THE HENLEY FORUM
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Henley Business School
UNIVERSITY OF READING

OUR 2020/21 PROGRAMME

Our comprehensive programme of research and development is designed to help Henley Forum Member organisations to develop and sustain the dynamic capabilities they need to thrive in challenging and rapidly changing conditions. We also help practitioners in knowledge management, learning and performance, OD and change to challenge their thinking and to advance their professional practice. Join us to join in the conversation.

	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR
1. Member events 'Becoming agile' ADAPT	**Part 1:** Tech trends changing the workplace Tue 21 Apr			**Part 2:** Becoming digital, the human face Wed 15 Jul				**Part 3:** Engaging a contingent workforce Tue 24 Nov			21st Annual Henley Forum Conference* Wed 17-Thu 18 Feb 2021	
2. Professional development LEARN			Advanced course in Knowledge Management* Tue 23-Wed 24 Jun			Advancing your Change & OD Practice* Tue 22-Wed 23 Sep Masterclass: OD & Change refresh* Thu 24 Sep						
3. Tailored support INNOVATE	Virtual Learning (Set 1 begins) Research projects begin	Peer Assist (TBC)				Virtual Learning (Set 2 begins)				Peer Assist (TBC)		
4. THF network KNOW	**NEW** During the course of this year we will be actively developing The Henley Forum network to help you stay connected with one another and with what's going on *Informal peer learning - reflections and conversations - celebrating and sharing member stories* **Watch this space!**											

* We welcome non-members to these events (fees apply)   This is a *draft* programme (28/01/20) and may be subject to change   Full details of our events will be published at www.henley.ac.uk/henleyforum

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1. MEMBER EVENTS

■ **Henley Forum themed meetings** help our Members to explore real-life challenging issues. Using a range of inputs and workshops, we encourage participants to develop actionable insights to address their challenges. Over the Autumn we asked Henley Forum Members about their most pressing needs and priorities. In response, this year's theme is 'Becoming Agile'. Put the dates in your diaries now, or book with Ellie Done.

    Part 1: Tech trends changing the workplace   (Tuesday 21st April)
    Part 2: Becoming digital, the human face   (Wednesday 15th July)
    Part 3: Engaging a contingent workforce   (Tuesday 24th November).

■ **Our flagship Annual Conference** attracts a world-class line up of practical academics and thoughtful practitioners ready to share their diverse experiences and insights. We are already working to secure in-demand speakers for our 2021 Annual Conference. If you have any ideas for speakers, please let us know.

■ Members have TWO places included their membership for each event and for our Annual Conference. Non-members are very welcome at our Annual Conference (fees apply). Book with Ellie (henleyforum@henley.ac.uk)

2. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

■ **Henley Forum development programmes in KM and OD** are designed to help advance professional practice in *Knowledge & Organisational Learning* and in *Organisational Change & Development*. We believe that knowledge professionals need **both skillsets** to develop and sustain knowledgeable orgs.

23-24 June	**Knowledge Management Advanced Course** *Improve your practice. Practice your improvement*	■ We refreshed our well-regarded **Knowledge Management Advanced Course** for 2018 and it's back again for 2020 ■ Chris Collison leads this popular programme as it returns for its 9th year ■ If you attended this course more than 3 years ago, why not come back for a refresher? ■ Previous participants said about their experience: *'Outstanding - this is what we pay the membership fee for. Thank you!'* *'Really practical actions to take away. Good exercises. Well timed'.* Members have TWO places included. Book now with Ellie Done Open to non-members (fees apply)
22-23 September	 **Advancing your Change & OD practice** *Develop a mindset & skillset for change*	■ The word is out! Our Organisation Development programme is beginning to make quite a name for itself. And you don't need an OD role to benefit. It's for anyone who needs to land change with people. ■ **Advancing your Change & OD Practice** returns for the 5th time ■ Delivered by two leading OD practitioners: Dr Sharon Varney, Henley Forum & John Hovell, Stratactical ■ Previous participants said about their experience: ■ *'Superb! Theory and practice combined. Will start using tomorrow'* *'Challenging, educational, affirming, confidence building'* *'Excellent. The beginning of a journey of self-discovery'.* Members have ONE place included. Book now with Ellie Done Open to non-members (fees apply)

