Transcript Connect More 5 May 2022 Leading an Effective Digital Organisation

John Sumpter 0:00
In this session today at connect more hope you've been enjoying the conference so far. And today, we're going to be talking about leading an effective digital organization. So, if we can have the slides, please. And I'm really pleased to introduce to you all our speakers for today. So I'll give you a little bit more context around the whole subject in just a moment. But if we can have the next slide, please. So let me briefly introduce you to our panel. So firstly, my name is John Sumpter, the program lead for leadership and culture and the digital leaders program here at jesc. With me today joining me is my colleague, Debbie Baff, who is a subject specialist works alongside me with the digital leaders program. And we're really pleased today to be joined by Claire Barley, who's director of PRP Training in Pembrokeshire and Chris Trace, who is head of digital learning at the Surrey Institute for Education now both Claire and Chris are alumni from our digital leaders program. So that's a that's really great to have them here today. And hopefully we're going to hear a little bit from them about their perceptions and their approaches to leading an effective digital organization. Next slide, please. So it's great to have everybody with us today. And when we talk about leading an effective digital organization, what do we really mean? Well, we're gonna dig into that a little bit more. But just to give this all some context, so I mentioned the digital leaders program. Well, that is part of our leadership and culture work that we run here at Jisc. And it really is about helping our members prepare themselves and their organizations for a digitally transformed future. And part of this leadership on culture project, which we run contains the digital leaders program. Next slide, please. So, I would encourage you all to make note of the URL on the screen for the leadership and culture homepage, you're going to find lots of really relevant and interesting information, some thought leadership on there some workshops, some events and a whole range of activities which are completely focused on digital leadership, and making culture change within an organization. So I'd encourage you in your own time to please go and visit that and you'll find out a lot more in connection with what we're talking about today. Next slide, please. So part of the work that we do is broken up into what we call full themes. So realistically, we're talking about training such as the digital leaders program, working together so that's around these kind of crafted events, things like we're doing today at connect more. And we have a range of what we call helping you services such as facilitated workshops, visual change, and strategy planning workshops that we can do with you. And of course, loads of resources and thought leadership as well. So that's all part of that leadership and culture work. So go over have a look and we're sure you'll find lots of useful information for you and your organization. Next slide, please. Okay, so let's get into the meat of what we're going to be talking about today. And I think it's really important to emphasize how when we think about leading effective digital organization, of course, we're talking about digital and we're talking about technology and the impact that makes but largely that complex journey is around people. And that's kind of part of what we're going to pick up on today. So I'd like to kind of open the conversation pretty much straight away and a Claire Hello, and welcome. Thanks so much for joining us today. Hello. How are you today?

Clare Barley 4:12
I'm good. I'm good. Thank you. Not

John Sumpter 4:14

too bad at all. Good. Excellent. Well, thanks for joining us today. And of course, you've been on the digital leaders program. You're one of our alumni. So you've been through part of the program. But this whole topic of leading an effective digital organization, it's a very complex one but maybe a good way of kind of opening up the discussion is asking you why did you go on the program? Why did you choose choose to go on the course.

Clare Barley 4:39
For me, I feel that we're mobile hadn't changed over the last few years. However, obviously, with the pandemic, those huge change across industry, and looking at a type of course, that I felt I needed. I really wanted something that would fit into the changing of, of my leadership style. So previously, pre pandemic, my leadership style, everybody was in the office, we were seeing each other all the time. There was a lot of different things to take on board. However, with the pandemic, people working from home, there was a lot more focus on being able to apply those leadership skills in a digital way. So over the course it looks fine and it went okay, but I recognize the fact that my leadership style needed to change so that I could see things from a digital perspective and have that embedded into everything we did as a company. So the course for me going into it, I was looking at something that would develop my skills on a digital platform, opened my eyes to different varieties of ways I could connect with my team, but also trying to enhance the skills I already had to make sure we were looking at it. One of the key points obviously was looking at things through a digital lens and making sure that the company was starting to operate in a function that would withstand that digital input that we needed, and we still do need to extend.

John Sumpter 6:04
That's really, really interesting. I'll tell you what would be really helpful as well for for our listeners or people joining us today. Do because give us a little brief background about yourself and where you've come from and then how you got to where you are today.

