



Regional Skills

NORTH WEST

Partnerships for Skills

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About the RSF

- Department of Education and Skills initiative to support collaboration between industry and training/education providers
- 9 RSF managers appointed nationally
- North West – Donegal, Sligo and Leitrim
 - Donegal ETB, LYIT, MSL ETB, IT Sligo & St. Angela's
- Commenced in Summer of 2016

Objectives

- Promote the services offered by the ETBs and HEIs in the region to employers
 - Work with the industry facing employees in the ETBs and HEIs (not replace what they are doing)
- Facilitate collaboration between industry and the training and education providers

Change in the Landscape

Much of the focus will change, from catering for those seeking employment to catering for those in employment

Work Based Learning

Definition – Work Based Learning

- WBL involves programmes of study where ‘students are full-time **employees** whose programme of study is embedded in the workplace and is designed to meet the learning needs of the **employees** and the aims of the **organisation.**’ (Sobiechowska & Maisch 2006).

What is Work Based Learning

Boud et al. (2001: 3):

1. There needs to be a **partnership** between the HEI and an external organisation.
2. Learners are typically **employees** in the external organisation.
3. The **content** of the programme derives from the needs of the external organisation.
4. The majority of learning should take place in the **workplace**.
5. The HEI is responsible for **assessing** the learning and maintaining academic quality standards.

Introduction to WBL

- Traditionally Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) concentrated mainly on preparing learners for employment rather than providing learning and training for people in employment.
- This new emphasis on concentrating on people in employment is due to a number of reasons including:
 - the **recognition by employers** of the increasing importance associated with knowledge and skills acquisition in the modern business environment,
 - Increased **student numbers** for HEIs
 - **government policy** that encourages interaction between industry and higher education.

Sample WBL programmes

Higher Cert in IT Support - (2013-15)

- This is a WBL programme for an individual employer
- Level 6 Programme (120 Credits)
- Completed 2 mornings per week over 2 years.
- Combines RPL, WBL, E-Learning and Mentoring, employees from the IT Sector can complete programme 2 mornings per week over 18 months.

Mondays 9.30am-12.30pm

Wednesdays 9.30am-12.30pm

	Credits	Teaching Hours	Class Dates
Study Skills	5	12	September 4th, 9th, 16th & 18th
Computer Systems	5	27	September 23rd - December 2nd
Operating Systems	5	27	September 25th - December 4th
Software Development 1	5	27	January 13th - March 24th
Computer Networks 1	5	27	January 15th - March 26th
Industrial Placement	60	0	April - September
Computer Networks 2	5	27	April 30th - July 2nd
Operating Systems 2	5	27	April 28th-July 14th
Computer Applications	5	15	July – August 12th
Software Development 2	5	30	September 15th - November 24th
Database Technology	5	30	September 17th - November 26th
Mainframe Development 1	5	30	January 19th- March 23rd
Quality Testing 1	5	30	January 21st - March 25th,

BBS IN RETAIL MANAGEMENT PRACTICE

- This WBL programme designed for a sector
- The programme commenced in Dublin September 2012.
- 64 places available on the course. Over 200 applications.
- Programme delivered in two central locations nationally - Dublin and Galway
- Currently over 200 learners on the programme.

	Semester 1 (September –December)	Semester 2 (January-June)
YEAR 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner Development (Sept. 7th & 8th) • IT for Retail (October 5th, 6th, 12th) • Marketing Principles (Nov 2nd, 3rd, 11th) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications (Jan 20th) • Retail Marketing (Feb 15, 16, 24th) • Legal issues (April 4th & 5th) • Work Placement 1
YEAR 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRM in Retail • Economics • Business Organisation Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Care • Business Information Systems. • Retail Management. • Retail Store Design • Work Placement 2
YEAR 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accounting for Retail • Consumer Behaviour in Retail • Operations Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchasing • Entrepreneurship & Innovation • WBL project

Why this programme is a success

- Steering committee made up of retailers, Retail Ireland Skillnet and HEI
- Designed by retailers for retailers
- 50% funded
- **Accelerated** Learning – 2-3 days per month for 3 years (September –May) with significant online & independent learning.
- **Recognition** of Prior Learning
- **Assessment** linked to workplace.
- Enthusiasm from HEI
- Highly Respected **Guest lecturers**
- **Marketing of the programme** (see brochure, information evenings, social media, company visits)

Exercise 1

Identify the key benefits / motives for the 3 stakeholders provided by WBL programmes

1. Employer Benefits / Motives
2. Learner Benefits / Motives
3. HEI Benefits / Motives

Benefits / motives of WBL for 3 stakeholders:

Employer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved performance & increased motivation• More flexible workforce• Minimal disruption to the workplace• Recruit and retain staff
HEI	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase student numbers• Improved relationship with employers – guest lectures, placement, research• Learning acquired from industry engagement
Learner	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Qualification help with career progression• Support from employer (employer pays for it , completed during work, mentor support)• More motivated at work and feel valued

Exercise 2

- What challenges would WBL programmes present to:
 - College / University
 - Employer
 - Learner

Challenges

Employer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifying their training & education needs• Paying for the training / education• Selecting learners to complete the programme• Coping when learners are completing the programme• Different organisational culture from HEI• Keeping employees when the programme finished
HEI	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Managing Employer Expectations (develop programme quickly, flexible content, instant improvement)• Additional stakeholder in decision making process• Spare capacity• Accelerated nature of programme• Different organisational culture from the employer
Learner	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Juggling 3 balls in the air at the same time• Extra responsibility as a result of the WBL course