24 September **Masterclass: OD & change refresh** *Reconnect, refresh and re-energise*		- For those who've attended our 2-day **Advancing your OD Practice** - Tailored to <u>your</u> needs. We design it around those who sign-up. - We introduced this 1-day workshop in 2019 and got all 5-star reviews - Reconnect and make new connections - Refresh and re-energise your OD & change practice - Small group - Previous participants said about their experience: *'Thanks again for a great session. Definitely feeling more energised and focused! Lots of food for thought until next time'* *'I'm already looking forward to next year'* - Led by: Dr Sharon Varney, Henley Forum & John Hovell, Stratactical Open to ALL previous participants from our Advancing your OD & Change Practice programme (fees apply)

3. TAILORED SUPPORT: WORKING ON <u>YOUR</u> WICKED PROBLEMS – PREGISTER YOUR INTEREST NOW!

- Our programme of **Henley Forum Research**, **Peer Assist** and **Virtual Learning** is <u>reserved for Members</u>. These activities provide more tailored support to help you make progress on your wicked problems. They are designed to boost the value that you and your organisation gain from your Henley Forum membership.

April start **Sept start**	**Virtual learning sets** *Maximising value, for you*	- A powerful format to gain support and challenge from peers in other Member organisations to help you make progress on your more challenging work problems. - We plan to offer two Virtual Learning Sets this year: the first kicks off in *April* and the second in *September:* 8 members maximum per set 5 x 3-hour meetings a year. Just 15 hours with huge personal development potential! - Our virtual format offers flexibility, making it much easier to participate from wherever you live or work. - Here's what people had to say about their experience: *'I had no idea what to expect... and I didn't expect to get as much out of it as I have. It's been really helpful'* *'Impartial yet supportive working sets was a fantastic sounding board environment. Excellent facilitation by Michael'* *'Do I recommend Action Learning? Yes-without a doubt, it's a simple, straightforward and timesaving way of making the use of the knowledge and lived experience of others'.* - Members have ONE place included in each set. - Interested? Contact our Henley Forum Co-ordinator, Ellie Done (henleyforum@henley.ac.uk) **More on the Virtual Learning Set format** on your Members' website. Reserved for Henley Forum Members

| May (TBC) Jan (TBC) | **Virtual peer assist** *Solving problems, maximising learning* | We were delighted to re-introduce the **Peer Assist**, with a new virtual format, into our Members programme in 2019. People liked the format. So we carried out an After Action Review to help us to tweak things and make the process work even better. What is a peer assist? *It starts with a <u>request for help</u> from an individual or group* *A <u>facilitated virtual meeting</u> to surface experience/knowledge from a group of peers responding to the request for help* *It is <u>recorded and made available</u> to all participants, together with any examples or resources offered during the meeting* *Always a <u>positive learning experience</u>, for all parties.* Here's what people had to say about their experience: *'Go for it! A peer assist is a very useful structured way to learn from the experience of others in a really short intensive space of time. They are a good environment in which people feel safe – to ask questions and to say: 'I really don't know what to do about this – what do you think?'.* If you've got a request for help, please contact Dr Divyata Sohal, our Henley Forum Network Lead, for an informal conversation (d.sohal@henley.ac.uk). **More detail on the Peer Assist format** on your Members' website.

Reserved for Henley Forum Members |

- Our **Research Projects** enable us to advance practice. Our research is leading-edge, designed to develop new knowledge and practical insights that help Member organisations to activate their full dynamic potential. We focus on the more difficult organisational challenges facing our Members.

Participation in our Research Projects offers significant benefits for the people and organisations involved. It is reserved for Henley Forum Members. We work closely with project participants to shape our projects.