Clare Barley 6:19
Sure, sure, no problem and I want to two directors of a private training provider were based on in west Wales. And we have a contract with the evil Consulting which is led by Ventura College. And we deliver undershirts training programs, targeted meet students aged 16 to 18. So we deliver those learning programs to them now in a digital way, across a different platform. So every year we're working with around 500 fortune 500 students at any one time. And so as a private training provider, we aren't necessarily an FE or college base. We work on a smaller scale, but still delivering that workplace learning if you like in the traditional sense in the learners workplaces. And then for those who have more challenges, we deliver training in house and in the center through our teaching platforms.

John Sumpter 7:18
Claire, that's fantastic. It's really really interesting and really helpful for our participants to to understand where you're coming from. So thank you for that. So before we dive into the the meat of some of our questions, let me just hand over to to Chris. Chris. Hopefully you can hear me we were testing the audio limits at the beginning of this session right up until we went live. But, Chris, Jonah, tell us a little bit about yourself. And again bit about your background. And also maybe lead into why you chose to go on the program. Chris, we are not hearing you at the moment. We will pause and hold for just a few moments. So yeah, we're still not quite hearing you yet, Chris. We can see you loud and clear but not audio wise

for the moment. Oh, hello, Chris can yes we're not hearing you yet. So what I'm going to do apologies Chris and everybody else. Our technical support. Owl we're going to hopefully he can press the magic buttons while what it might do. If that's okay, Chris is head on back to Claire just while we're trying to sort out those audio issues. I'm wondering, so clever thinking back to the kind of meat of this question. How do you lead this effective digital organization? We were touching on kind of people do you want to pick up on that from your perspective?

Clare Barley 8:59
I think where we're at now as a company, regardless of the background of that company, and regardless of what you're trying to achieve. Something which is very apparent in organizations is the digital focus the digital impact in making sure that we are able to meet the organization's needs. So all our employees needs, but also a customer's needs and making sure that we're communicating effectively. And I think a lot of time and effort goes into making sure customers need to be met on a digital platform, whether that's making sure social media presence is sufficient on website is sufficient. But also when we look at it more internally in the people we're working with. So our team members, our colleagues, our peers, making sure that we're able to communicate digitally effectively for them, and still priorities, prioritize tasks and so Cheever goals in a platform that's going to make that work. Whether we're in the office or working from home.

John Sumpter 9:56
It's interesting, isn't it? Because there's so many aspects when we think about some of the things that you've just said and particularly people and around around culture, that's always been culture change is a big part of leading an effective digital organization. How do you make that happen? I know it's kind of relatively early days for you. You know, relatively fresh alumni. But how have you started to attempt to make that kind of culture change at your organization, or did you feel you needed to

Clare Barley 10:29
do it? We really do. So I completed the course a couple of months ago and told us far too fast. But what we wanted to do is really make sure that we were starting at the beginning. So one of the key sessions that we did was around looking at Mission statements. And what does that mean? So company values, how they were impacted in what we do. And it was one of those moments where I was looking at it thinking actually, these were written when we were very different company, and so trying to transfer those into the company that we work now. was quite critical. So the first steps really is making sure our senior management team or our strategic team if you were working in sync with that, so I kept the rest of the training I was doing and I would talk to them about it and reflect on it. And one of the key exercises we did which was really interesting, was being able to evaluate ourselves and the digital imprint we were leaving, where we felt we used digital technology, what different ones we used, how we use it purposefully. So we did this exercise within the session, which was great and then encourage them to get feedback from our team, as you know, with in terms of how they thought we use that digital platform and what we use that for. And straightaway it became very apparent to me that there was a difference between what people perceived in how I use digital platforms and what I was intending for that purpose. And so then we take it back to culture, and we think about that. It's very often the situation isn't it? That is an individual you think the culture is x y Zed, but actually when you delve into that, other people are coming from a different perspective. So during the real temperature gauge on that was

was important. And so over this last month or so we've had an all staff training day, where we've come together and talked about where we think we are from a digital perspective. And I've started to introduce individual platforms. So throughout the session we used a lot on Nero, which for me was really eye opening. I'd heard about it and used it very much. And so that training day we incorporated Nero into the sessions so that what I'm trying to do is make sure that I am the old fashioned leading by example so that people can see where we're coming from, and they can see that I'm invested in that. So in terms of changing that culture now, which we do need to do if we're going to continue to expand and grow in the current age. It's about establishing Memoranda of Understanding with our editors. And identifying very, very early on what our ends are as a strategic team.

