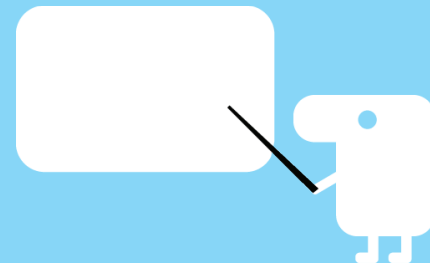


WELCOME TO 'THINK NEWS'!



Welcome to our November 08 edition of Think News – the occasional newsletter to keep you informed about the work we're getting involved with.

As well as continuing to work with our core audience of NHS organisations on the implementation of the KSF, e-KSF and AT-Learning, we've been busy recently expanding our portfolio so that we can help organisations with a wider range of challenges. The Darzi review highlighted the importance of quality development of NHS workforces. To respond to this need we've built a range of quality feedback and evaluation tools (AT-Feedback), and improvement processes and tools for Learning and Development departments (including learning process design, high performing teams, and rapid e-learning). We're also finding that lots of organisations need support at the moment with skills audits, particularly to respond to pandemic flu planning, and we're using AT-Feedback to help with this in a number of places around the country.

The other exciting news is the launch of our new website! There's more about this, below, but you can also go straight to www.think-associates.co.uk to see what we're up to in more detail.

I hope you find the information in this newsletter useful and stimulating. We plan to produce a newsletter whenever we have sufficient new things to tell you about, without bombarding you with emails of course!

If you don't wish to receive this publication in future then please email info@think-associates.co.uk with the words 'Unsubscribe Think News' in the subject line. However, if you like what you read here, please let us know, and forward it to anyone else you think would be interested.

Tim Newham, Director, Think Associates Ltd.

NEW THINK WEBSITE LAUNCHED

We have recently launched our new website that can be found at: www.think-associates.co.uk. You will find a wealth of new information on the increasingly broad range of products and services that we have been providing to our predominantly NHS client base for some time. We think that you'll be particularly interested in the information on how we can help you:

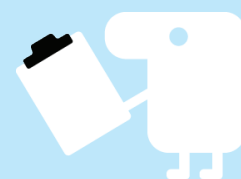
- » To effectively implement the KSF.
- » Build on your existing KSF / e –KSF implementation to assist with workforce planning and role redesign.
- » To effectively implement learning management systems.
- » Build on your existing systems and processes to ensure your Learning and Development team is operating effectively.
- » Achieve compliance with national policy relating to mandatory training.
- » Develop your e-learning strategy.

- » Provide a solution to your 'rapid e-learning' needs.
- » To effectively implement feedback systems and build a range of organisational information to meet a diverse range of needs.

We are already working on additional information to update you on some of our more recent work which has included:

- » The development and delivery of Management Development Programmes.
- » Helping to develop High Performing Teams.
- » The development and delivery of HR Business Partnering Programmes.

To find out more about any of our products and services please speak to your Regional Account manager or email info@think-associates.co.uk.




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THESIS PROFESSIONAL - A RAPID E-LEARNING TOOL

Have you looked at e-learning before and rejected it? Or are you looking over your current e-learning offering, your budgets and business requirements, and wondering if there's a different and more cost effective way it can be done? In either case you're not alone. For many organisations, e-learning has hit a stumbling point despite the significant advantages that it can offer. Like traditional learning, off the shelf titles can be too generic and miss the mark. Bespoke e-learning can cost too much, take too long to develop and when it's completed the goalposts have moved and it no longer meets individuals and organisational needs.

Rapid e-learning is a response to many of these challenges. Rapid e-learning often involves an authoring tool where individuals within organisations can create their own e-learning packages from either internal or external content sources.

We've chosen to partner with Hunterstone Inc. who provide a rapid e-learning authoring tool called THESIS Professional because we've found it to be one of the easiest and quickest tools to use for rapid e-learning content authoring. It enables you to prepare any web-presentable content for an e-learning platform, including tracking assessments and sequencing learning objects into customised courses. It includes functionality to turn Word, Excel and PowerPoint documents into pages of e-learning content, whilst maintaining formatting. This means that anyone who can use Word, Excel or PowerPoint, could use Thesis to create rapid e-learning.

