

CKOP Unconference on ‘The Future of Professional Knowledge and Learning’ and Research Development Day

13 & 14 June 2018

The Centre for Knowledge in Organisations and Professions (CKOP) recently hosted two events - an ‘unconference’ on *‘The Future of Professional Knowledge and Learning?’* at The Open University in London on 13 June and a Research Development Day on 14 June at the Milton Keynes campus for FBL academics and PhD students. Both events were attended by invited guests: Ann Cunliffe, Professor of Organization Studies at Fundação Getulio Vargas-EAESP, Sao Paulo Brazil, Hillary Sommerlad, Professor of Law and Social Justice at University of Leeds and Staffan Furusten, Associate Professor of Management at Stockholm School of Economics and Director of the interdisciplinary Stockholm Centre for Organizational Research (SCORE) at Stockholm University.

The unconference was intended to promote conversation, develop future research collaborations and plan practical actions. 24 attendees from a range of backgrounds including business, nursing, law and management consultancy. FBL academics, PhD and MBA alumni students also joined the event. Using the ‘Open Space’ facilitation technique and led by Lloyd Davis, the participants created and managed the agenda of the unconference themselves. Each participant proposed a topic they wanted to discuss. In the fluid nature of the day, three sessions (8-9 topics each) were organised to enable discussion and collaboration.



The first session was structured around problematising current understanding of professional knowledge and difficulties in managing professional learning. The second session focused on several issues related to the future of professional knowledge. Several groups looked at the dynamic development of professional knowledge over time from different perspectives. The third session explored professional knowledge in different contexts and role of individuals in facilitating knowledge sharing.

Finally, the ‘unconference’ closed with reflection and feedback. Many participants highlighted the positive nature of their experience and wish to meet again to continue discussion and plan possible projects. The organizers will create a wiki to capture learning from the event which will be linked to the CKOP webpage.

The Research Development Day began with presentations by guest speakers about their research and how it links to CKOP. They discussed current issues related to organisational knowledge and learning, followed by a question and answer session. Round table discussions invited participants to discuss different topics, facilitated by invited speakers. The speakers shared their experiences of managing reviewers and paper publishing (Ann Cunliffe), interdisciplinary collaboration (Staffan Furusten) and engaging with practitioners (Hillary Sommerlad).

Afternoon sessions covered a range of topics and stimulated discussion on developing a convincing methodology (Ann Cunliffe), applying for funding (Staffan Furusten) and using theory in applied research (Hillary Sommerlad). The final session was designed in a free format. The topic of 'academic careers' was proposed, including the issues faced by those who deviate from conventional career norms. The guest speakers shared their insights on how to deal with changes in academic life. Videos of the guest speakers' talks will be posted on the CKOP webpage.