John Sumpter 13:15
That's really, really interesting. And it's great to hear some of the developments and moves that you've made. And I think one thing that we recognize is that just having a conversation about particularly values and opening up those conversations is incredibly useful. Whether the the values is that already set a correct and work, that's great, but if they don't, then it opens up a conversation to say, Well, why are why do we have these values? And why do they not align with maybe some of the future plans you've got? So it's just a wonderful question to ask with your team. So brilliant. Thank you, Claire. And Debbie, I'm gonna hand over to you. I think you've got some some follow on questions as well. And hopefully, Mike and Chris, back in the room. We'll find out in a second.

Clare Barley 13:58
Thanks, John. Good. Good morning, everybody. Great to be here. Yeah, I can just see in the chat as well that Chris, even though he's put into the mind kind of impressions to us at the moment, and he's kind of said that he loves my room now as well. For anybody that doesn't know my room is a kind of collaborative tool. And it's like a whiteboard that has massive pieces in it kind of whiteboard that you can just kind of put sticky notes and and documents and images and it's really great and we have great fun with that in the in the digital leaders program. So yeah, that really makes my day that I can see that okay, is actually used it productively in her daily practice and also when with Chris, I just wondered whether we might want to just possibly try to see if Chris is able do we have any voice Yeah, Chris, we good to go.

So I know obviously if you said because you're quite a fan of my room as well. So can we just kind of segue back a little bit. Can you just give us a brief introduction to kind of what your role is. And then obviously, just kind of cover a little bit maybe sort of things a player was just talking about as

Chris Trace 15:16
I've come from I guess, a slightly different background into the role. And so the role I have currently is as head of digital learning at the University of Surrey. So I need a team within the Surrey Institute of Education which is a kind of a elite squad I think of us that are trying to transform support academic practice and make education as crazy as it can be at the university. And I came to that from that background. So I'm originally a vet, fell into higher education via a variety of different routes, and was always fascinated by technology. And so I had an opportunity to join the University of Surrey back in 2013. When we're setting up for vet school. I came in with a remit to try to sort out technology and get the hardware and

software in place for us to run a really great veterinary curriculum, and also got into teaching as I went along. And then in September 2020, I took on the role of head of the Truman's and moved into the central team to lead it and try to help the university through what was then the midst of a pandemic. And I guess to move on to the next part of the question John asked me it feels like a while ago, is why did I take this course. I certainly felt my first year in the ball. Game was very much bailing water out of the ship to keep it afloat. It was kind of peddling to keep us where we were going. And as we started getting into this kind of post pandemic phase, I certainly felt that this my role is more and more about leadership less and less about management for the first year certainly was managing the team trying to use our resources most effectively. put out fires left, right and center and see what's coming down the line and no one really wanted to think about how I can use my skills as a leader to influence change that we're trying to work out. So for context, the University of Surrey is a medium sized research intensive teaching excellence University force of 16,000 students based in Guildford in salary. And yeah, I certainly was keen to work with obviously people, you have to sign up for people. There's a lot of people that salary really invested involved in the digital transformation of the university. And where I wanted to prove my skills was in working with lots of lots of different people and bringing together these different threads. So I could start a thread that leadership direction for where I thought the digital ecosystem should go through university and best deliver on the kind of education practices. I can now completely geek out about mirror as well because I do so certainly I think of mirror was a brilliant hybrid between tablets and jam boards and teams, whiteboards, all sorts of things. It's like the best bits of all of them in one lovely platform. So I do now get frustrated when I use something else. I didn't catch all of Claire's past she was doing as we were just messing about in the green room. So could you remind me of some of the questions where you'd like to go next, because I'm very happy to talk for a lot longer.

John Sumpter 18:41
So thank you, Chris. That was really, really helpful to hear your background and also to hear that you've got some benefit out of using my row as well and I'm sure there's gonna be other aspects that will we'll touch on and I thought I'd dig into a bit of a meaty subject, a bit of a wide open subject, but I'm sure we can all probably find some responses to and I was thinking about this a little bit earlier, and it's around that the challenges that we face when we try and drive an effective digital organization, but also the opportunities that it gives us. And I wonder if we wanted to pick up on a few of those and I'm wondering if Claire if it would be okay to come back to you. And if we think about some of the couple of challenges that you found straight away, we're were hindering you with your progress in trying to develop your organization. What would they be?