FREE WEBINAR

MONDAY 8TH DECEMBER 2008

14:00 – 15:00

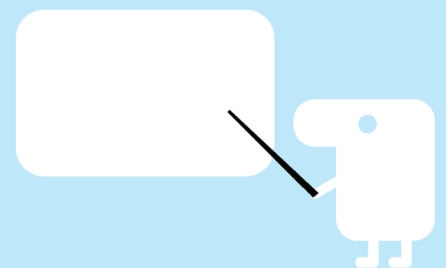
If you are interested in finding out more information about Thesis Professional we are hosting a FREE Webinar on Monday 8th December 2008 at 14:00-15:00 to demonstrate the software and provide additional background information to how 'rapid e-learning technology' can help to fulfill your e-learning needs.

All you will need to attend this webinar is access to a telephone and computer with internet connection. To attend please register your details including a valid email address via our www.think-workshops.co.uk website or alternatively email your name, job title, organisation and telephone number to info@think-associates.co.uk and we will contact you next week with additional details.

For more information please contact:
info@think-associates.co.uk

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF USING THE THESIS E-LEARNING AUTHORING TOOL?

- » It allows you to easily and rapidly convert and create content into e-learning packages from virtually any type of lesson content file - Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Visio, Flash, Flash Video, Shockwave, PDF, XPS, JPEG, GIF, Tiff, PNG, BMP, MPEG and Windows Media....
- » It will save you time and money in creating e-learning packages.
- » Content created using the software integrates with SCORM-compliant Learning Management Systems, such as AT-Learning and OLM.
- » It will allow you to increase productivity and ultimately provide the desired learning results specific to your organisation needs.
- » It helps to streamline the process of 'learning anywhere, anytime'.



AT-FEEDBACK – A SOLUTION TO THE FEEDBACK CHALLENGE EVENT UPDATE

In July we ran two events, one in Leeds and one in London, to help publicise the launch of AT-Feedback, the latest software tool to be developed by our technology partners ikonami. Over the last couple of months we have continued to work with our original pilot organisations and some new organisations who have chosen to use AT-Feedback after attending our launch events to help collate feedback to meet a range of local information needs. Three projects to highlight are as follows:

The Information Centre for Health and Social Care – who are conducting a skills audit.

Sussex HIS – who are evaluating the implementation of a key CfH project.

Brent tPCT – who are conducting an organisation wide audit of Level 2 qualifications.

It has become apparent, speaking to our clients about AT-Feedback that the tool meets an increasing range of information requirements including the following:

- » Reporting of data for routine risk management and information governance requirements - providing evidence for Standards for Better Health, NHSLA, NPfIT).
- » Ad-hoc targeted requests for information - the opportunity to ask more detailed questions and involve every employee in workforce surveys on areas highlighted within the NHS Staff Survey or to run quick diagnostic surveys.
- » Collating staff qualifications and skills audits - a quick way to build (or confirm existing staff qualifications and skills).
- » Monitoring client satisfaction levels - gathering patient views or evaluating Service Level Agreements.
- » Improving the quality of staff development reviews - staff can quickly and efficiently gather feedback that will inform their KSF review discussions, appraisals and development plans.
- » Integration within a blended approach to learning and development -conducting Kirkpatrick level 3 / 4 style evaluation of learning activities and implementations.
- » 360° / multi-source feedback - as part of a manager/ supervisor development programme.

Plus many more scenarios...

...continued overleaf.

TOP 6 BENEFITS OF AT-FEEDBACK

- » It's integrated with the e-KSF – offering organisations the ability to collate feedback from all staff within an organisation or specific departments / teams / staff groups, along with the additional capability of targeting external audiences.
- » The intuitive interface and processes mean there are minimal or no training requirements for survey respondents and minimal training for survey creators.
- » There are a diverse range of question formats including: any number of unlimited points, Likert (rating) scales, numerical, binary, categorical, single choice of multiple answers, multiple choice with multiple answers, ranking, subjective and matrix responses, and dual response scales for comparative selection.
- » The tool is highly customisable and process efficient – from survey creation, notification of respondents, issuance of reminders, and publication of online, real-time performance feedback reports is customisable and automated.
- » It can be deployed quickly to meet your immediate needs, ensuring you achieve rapid results, enhanced with the real time tracking of survey progress and responses.
- » The simple and flexible licensing models offer a cost effective approach.

