, the required resources and timescales.
- 7 Work with colleagues to recognise and make use of un-planned learning opportunities.
- 8 Seek and make use of specialist expertise in relation to identifying and providing learning for colleagues.
- 9 Support colleagues in undertaking learning activities making sure any required resources are made available and making efforts to remove any obstacles to learning.
- 10 Evaluate, in discussion with each colleague, whether the learning activities they have undertaken have achieved the desired outcomes and provide positive feedback on the learning experience.
- 11 Work with colleagues to update their development plan in the light of performance, any learning activities undertaken and any wider changes.
- 12 Encourage colleagues to take responsibility for their own learning, including practising and reflecting on what they have learned.

BEHAVIOURS WHICH UNDERPIN EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

- 1 You recognise the opportunities presented by the diversity of people.
- 2 You find practical ways to overcome barriers.
- 3 You make time available to support others.
- 4 You seek to understand individuals' needs, feelings and motivations and take an active interest in their concerns.
- 5 You encourage and support others to make the best use of their abilities.
- 6 You recognise the achievements and the success of others.
- 7 You inspire others with the excitement of learning.
- 8 You confront performance issues and sort them out directly with the people involved.
- 9 You say no to unreasonable requests.
- 10 You show integrity, fairness and consistency in decision making.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

You need to know and understand the following:

General knowledge and understanding

- 1 The benefits of learning for individuals and organisations and how to promote these to colleagues.
- 2 Ways in which you can develop an 'environment' in which learning is valued and willingness and efforts to learn are recognised.
- 3 Why it is important to encourage colleagues to take responsibility for their own learning.
- 4 How to provide fair, regular and useful feedback to colleagues on their work performance.
- 5 How to identify learning needs based on identified gaps between the requirements of colleagues' work-roles and their current knowledge, understanding and skills.
- 6 How to prioritise learning needs of colleagues, including taking account of organisational needs and priorities and the personal and career development needs of colleagues.
- 7 The range of different learning styles and how to support colleagues in identifying the particular learning style(s) or combination of learning styles which works best for them.
- 8 Different types of learning activities, their advantages and disadvantages and the required resources (for example, time, fees, substitute staff).
- 9 How/where to identify and obtain information on different learning activities.
- 10 Why it is important for colleagues to have a written development plan and what it should contain (for example, identified learning needs, learning activities to be undertaken and the learning objectives to be achieved, timescales and required resources).
- 11 How to set learning objectives which are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-Bound).
- 12 Sources of specialist expertise in relation to identifying and providing learning for colleagues.
- 13 What type of support colleagues might need to undertake learning activities, the resources needed and the types of obstacles they may face and how they can be resolved.
- 14 How to evaluate whether a learning activity has achieved the desired learning objectives.

- 15 The importance of regularly reviewing and updating written development plans in the light of performance, any learning activities undertaken and any wider changes.
- 16 How to take account of equality legislation, any relevant codes of practice and general diversity issues in providing learning opportunities for colleagues.

Industry/sector specific knowledge and understanding

- 1 Industry/sector requirements for the development or maintenance of knowledge, skills and understanding and professional development.
- 2 Learning issues and specific initiatives and arrangements that apply within the industry/sector.
- 3 Working culture and practices of the industry/sector.

Context specific knowledge and understanding

- 1 Relevant information on the purpose, objectives and plans of your team or area of responsibility or the wider organisation.
- 2 The work roles of colleagues, including the limits of their responsibilities and their personal work objectives.
- 3 The current knowledge, understanding and skills of colleagues.
- 4 Identified gaps in the knowledge, understanding and skills of colleagues.
- 5 Identified learning needs of colleagues.
- 6 Learning style(s) or combinations of styles preferred by colleagues.
- 7 The written development plans of colleagues.
- 8 Sources of specialist expertise available in/to your organisation in relation to identifying and providing learning for colleagues.
- 9 Learning activities and resources available in/to your organisation.
- 10 Your organisation's policies in relation to equality and diversity.
- 11 Your organisation's policies and procedures in relation to learning.
- 12 Your organisation's performance appraisal systems.