Clare Barley 19:39
I think one of the sessions we did was was on a lot of change and change management and and what the impact in that and what the perception is. And one of the problems which I think everybody relates to is that there's always will or group or who are pretty resistant to change. And often in my instance, it tends to be people who are resistant because of fear. Because they're too busy to take on change or take within different platforms and use a different platform in another way. And so that was one of the things to try and overcome in terms of making sure that those individuals felt their viewpoints were taken on board. But also that we were able to hopefully persuade those individuals to be able to change and take on board the new wave where you so for example, and we're using mirror now to collaborate

we use an annual plan, quality development plan, which historically has always been kept on an Excel spreadsheet. And when people can remember the file name and path, then go into it and now update it. And it's supposed to be very, very frequently done. And it's, it's done, but it's done in a formal way. So there usually has to be a meeting ground and everybody discuss it and remind everybody what we're going to be working on anything we need to cover and so on. So moving back to this platform, it allows people access at any time, and the way they're using it as well is not free so that they can add individual things. But it's very easy to add links to add images and try and enhance the message we're trying to get across. Also then, as your LinkedIn as an organization, you'll get updates so just general emails that will come through and say this has been updated. So you know somebody else has been in there working on it, which helps to encourage everybody to have a look at it. So this particular move was a big one in terms of getting the buy in from those individuals. So I think one of the things I learned is to approach that with time and patience to hear those individuals points of view, but also hopefully be able to give them the skills they need so that it isn't a worrying task isn't something that's going to consume their day to try and learn because we're able to brief it in a way where it's easier for them to use and they can see the benefits of using it in a different way. So one of the sessions was all about that in terms of taking everybody's personality within within a team to make something work because often the people who are most resistant to change are usually once they're buying into that change are usually the most dynamic and getting them on board and getting it done and they usually a very vocal amongst the team as well. So as a as a group when when you get those people involved in it. So that was one of the big things is that the fear of change and a different way of working.

John Sumpter 22:42
In clay you're referring to we've we have a specific session around skeptics and enthusiasts. I think that's what you're referring to. And how do we work with these different ends of the spectrum, both free, equally needed in an organization but take different approaches when working with them and recognize that they have different needs and wants to allow them to kind of flourish in what they're doing. So it's really interesting to hear that, you know, you've you've recognized those challenges and that you'll see ways forward to that as well. And you touched on the opportunities that it gives as well. So that that's really interesting. Thank you, Chris. I'm wondering if we open up the same kind of question to yourself around those challenges and opportunities and thinking about people and how you're bringing people on. How's that working out?

Chris Trace 23:33
Similar? I certainly recognize similar challenges that Ken has described. And there's you know, I couldn't describe staff as fitting into a normal distribution, but you can kind of imagine that when you've got some extremes enthusiasts on one end, some on the other end who are more resistant. So the vast majority in the middle you kind of have to go either way. That's certainly become much more apparent for me. In my certainly my role now. I was used to dealing with academics of a particular persuasion. So we're all in the same subject. And certainly realizing that there's a lot of subject nuance and with that comes often some set ways of working that people can be resistant to. So yeah, what I've really appreciated and I suppose Claire said it is about going out and spending the time talking with people. It's really easy to try to homogenize academics like we sometimes do with students. We sometimes think, Oh, the students will say, then lots of academics. And so one example I

