Staff Learning and Career Development
NEWSLETTER

OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY

September 2025, in this edition

Dear colleague,

Welcome to this month's edition of our staff newsletter. This issue includes details of our development programme for the year ahead. We had excellent feedback on the new courses introduced last year, so we've brought them back into the schedule - and added more. To help with planning, we've also tried to give you as much notice as possible - we know how quickly diaries can fill up. Keep an eye on future editions for courses still to be scheduled.

We're also continuing our new 5-minute focus feature. This month, we explore the essential skills of a change leader and share some practical tips on how to think about your own development a bit differently.

We hope you find it useful.

The Organisational Effectiveness and Development Team

Upcoming Workshops and Events

Click on the links for more information and how to book.

For new starters:

- **Headington Campus tour**, face-to-face, Tuesday 4 November 2025, 12.00pm - 1.00pm

- **Headington Campus tour**, face-to-face, Tuesday 10 February 2026, 2.00pm - 2.00pm

- **Headington Campus tour**, face-to-face, Tuesday 12 May 2026, 1.00pm - 2.00pm

- **Headington Campus tour**, face-to-face, Tuesday 18 August 2026, 11.00am - 12.00pm

For line managers:

Bite-size and one-day courses:

- **Mental Health - one day for line managers** **online**, Wednesday 8 October, 9.00am - 5.00pm and 3 February 2026, 9.00am - 5.00pm

- **Conflict Resolution Skills for Managers** **face-to-face**, Wednesday 28 January, 9.30am - 4.30pm

- **Creating Psychological Safety in your Team** **face-to-face,** 20 May 2026 9.30am - 4.30pm

- **Effective Career Conversations** **online**, 9 June 2026, 9.30am - 12.30pm

- **Wellbeing conversations in the workplace** **online, dates tbc**

More in-depth programmes:

- **New to Management programme workshops** **4 x 90-minute online sessions**, Monday 6 October, Tuesday 4 November, Thursday 26 February, Wednesday 20 May. All 9.30am - 11.00am

- **The Collaborative Leader** **3 x half-day programme**, Wednesday 21 October, Friday 13 November, Tuesday 1 December. All 10.00am to 2.30pm

- **Building high performing & resilient teams** **5 x half-day programme,** 27 January **(face to face**), 11 February (online), 24 February (online), 9 March (online) and 25 March 2026 (**face to face**) All 11.00am- 2.30pm

- **The Coaching Manager** **4 x 1-day programme (face to face)** 25 February, 26 March, 22 April, 3 June 2026. All 9.15am - 4.15pm

- **Mediation and Resolution Skills for Managers** **5 x half-day programme,** 19 May **(face to face)**, 5 June (online), 15 June (online), 8 July (online), 21 July 2026 **(face to face)** All 11.00 am - 2.30pm

For colleagues:

Bite-size & one-day courses:

Essential Skills

- **Enhancing Emotional Intelligence** **online**, Wednesday 15 October 2025, 1.00pm - 3.30pm

- **Coaching fundamentals: Having better conversations at work** **face-to-face,** Wednesday 12 November 2025, 9.30am - 4.30pm, **or online**, Wednesday 4 March **AND** Tuesday 17 March 2026, 9.00am - 1.00pm

- **Effective Communication** **online**, Friday 14 November 2025, 9.30am - 12.00pm

- **Courageous Conversations**, **online**, Wednesday 3 December 2025, 1.00pm - 3.30pm

Career & Professional Development

- **Interview Techniques workshop**, **online**, Wednesday 22 October, 9.30am - 11.30am

- **Taking control of your career direction** **online,** Wednesday 21 January, 1.30pm - 4.30pm

- **Discovering and using your strengths** **online,** 28 January 2026 1.00pm - 3.00pm

Wellbeing

- **Coping with Change**, **online**, Thursday 6 November, 11.00am - 12.30pm

- **Stress and Resilience**, **online**, Thursday 6 November, 9.00am - 10.30am

- **Reframing negative thoughts**, **online**, Thursday 20 November, 1.00pm - 2.00pm

- **Mental health aware workshop**, **online**, Thursday 4 December, 9.00am - 2.00pm

More in-depth programmes:

- **Mental Health first aid** **4 x half-day programme (online),** Monday 10, 11, 12 & 13 November 2025 All 9.00am - 2.00pm. **Deadline to register 31 October 2025**

- **Hear and be heard programme** **online 4 x half-day programme, dates tbc Nov 25**

You can also find details of all events via the **Calendar of upcoming events** in Staff Learning.

New: Coaching Fundamentals: Having better conversations at work

We're launching a brand-new workshop as part of our commitment to create a more collaborative and empowering culture across the University. It will help you develop coaching skills you can use every day – whether you're a manager, a colleague, or working with students.

Why coaching skills?
Because the best conversations aren't about giving answers – they're about helping others think clearly, make good decisions, and grow. Coaching techniques give you simple tools to do just that. They make interactions more effective, reduce pressure on you to "solve" problems, and create space for others to take ownership.

What you'll gain

- Practical coaching techniques you can use straight away.
- Confidence to support others without creating dependency.
- Stronger listening and questioning skills for everyday workplace situations.
- Less pressure to "have all the answers" – and more rewarding conversations.

Dates

We're running the workshop twice. A full-day, face-to-face workshop on campus (Wednesday 12 November 2025, 9.30am - 4.30pm) or alternatively, two half-day online sessions for those who prefer virtual learning (Wednesday 4 March and Tuesday 17 March 2026, 9.00am - 1.00pm)

For more details and how to book, see **Staff Learning**.