AT-FEEDBACK – A SOLUTION TO THE FEEDBACK CHALLENGE EVENTS UPDATE

Our piloting phase is now complete and we have enhanced the capabilities of the tool to meet specific challenges along with consolidating the development plan for the tool for forthcoming releases. We are confident about the tools capabilities and the value that it can add to organisations so if you are facing challenges around information collation or feedback then please let us know and we can arrange a demonstration of the tool and discuss the best way to meet your specific organisational needs.

You'll find additional information about AT-Feedback including detailed fact sheets about how the tool can be used in a range of implementation scenarios (including: using the tool for learning and development evaluation (particularly relevant in light of the Darzi review), KSF review, 360 degree appraisal) on our website.

We are also in discussion with a number of organisations about how we can help to conduct surveys / collate information or use the tool as a diagnostic as part of other projects, so if you have information needs but have limited resources please contact your Regional Account Manager or email info@think-associates.co.uk as we can help.

DO YOU HAVE GREAT APPRAISERS ?



We've noticed an increasing focus on not just the quantity, but the quality, of appraisals and reviews in the NHS. This is reinforced by the latest NHS staff survey results: did you know that in 2007, NHS-wide, 61% of staff reported having an appraisal or review, but of these staff, only 24% reported that their appraisal/review was well structured? The conclusion from these figures is that only about 1 person in 6 in the NHS is having a well structured appraisal. How is your organisation doing against these benchmarks?

To try and help with this situation, we've developed a set of competences that research, plus our experience, suggests great appraisers tend to possess. We've split the competences into themes of:

- » Preparing for the review
- » Assessment
- » Managing the meeting
- » Interpersonal skills
- » Future focus
- » Personal qualities
- » Process requirements

Our plan is to create a robust 360 degree and/or self-assessment survey to help managers and reviewers understand the requirements of a great appraisal, benchmark themselves against these requirements and create a development plan to improve their knowledge, skills and behaviours in this area.

We're now at late pilot stage of this project, and aiming to have a valid set of competences and a slick approach to measuring and feeding back on these competences, around February 2009. If you'd like to know more about this work, please contact our project leader Rob Winson, on rob@think-associates.co.uk.

HR & L&D DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 3rd – 5th February 2009



The HR business partner model has been around for years but many organisations are still to develop the HR and L&D professionals that have the confidence and skills to fulfil the role successfully. The role demands a level of confidence and business understanding that many have not had the opportunity to develop. Technical HR and L&D know-how is no longer enough, individuals must understand customer needs and challenges and influence them to do the right things in order to align their people and improve the performance of their functions.

If you have answered yes to any of the above questions on the right, then the three day residential programme that Happen have designed using their experience of working with many HR and L&D professionals in the Public and Private sectors will be of interest to you. They have taken the critical essentials and combined them into a challenging and enjoyable development experience that allows participants to work on real implementation challenges in a supportive and confidential environment. Participants leave the programme with clear strategies and actions that will drive their current HR or L&D imperatives along with tools and techniques to help them develop close and valued relationships with the business.

As a result of attending this programme participants will be able to:

- » Adapt their communication style to successfully influence their customers.
- » Comfortably and confidently demonstrate their contribution to the organisation.
- » Understand strategy and organisational politics and use networks to gain buy-in and support for initiatives.
- » Develop their understanding of their customer's situations by using strategic analysis tools.
- » Effectively align and evaluate interventions for demonstrable results.
- » Walk a mile in their customers' shoes – to understand the pressures that their customers face.
- » Develop their own leadership style to ensure they can get people to deliver.
- » Use personal sources of power to prepare for challenging interactions.
- » Recognise effective internal marketing strategies to promote value adding services.
- » Maximise their personal impact when dealing with stakeholders
- » Develop the ability to maintain their motivation and confidence in the face of resistance.

The next open programme is running on the 3rd – 5th February in London and is only £1,295+VAT per delegate (including accommodation and meals).

For more information on the content of the programme, the benefits of attending or an application form please refer to www.happenconsulting.com/nhs.html alternatively please contact Lindsey Holman at lindseyholman@happenconsulting.com.

"Do you need to have better influence with your management team or stakeholders?"