Research into WBL Programme

- 2106 conducted research into the **prerequisites** for a successful WBL partnership.
- Depth interviews conducted with HEI staff and Industry representatives.
- The data collected identifies the following as important for successful WBL partnerships:

Prerequisites for successful WBL partnership

- Trust and Commitment
- Regular communications between stakeholders
- Roles and Responsibilities of stakeholders made clear
- Bespoke programme design (employer and learner input)
- Flexibility (dates and content change)
- Assessments linked to workplace
- Inform learners labour processes and help with academic writing
- RPL
- **Ensuring an organisational culture that recognises requirements of three stakeholders**

Bridging Cultural Differences

- ‘Overcoming the cultural differences between private industry and third level institutions is a major challenge. Both partners need to be understanding and realise that for the partnership to work, each partner is going to have to be patient. There will have to be compromises on both sides. The ability to overcome the cultural differences will depend a lot on the personalities of the partner representatives’

(Respondent E – academic).



lyit

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DBA Research 2013 - 17

**To determine the impact of organisational culture on
WBL partnerships**

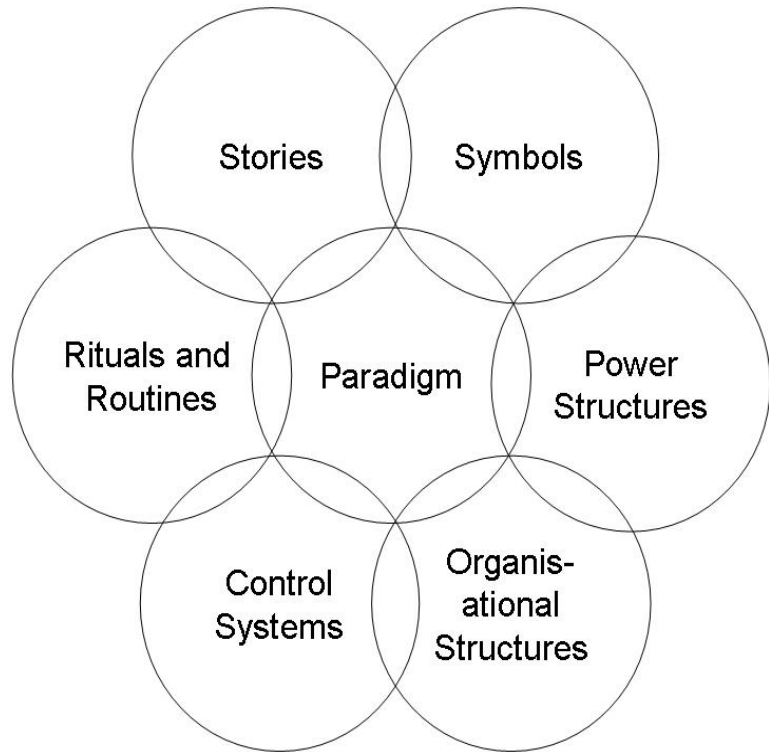
What is Organisational Culture?

Organisational Culture:

“denotes a wide range of social phenomena, including an organization’s customary dress, language, behavior, beliefs, values, assumptions, symbols of status and authority, myths, ceremonies and rituals.

Scott, Mannion, Davies, and Marshall (2003, p.925)

Johnson's Cultural Web (1992)



- The cultural web is based on six interrelated and overlapping factors, which influence and are influenced by the central cultural paradigm.
- Look at cultural web descriptions

Some cultural differences that caused challenges

- Different languages
- Different approaches to time
- Ability to share power
- Different priorities
 - HEI – Learner welfare and academic rigour
 - Employer – productivity and performance
- HEI had systems, policies and procedures designed for full time learners and programmes that were challenging when designing, delivering, assessing and evaluating WBL programmes



Exercise 3

- Prepare a cultural web describing how the culture should look like for the HEI

Building a real sustainable relationship with employers

1. Bespoke WBL programmes existing staff
2. Input into Full Time Programme provision for future staff
3. Recruitment
 - Full Time / Part Time work
 - Placements (long term placements)
4. Opportunities to suggest projects for FT learners
5. Joint Research
6. Guest Speaker
7. Events

Sample Portal

Sectoral Approach

- Education and training providers collaborate to address needs of each sector
- Get cooperation of the employer representative bodies
- Pick 3-4 main sectors in the region
- Pilot IT sector initially and consider other sectors

Employer Cluster Group for the NW- structure

- Sectoral councils comprised of employers, employer representative bodies and training and education providers.
 - Individual employers (one person representative)
 - Employer Representative bodies e.g. Chambers of Commerce
 - Department of Social Protection (Intreo)
 - Further Education bodies (Level 1-6)
 - Higher Education bodies (Level 6-10)

Objectives of the IT sector cluster group

- To influence the IT courses developed and delivered in the local ETBs and HEIs
 - Input into design of full time programmes
 - Apprentices
 - WBL programmes for existing employees
- Recruitment
 - Help employers recruit for Full time and part time positions
- Placements
- To promote IT sector to parents, school children and career guidance teachers
- Collaborations in relation to research, guest talks, new programme development, projects, events (e.g. recruitment fairs)

Thank you

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