Last Autumn we asked Henley Forum Members about their most pressing needs and priorities. In response, this year, we are offering up to 3 research projects on the following themes, subject to interest:

1. **Meaningful measurement in a dynamic environment**
   - Project lead: Professor Jane McKenzie. Research Assistant: Ola Oladosu
   - Kick-off meeting Monday 20th April (TBC)
2. **In it for the long haul: Rising to the challenge of sustaining KM & OD**
   - Project lead: Dr Sharon Varney. Research Assistant: Dr Divyata Sohal
3. **Energy commitments in change: Sustaining engagement and avoiding fatigue**
   - Project lead: Professor Karen Jansen.

ACTION: There are sign-up sheets for the all the above at our Annual Conference. So, get your names now if you want to find out more about these projects, or email **Ellie Done** (henleyforum@henley.ac.uk) **by 29th March.** Members may take part in <u>all </u>the Research activities, Peer Assist and Virtual Learning groups.

4. THE HENLEY FORUM NETWORK

- This year we are pro-actively building the community aspects of your Henley Forum with **THF Network**.

- There will be a renewed focus on facilitating communications and informal knowledge sharing across our Member community. For example:
    - **curated connections** - new opportunities for informal contact between members to share ideas and provide stretch and challenge
    - **creating learning spaces** - for members to reflect on learnings from events and projects and engage in collaborative sensemaking to help them apply the knowledge and insights gained
    - **celebrating successes** - following the success of The Henley Forum 2020 Awards, we want to actively recognise and celebrate our members' stories and excellence in practice
    - **THF community communications –** Members newsletter, a revitalised Knowledge Flow.

- If <u>you</u> have ideas for developing THF Network, please contact our new Henley Forum Network Lead, Dr Divyata Sohal, for an informal conversation (d.sohal@henley.ac.uk).

PROPOSED RESEARCH PROJECT 1: Meaningful measurement in a dynamic environment

When change never stops, it becomes hard to evaluate what difference KM, OL, and OD programmes make. So, in unpredictable and dynamic circumstances, the question becomes *how can any organization meaningfully assess the strategic importance and value from knowledge, learning and change activities?*

Why is this research needed?

Generic measurement approaches often neglect the effect of context, for example, specific local circumstances and/or resources that may have a significant influence on outcomes. Benchmarking against standards of good practice can provide some useful insights; yet, by its very nature, the process has limitations in dynamic environments, both because (1) benchmarks are an assessment of what has worked well historically but the past may not predict the future, and (2) of necessity the benchmarking process has to remains fairly static to provide a sensible comparison to standard.

How can measurement be meaningful?

Whilst there are no simple answers, a first step is to ask what is the purpose of any form of assessment? In other words what makes it sufficiently meaningful that you can use the results to make a difference? In a complex and dynamic environment, any objective that is about proving worth, success or performance can only deliver short term satisfaction. What might be more meaningful would be using a relatively straightforward and adaptable mechanism for long term strategic monitoring, so that the process produces feedback that helps the organization improve and become more able to absorb change.

The degree of disturbance that a system can absorb is a mark of resilience, which is broadly defined as "the capacity to experience massive change and yet still maintain the integrity of the original"[1]. *Could one purpose for monitoring and evaluating the effect of knowledge, learning and change activities be to improve organizational resilience?[2]*

What is involved?

The Henley Forum invites you to join us in a project to explore different ways to evaluate knowledge learning and change programmes in dynamic environments and consider how forms of assessment might contribute to enhanced organizational resilience in that context.

To make the project as accessible as possible to all our members, the plan is to kick off the work with a one-day workshop **on 20th April at Henley**. This will allow anyone interested to learn more about alternative approaches to monitoring such as developmental evaluation, realistic evaluation, and the 'vital signs' of change. Then the research would continue virtually with each organization; we would help them experiment with the approaches in their own context to gauge the benefits. Together we can learn how assessing KM, OL and OD activities in dynamic environments can be more meaningful.

Potential benefits for you and your organisation

- New insights on alternative approaches will help you re-assess your measurement practices.
- Peer comparison with other participating organisations gives the chance to develop ideas.
- Virtual discussions with academic staff offer an external perspective on monitoring activities.