went to talk to maths departments. And we're looking at rolling out digitalize assessment as a process across the university. And that's involved in your conversations with people about how we could go about that, what kind of advantages that might bring our supply that was saying, well, actually we'd really like to go back to in person exams. It would have been easy for us to jump to the conclusion on that. Okay, that's just because that's how they always want to do it. Then when we get back to ensure that I see you as soon as we can have that deep conversation and try to understand where they're coming from. There's lots of lots of great reasons why. So they were really concerned for example with contract cheating and plagiarism Turnitin for example, I'm sure plagiarism detection software available is really good at looking at text and then go home on that person to do something, somebody else. There's no great system for doing that from handwritten mathematical formally. So they were really having to go through and check out a lot of detail and then compare this manually to see if anybody was doing similar. There's a big reason therefore, why they wanted to go to university exams. So yeah, that the lesson for me there was really taking the time trying to not make assumptions. Try to walk in their shoes if you can. And that starts to help you think with the hearts and minds mission with this knowledge change. It can be really uncomfortable. That can be really difficult. If you can paint a vision for people to be able to latch on to that they can really get into that certainly helps giving them that time where you can try to understand and bring them along. And then probably at the end of the day, depending on the size of the institution, you're probably not going to win over helps other people. I certainly realized this with teaching. Don't aim to try and please 100% of people in your class. It's a physically impossible task to do. You're always going to have something but if you do, somebody at one extreme is not going to get that. So if you can get to 95% satisfaction with what you're doing, you're doing very, very well. And eventually, you know people will come along with you so very much love the people management estate side of things I do. And this course certainly helped me think through that a little bit more and explore different ways of doing that.

Clare Barley 27:13
It's such a it's such a thing to focus on the people I think I think too often we can get distracted by the next shiny thing isn't a you know in terms of kind of technology, but it's you can have the best systems in the world that if you if you don't invest your time and your energy in your kind of your people that you're surrounded by then it's everything's just gonna fall over, isn't it? So, really encouraging to kind of hear that hearts and minds thread that you mentioned, because as I was thinking John as well that kind of leaps into some of the other things that we we kind of do within our work workflow, you know, things like visions or change and, and that kind of stuff, you know, and all of these things we we kind of touch on it within the digital leaders program, don't we? But then there are additional things that we can also help people with and I didn't know whether you wanted to kind of mention things like that. That would fit really well.

John Sumpter 28:14
Yeah, absolutely. And I was going to briefly go back to Chris and then maybe declare as well, if I can about that. And what we're referring to is we run a number of workshops that have been spawned out of the digital leaders program, vision for change and planning for action and helps institutions really understand where they are as an institution now and helps them then understand where is it they want to get to and they collectively agree on this vision for the future, and collectively is the most important thing. And that's what I want to

just briefly pick up with you Chris. If I could then pass it back to Claire with the same question. You talked about painting the vision. Do you want to tell us a bit more about that Chris, have you do you feel you've done that yet? And and if you have or you're in the process, how have you gone about doing it? I know you went out and you were you were speaking to everybody. But how did you get them to inform the vision that you feel in your role? You now need to kind of lead?

Chris Trace 0:00
Yes.

 Great question. It's something I think I'm still doing. I suspect that it might be the kind of thing that you don't ever stop doing. I think some we've, for example, as I said, we're getting through hybrid routes, sort of kind of the pandemic, we've adopted a hybrid education approach and really went all guns blazing for that. And so I feel I'm still in the middle really, of trying to get a lot of people to decide on the vision. It could be very easy for an organization to have different visions for different parts of the institution. So it's really key I found and look at what is certainly coming right from the top in terms of corporate strategy, education strategy, and picking out the parts that are relevant for you. What I think I've done in my time is really tried to establish those then connections and networks so that I'm always talking with the key decision makers. Associate Dean's for education, for example. And we start and keep talking about what we're trying to achieve, where we're trying to get there, how digital can fit in with that and be part of the journey, how that will map down to individual school kind of visions for what they're trying to achieve. And so it is yeah, I don't have a quick and easy way of doing it. Unfortunately, it's not something you can shortcut it is a lot of conversations,   is bringing them in. I've tried a few kind of network approaches where I get enthusiasts from across the university into communities of practice. That's quite a nice way of doing it. And I'm trying to get some ability to second some staff. My team aswell. Watch this space, but hopefully, that gives us it's that that kind of in depth knowledge of what the challenges are, and this vision can solve it. That's sometimes what you need to think, to really understand the tapestry of an organization.

John Sumpter 2:12
Yeah, thank you, Chris. And a great way of describing it. The tapestry of an organization is so true, though, isn't it? Because it's just a patchwork quilt. of so many different pieces you're trying to pull together. Thank you, Chris. Clare, Can I can throw the same kind of question over to you please. That that whole kind of vision piece. How was that with you and your organization?

