Exploring Challenges and Action in the Implementation of Resilience

This workshop addresses the challenges faced when designing and implementing tools for resilience. We will explore a methodology called Action Learning and put it into practice to solve, in real time, challenges workshop members face when implementing tools or methodologies to enable resilient performance.

Convened by The Resilience Shift and facilitated by The Schumacher Institute, this workshop is developed from the experience of running three workshops within critical infrastructure sectors, but applies to any sector and is relevant to all practitioners who are researching, developing, marketing or implementing a tool or methodology to work towards resilient performance of a system.

Background

There is a well-recognised need to make resilience tangible, practical and relevant, and that sustained implementation of tools to achieve resilient performance is difficult to achieve (Lloyds Register Foundation, 2015, Foresight review of resilience engineering, Report Series: No. 2015.2). In order to explore these issues, the Resilience Shift have recently run three workshops linking resilience tool developers with potential end users of those tools. Based on an Action Learning methodology, participants have shared and learned from implementation issues they face, identifying gaps and forming new ideas to solve those problems. The aim was to seek ways to support individuals in ensuring that change takes place and is embedded, but also to look to develop industry-level support.

Action Learning

For a system to transition from non-resilient to resilient performance, and to sustain that performance, stakeholders must act to make change, learn from those actions and review in a continuous loop. Action Learning is one practical approach to enable this.

Based on Drs Mclean and Gill's research and practical experience of organisational change, if the human factors of change are not attended to and culture change is not achieved it is difficult to sustain new ideas. The evidence base suggests that action learning can help to achieve this.

In this method people implementing change of any type are supported as members of a facilitated action learning set. In these sets each member is given an opportunity to present an example of what is being implemented, the context and associated issues as well as an aspect of implementation with which they are currently struggling. Set members listen attentively to the short

presentation, asking only questions for information at this stage. These questions give the presenter information about what they may be missing. The listeners pay close attention to the content but also to the language used, where emphasis is placed, what is not said and to non-verbal messages conveyed by the presenter's body language.

The next phase is the analysis where set members explore 'what is going on'. The assumption made is that the presenter is competent, so the cause of the difficulty must be external to the presenter, or in some way connected with their way of implementing the change. Critically, no solutions are permitted at this stage.

Finally, solutions are suggested, and the presenter selects one or two they believe they can try.

Before the close of the set all members describe one concept they take away as learning, which are collated by the facilitator to form a handbook unique to that set to which all members have access. Importantly what is discussed and presented in the set is confidential.

Workshop principles

At this workshop you will be an active member of an action learning set, and you will be invited to join a community to explore implementation challenges on an ongoing basis. There will be time to consider two or three issues of implementation and all members will have a chance to contribute and to align challenges discussed with their own experience, reflecting on how issues and solutions could be applied to their own situation. Also presented will be a synthesis of the results of previous Resilience Shift workshops, and practical tips on how to apply the principles in your own organisation. The work of The Resilience Shift in creating a Platform to compare resilience tools and a Community of Practice will also be shared with indications of how you can contribute to these.

What you will be doing

There are two opportunities for participating in this workshop, one in the morning and one in the afternoon on Monday 24th June. Both share the same format and agenda, as below:

- "Creating our Implementation Community" - Introductions to the workshop objectives and expected outcomes;
- "What is Action Learning?" – Explanations of the origins of the methodology and how it is applied;
- Action Learning Set 1 – Group working to discuss action learning, to determine subjects for discussion and to apply the methodology on an implementation challenge;
- Coffee break;
- Action Learning Set 2 – Group working on another implementation challenge and then exploration of what worked well and less well;
- "How to Achieve Sustained Implementation" - What The Resilience Shift is doing to solve the challenges of implementation, a tool 'platform' and the community of practice;
- Personal Action Planning - How you might use the principles of Action Learning in your own organisation to build into your resilience plan.

Register interest

In order to ensure that the workshop achieves full benefit for attendees, we would love to hear from you. If you are interested in attending, please email simon.gill@schumacherinstitute.org.uk outlining the sector you represent and your role (as researcher, developer, marketeer or implementer of a tool or methodology, or if you have another interest).

Also, to gain maximum benefit from the workshop, we would ask you to give a little thought to an issue of current or recent practice which you would like to explore.

About Us

The focus of the Resilience Shift is to do work, and support others to do work, that will shift the worldwide approach to resilience in practice. This will help practitioners involved in critical infrastructure to make decisions differently, so that it continues to function under both ordinary and extraordinary circumstances.

The Schumacher Institute is an independent think tank for environmental, social and economic issues and a thought leader in the area of systems thinking and resilience. The Institute brings together a network of individuals to undertake research and consultancy on the complexity of our world and how to make it fairer and more sustainable.