

SEDA Spring Conference 2024

Session Title: Dimensions of Change: Educational Developers as Change Agents

Session Type: Lightening talk (10 mins)

Main presenter(s): Laura Milne, University of Chester

Co presenter(s): n/a

Session Summary: This session reviews the role of educational developers as change agents within higher education contexts, working between and with different disciplines and university governance structures. Managing and responding to change requires different skills, and conscious effort to guide different efforts towards the common goal. Looking at high, deep, broad and long dimensions of change, I will discuss how I think through problem-solving and communication towards successful change management and project completion.

Session Outline: In this lightning talk, I will review the role of educational developers as change agents in the higher education sector, given recent challenges to practice and business as usual, such as the Covid-19 pandemic and the advent of Generative AI. I will reflect on some projects I've been part of, and how managing change through to the end has been critical to success, reviewing four dimensions:

High: This dimension reviews the importance of gaining senior sponsorship and involving senior stakeholders. Sometimes this is relatively easy, but in other cases, it's a challenge, and requires specific approaches to get them on board with your change process or project.

Broad: This dimension relates to obtaining early feedback from a wide variety of stakeholders; in the HE context, this often requires tailoring your message and activities to suit student and staff groups across faculties or discipline groups.

Deep: This dimension is about developing and reinforcing knowledge required to ensure that colleagues are supported in their practice.

Long: This dimension refers to the work required to switch from emergent or emergency change to long-term, operational activities that are embedded in practice.

I will then conclude with some provocations or questions for those facing the (seemingly) unending cycle of change, and reflect on how educational developers are positioned to work between and with colleagues across institutions, and how this position allows us to build bridges across dimensions.



References: Whitchurch, C. (2023). Rehabilitating third space professionals in contemporary higher education institutions. *Workplace: A Journal for Academic Labor*, 33, 23-33.

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Kotter, J.P.(1996) *Leading change*. Harvard Business School Press.

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Brown, S. (2014).You can't always get what you want: Change management in higher education. *Campus-Wide Information Systems*, 31(4),208–216.