Clare Barley 2:35
I mean for us, I feel it's important for us to have a set of values that we want to work to change we have a set line of what we want to do what you know, what is the purpose of the company? And that set line is actually made up of words which our employees chose to describe or delivering. So the different types of delivery we do those words were chosen from that. So that I think, is hopefully continues to stand the test of time even in a digital age. But below that, then the individual values is something we are looking at changing because the current ones some of them aren't fit for purpose, we only have five. A couple of them need to be amended. So we've started the discussions now which we did on the training day

in terms of what do we feel summarizes our organization what is our intention, what would we like to provide ,because we're out there providing learning and education to people within a web based learning platform? What is our intention? We know that we want to achieve qualifications but beyond that, what do we want to do? So we've had those conversations to try and pull in some ideas, and particularly key words in terms of their summary of that. So we have like a very small task and finish group working on that trying to put that into a sentence in terms of the value. So hopefully then the next time we meet which will be around July time, we'll be able to formalize those those key five values. And then the biggest task, which is something that Chris is already in, is making sure we continue to keep these relevant and making sure that we continue to use them regularly, because I don't really want them to do something which is just written on a piece of paper, which is not everybody knows. And it's not really a tangible entity. So I want them to be something which is a very clear structure in how we do things. So the biggest task for us then is taking those five values and filtering them down into everything we do. So that everything we do falls around those values, I think then we'll get a sort of a cohesive platform of what we're doing, and hopefully have some clear synergy in our decisions that we're making, and hopefully make that decision making process a little bit easier as well though being able to reflect on those values, and how they fall in and if we do end up within a task where we've kind of gone off on a tangent and we're far away from the original purpose by reflecting on those knowing those that will bring us back to the task in point in terms of what we want to deliver and how we want our learning to be.

John Sumpter 5:25
That's really interesting, Claire, and I think we've we've reflected a lot in previous conversations and on the program about how some of the most successful organizations you know, outside of education, funnily enough, I don't think we do a good enough job of it in education personally, but really do buy in and live those values and do exactly what you said, you know, bring them back to the everyday activities and how can we reflect on what we're doing? are they responding to our core values, and if we all agreed on those values and that kind of set in stone, of course, everything evolves over time. But that's clearly very effective, particularly outside of education. And I think it's something that education itself can do can do better on so brilliant. Thank you, Claire. Debbie, hand over to you for any other questions. People don't want to listen to me all the time.

We like to share the pain :)

Debbie Baff 6:26
what I'd be quite interested in I know that you you're both in kind of slightly different stages in terms of your kind of your digital transformation journey. But I mean, as we've probably not got that long left. So you know, I was just wondering what your plans are in sort of terms for the next six months, that kind of thing in terms of where you see yourself going with digital leadership and your institutions. So if I can perhaps go to Claire first and then to Chris

Clare Barley 6:54
So following on from the review of values, we want to get those confirmed and around July time, so that they will then be on our platform. So all of our digital platforms then will have that branding there so that they are accessible in different ways. So that will lead through into themes and calls into our presentation material and trying to standardize that. So that

everything we do basically will be revisited in that way, which is a big task, and it's going to take a while to do that. But that's one of the key practical things we're going to be doing in terms of communicating that. The next big thing then is introducing miro but I'm never quite sure how to pronounce that. But introducing that in the wider platform. So we've already introduced it on quality with a quality development plan, but creating boards which are relevant for departments to use, giving them the skills so we've done a little bit of training already, that training will continue so that they have the skills to be able to use the board as they choose to. And so there's tools on there which are very useful. And so seeing that taken on board by different managers. So for example, the two strategic managers now, they have, they've always used to-do lists very often, you know, notepads, simple to do lists, and I went through with them the exercise that we did, where we're splitting things into four in terms of what has to be done, and it basically that prioritization, prioritization exercise, in terms of what's desirable, what has to be done, what's critical and so on. And that was a really thought provoking exercise for them and then use that daily now So they use that as their task board. So what I want to see in the next six months is other leaders in the organization using that in the same way, finding their own way, you know, they might choose different words to summarize that but essentially using that digital platform daily so it's part of their work that they're doing, because I feel it will help them I feel that it'll help them prioritize what they're doing. And also encourage that collaboration. As a strategic management team, we have our board. And so we're prioritizing different tasks on that. And then when I know one of the managers has updated it, so maybe they've changed something or whatever, and get my notification, I'm able to contribute to that when I can, which is also more often than having your general weekly meetings or fortnightly meetings. So the other thing we want to do in the next six months is look at our communication strategy. So we have adapted it over the last couple of years. In terms of how it's changed. So it's very much more digital. So we use Microsoft Teams very often now. And that has been used very well across departments and everybody's on board with using it. But as if anything a couple of years down the line and it needs to be freshened up and we need to condense that and make sure that we've got efficiency, because very quickly it becomes quite spread out and then you're not getting the quality and making sure everybody's in the right team. So the right decision is on that team. So the communication strategy is the next big project to formalize how people will work in terms of tasks, and finish groups, in terms of quality assurance in terms of teaching and delivery, so that the right people are in the right teams communicating. So that's a little bit more of an enhancement on what we were doing. already. But still it's moving forward in a positive way. So there's quite a few things going on in the next six months to implement that change. We tend to try and do things by academic year. So even though we're a private training provider, our contract runs August through to July. And so hopefully we'll have those key strategies, those those top level strategies in place ready for the beginning of August to really start using them and filtering them down. But I think as Chris said above as well is going to be important long term to make sure we set up an infrastructure for continued communication, just about the change, because things can evolve and and people change and some people will take on board technologies and some people won't. Some people might find it more difficult. So setting in place those revision opportunities and review opportunities is going to be important as well. So that we have that annual calendar of events where those discussions can happen.