Project leads: *Professor Jane McKenzie, Ola Oladosu – Research Assistant*

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[1] Westley, F., Zimmerman, B. & Patton, M. 2009. *Getting to maybe: How the world is changed,* Vintage Canada
[2] Resilience is a parter to agility: Holbeche, L. 2015. *The Agile Organization: How to Build an Innovative, Sustainable and Resilient Business*, Kogan Page.

PROPOSED RESEARCH PROJECT 2
In it for the long haul: Rising to the challenge of sustaining KM & OD

Knowledge Management (KM) brings with it the promise of delivering competitive advantage and organisational value. However, in order to realise this value in a successful and sustainable way, it is imperative that an organisation's KM in turn is also sustainable.

Organisation Development (OD) too offers strategic advantage through enhancing organisational effectiveness and providing practices to help land change with people. There has been growth in OD in the UK over the past decade or so, but in the US, OD practitioners have been concerned about sustaining OD practice for just as long.

Working in highly dynamic, unpredictable and demanding environments, the question emerges, ***how might we ensure an organisation's sustained engagement with KM and OD to deliver ongoing strategic value?***

Why is this research needed?

Many organisations struggle to sustain Knowledge Management and Organisational Development efforts over the long term. In a dynamic context, and as people come and go, organisational support, attention and resource allocation for KM & OD activities can wax and wane. This can leave the people involved in KM and OD work feeling vulnerable and the activities looking precarious.

What do KM and OD have in common?

The challenge of sustainability is currently being felt in *both* the KM and OD communities. We've noticed a number of common characteristics and challenges between these two fields, so we'd like to explore both together and to share the learning across the communities. Common characteristics include:

- o growth over the past 20 years
- o criticism for being a management fad that is prone to fade away due to lack of sustainability
- o one particular challenge practitioners face is the lack of a 'one size fits all' model of KM or OD
- o in highly dynamic environments a KM/OD strategy relevant in today's context and business needs may not deliver competitive advantage in the future
- o overlaps with other management practices such as human resource management, continuous improvement, information technology, communications and organisational learning.

What is involved?

Building on previous Forum research and other academic insight, we will develop share a framework to help you to assess how embedded KM and OD practices are in your organisation. (You may focus on either KM or OD, or both). We will explore what helps to embed KM/OD programmes and the actions of practitioners into organisational practice. We will consider what happens when the context and people change.

Potential benefits for you and your organisation

- New insight on how to develop, increase and sustain the strategic value of KM & OD in your organisation
- Peer learning with other participating organisations may help you to develop new ideas and strategies
- Discussions with academic staff offer an external perspective on this important challenge.

Project leads: *Dr Sharon Varney, Dr Divyata Sohal – Research Assistant*

If you'd like to register your interest, or if you have any questions about this project, please contact
sharon.varney@henley.ac.uk +44 (0)7946 581875

PROPOSED RESEARCH PROJECT 3

Energy commitments in change: Sustaining engagement and avoiding fatigue

Given the high rate of change experienced in organisations, employees are increasingly being asked to simultaneously commit their energy to multiple work tasks and one or more change processes. Yet energy is a limited resource, so employees must make choices about where to direct their energy at any given time.

With increasing demands, an individual's available energy pool is spread thinner and thinner, making it essential to understand **how individuals choose to commit their energy to work tasks vs. change activities, and what impact these choices have on overall work/change engagement and fatigue?**

Why is this research needed?

Recent research found that individuals engage in different patterns of energy commitments. Some focus all their energy on business-as-usual tasks, while disengaging from change activities. Others throw themselves into change at the cost of their regular work. Still others attempt to support both sets of activities, but suffer fatigue and burnout. By identifying the factors that contribute to these choices, we can avoid costly implications of fatigue, burnout, and turnover, and help develop resilience-developing strategies for navigating both successfully.

What is involved?

To be confirmed. We are currently posting this project to gauge interest.

Potential benefits for you and your organisation

- New insights on the demand for multiple energy commitments and their impact on engagement.
- Organisational comparisons can identify additional factors related to culture and change contexts.
- Important insights into the causes and consequences of change fatigue.

Project lead: *Professor Karen Jansen*

If you'd like to register your interest, or if you have any questions about this project, please contact Karen.Jansen@henley.ac.uk.