"Do you wish you could develop an understanding of your customer's situations to effectively promote services?"

"Do you want to be able to confidently demonstrate the contribution of L&D to the organisation?"

"Would it help to understand strategy and organisational politics and use networks to gain buy-in and support for initiatives?"

"Would you like to be able to adapt your leadership style to engage others and get people to deliver?"



Think...what you could do
info@think-associates.co.uk

"In the past, the clinician's role within the team has often been confined to a practitioner, an expert in their clinical discipline. Yet frontline staff have the talent to look beyond their individual clinical practice and act as partners and leaders."

High Quality Care for All NHS next stage review Lord Darzi 2008

In response to NHS client needs and driven in part by the Darzi report, Happen have recently refined some of their existing service offerings to meet the needs of our clients - we wanted to highlight two of these here:

CLINICAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The first session of their new Clinical Leadership Development programme ran early in September with one of our PCT clients, with dramatically positive results. The attendees were from multi-disciplinary backgrounds across primary care operating at team leader level. During the programme they identified what was changing in the current climate and the results that an excellence in clinical leadership would deliver. The groups discussed how to manage change and engage others in their visions and spent time looking at how they can change the attitudinal climate in their teams. They were then given pragmatic tools and insights into effective leadership, developing a feedback culture, self awareness and effective influencing of stakeholders and worked through real practical examples so they get immediate benefit back in the workplace. Participants left the programme committed and motivated to make changes, they will return for 2 further modules before presenting their successes to their managers.

The feedback from this programme is particularly impressive, the following is just a sample of the quotes received from delegates:

"It was fascinating, I thought I knew what to expect but that was only theory and the real skill in this course is the change in practice it produces."

"All clinicians should benefit from this workshop. I have enjoyed my two days of learning – it has brought out the best in me."

For further information on either of these programmes or any of Happen's services please contact Lindsey Holman by email on:

lindseyholman@happenconsulting.com.



CUSTOMER CARE – ENSURING CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

This programme focuses on maximising the impact of interactions with others and explains the underlying concepts of how individuals can use various techniques and language to fully engage others, whether the interaction is between internal or external customers. The programme looks beyond customer service.

This programme is suitable for everyone! It will give answers to why we think, feel and behave the way we do which in turn dictates the responses and results we get. Individuals will learn optimism for success both in business and personally. Whether they want to build effective business relationships, improve rapport with customers, or just be more confident individuals then they will benefit from this programme.

As a result of attending this programme participants will be able to:

- » Understand the reasons and factors that govern their behaviour enabling them to make choices.
- » Take an objective and alternative view of their world.
- » Maximise effectiveness of relationships through rapport.
- » Recognise the power of the messages delivered by non-verbal communication.
- » Use language effectively to get the responses they want.
- » Communicate at different levels to match different preferences.
- » Maintain optimism for success.
- » Undertake practical steps to improve their current working relationships.
- » Identify how to fully engage and seek feedback for success.



Think...what you could do
info@think-associates.co.uk

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATOR ACCESS ON THE E-KSF - KSF LEADS SURVEY

In the last issue of e-KSFNow we highlighted the new central administrator access level that was developed as part of version 6.1 of the e-KSF that went live on the 30th June. To allow you to benefit from the new customisable administration functions, we need to know who in your organisation should have this access level. So we created a short survey (using our AT-Feedback tool) for KSF Leads to complete.

If you have not already received a link to this survey please contact us so that we can forward this to you.

Alternatively if you have any questions regarding this level of access please refer to the user guide available on www.e-ksfnow.org or alternatively please contact your Regional e-KSF Account Manager.

NEW PEOPLE IN OUR TEAM

Finally, we'd like to introduce the newest member of the Think team – Sarah Jane Ashcroft. Sarah Jane joins us as an e-KSF implementation manager and trainer, working with Richard Bradbury mainly in the North East and Yorkshire and Humber regions. We're already putting Sarah Jane to good work delivering e-KSF and KSF training courses, and she's getting fantastic feedback! Her latest set of training sessions was rated by 70% of delegates as "excellent" and by 28% as "very good" or "good". So I'm sure you'll agree Sarah Jane is a great addition to the Think team.

If you have have found our second issue of 'Think News' of interest please let us know.