Debbie Baff 7:37

Thanks Clare that was great. It's always good, isn't it to kind of see you get a vision in your mind that something practical that you can also apply perhaps in your own setting. So Chris, I know we've got a bit of a tall order because we've got about four minutes left. But if I could just ask you maybe in two minutes, a quick two minutes to sum up your next six months, that would be superb !

Chris Trace 11:50
fine. I made a list and it's quite long, so I'll try and disclose the key points. So some of the things I guess I'm most excited about is we've created some interfaces for staff to find out how best to interact with so we're creating an internal facing education hub, for example, where staff can come and see what resources what events we've have been rolling out, monthly showcases where we all show best practice to reach our faculties and talk a bit about pedagogy. We have been enhancing those over the next six months. Those will come with live workshops with my team and have a bit of a monthly thing each time to try and spark different levels.of interest across an exciting just launched in teaching innovations website and teaching innovations , a place where we are showcasing great teachings on trying to build that scholarship and also enhance the reputation of what individuals are doing. I'm really keen in pressing our VLE use. So we're looking at a lot of data to see how people are using the theory what tools they're using, and evolving on team. And so one of the things I've realized is that teams shouldn't stay stuck as well as the changes come in and you need different things sometimes need to redirect people to different tasks and use their skills in different ways. And online learning strategy people are coming out with digitalised assessment we're doing staff training across new teaching spaces that we believe in, then thinking about how they can use more flexible furniture. That's half the list. This is a busy time at the moment. So real kind of change and this is just brilliant to be able to furthering that wave

Debbie Baffr 13:43
see you've got your feet up then for the next couple of months. Youv'e not got much on ! That's really, really helpful. Thanks so much Chris. John I'll hand back to you just to kind of sum up because we've got about a minute and a half left.

John Sumpter 13:55
Brilliant. Thank you. Thank you very much. If I could ask our handy AI our IT person. If you would kindly put the last slide up please. That'd be wonderful. So thank you ever so much, Claire. And Chris. It's been fascinating to hear some of your insights from how you've taken some of the kinds of advice and guidance and approaches that we we've worked with you on over the digital leaders program and how you're putting it into practice and hearing about your real world experiences, challenges and opportunities. Just absolute gold dust for us to hear it and hopefully those listening in on the call today will be able to take just some of what you've said away and look at how they can apply that themselves as well. So it just leaves me to say again, thank you ever so much to Claire and to Chris and of course to Debbie really appreciate your time today and doing this for us really appreciate it.

Up on the screen. We have got just some links to take note of there's our contact details there and of course, if you wanted to get in contact with Claire or Chris come via our email

addresses, and we can pass on any messages that you might have. But do take a look at the leadership and culture page that I mentioned at the beginning. There's a whole range of free resources there membership resources, and links to some other paid for services, a whole mix there that you can really take advantage of do take a look at the digital leaders community as well that is open for anyone with an interest in leadership to join. Predominantly we've got lots of people from the digital leaders program alumni, and of course check out the link to the digital leaders program itself. So thanks ever so much for joining us and enjoy the rest of Connect More.

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