Thinking about your development a bit differently

Although we now have a great new programme of events, development isn't just about attending courses. Most growth happens through the projects you take on, the colleagues you work with, and the challenges you solve day to day. The **70:20:10 model** is a helpful way to think about how people really learn at work: 70% through experience, 20% through others, and 10% through formal training.

In the full article, **Thinking about your development a bit differently,** we share practical ways to put the model into action - from stretch tasks and secondments, to mentoring, networks, and where to find the resources to support you to create a well-rounded development plan that makes the most of the learning opportunities already around you - not just the ones in the classroom.

Start building your skills today! Try Mindtools

Mindtools is your go-to space for flexible, practical learning. Available to all staff, it's designed to support your growth, wherever you are in your career. Whether you're looking to sharpen your communication, boost your confidence, or manage your time more effectively, Mindtools is packed with engaging resources that fit around your day.

With Mindtools, you're in control of your learning. Choose what you learn, when and how – whether that's through short Skill Bites courses, practical guides, interactive quizzes, videos or audio resources. You'll get tailored content recommendations, and you can track your progress as you go, making it easy to build skills at your own pace.

Discover **Mindtools** and start exploring today.

5-Minute Focus - One subject. Five minutes. More effective you!

Each month, we highlight one practical article, tool, or tip from our **MindTools catalogue** - Great if you're curious, short on time, or just want to try something new. Whether you're looking to build confidence, manage time better, or develop your leadership skills, there's always something useful to explore.

You can find previous highlights in the **5-Minute Focus Archive**.

This month's pick: The Essential Skills of a Change Leader

This month, we focus on change leadership in recognition of the ongoing change activities across the University. Leading change successfully requires a broad set of skills that balance vision, people management, and adaptability. Developing the right mix of skills can make the difference between a smooth transition and a stalled initiative.

The MindTools article: **The Essential Skills of a Change Leader** summarises the skills key thinkers say Change Leaders need to be successful. These are:

- **Vision:** The ability to imagine a better future and explain how to get there is fundamental. Change leaders challenge assumptions, embrace innovation, and stay aware of developments both inside and outside the organisation.
- **Coalition Building**: Successful change requires a strong team with the right mix of skills and influence. Leaders must understand internal dynamics, manage differing agendas, and maintain "listening posts" to monitor reactions and opportunities throughout the change process.
- **Communication Skills**: Clear, persuasive communication is essential. Leaders must "sell" the vision, build stakeholder buy-in, negotiate resources, and provide regular updates to keep everyone informed and engaged.
- **Interpersonal Skills**: Strong relationships matter. Leaders inspire, listen, delegate effectively, and foster collaboration to turn vision into action.
- **Motivation:** Sustaining momentum is key. Change leaders set achievable goals, celebrate successes, and maintain their own energy to keep teams committed, especially when progress is slower than expected.
- **Big Picture Thinking:** The ability to step back, stay focused on priorities, tolerate ambiguity, and adapt flexibly is vital to navigating challenges and maintaining progress.

Developing these skills provides a strong foundation to lead change effectively, helping staff feel supported, engaged, and confident in the process.

Read the **full MindTools article** to explore each skill in more depth. You can find further resources to help you lead change effectively in the **Change Tool Kit Google site**, which includes a **Change checklist**.

Research Mandatory Training

From September 2025 it will become mandatory for any supervisor that has completed Graduate College Supervisor Training for Research Active Staff Parts 1 & 2 to complete the Experienced Supervisors' Update Training every 3 years. Supervisors will receive an automated reminder email when they are required to sign up and complete this and you will be able to book on to one of the sessions via the **Staff Learning Portal**.

Mandatory Training - are you red, amber or green?

✓ 100% Compliant	🕐 0% Expires in 30 days	✗ 0% Non-compliant

Before the new academic year kicks in, now is the perfect time to check in on your mandatory learning. Are you up to date – or falling behind?

Staying compliant isn't just a tick-box exercise – it helps keep our workplace safe, informed, and effective.

Red? You've got some catching up to do – make a plan today.
Amber? Nearly there – keep going!
Green? Great job – but don't forget to keep an eye on expiry dates.

Log in to your **learning portal**, review your status, and aim for green. Let's make this a summer of learning success!

Online resources

Many of our learning and development resources are now online making them easier to access at a time and place that suits you. We have created dedicated areas on the Staff Learning platform to help you find the development that suits your needs:

- **New starters**
- **Leadership and management**
- **Wellbeing and personal resources**
- **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion**
- **Essential skills**
- **Risk and Compliance**
- **Professional and career development** (including **apprenticeships**)
- **Customer service**

Keeping in touch

Learning and Organisational Development
Email: staff-learning@brookes.ac.uk
Twitter: @Staff_Learning
Website: https://www.brookes.ac.uk/staff/people/teams/
Organisational-effectiveness-and-development

Thinking about your development a bit differently

Although we have a great new training and development programme, development isn't just about attending courses. The **70:20:10 model** is a useful way to think about how people really learn and grow at work. It shows that while formal training has its place, most meaningful development happens through everyday work and interactions with others.

What is the 70:20:10 Model?

The model suggests that people develop their skills and knowledge through:

- **70% from experience** – learning by doing: taking on stretch tasks, solving real problems, or leading projects.

- **20% from others** – learning through feedback, coaching, mentoring, shadowing, and collaboration.

- **10% from formal learning** – courses, workshops, webinars, and structured training.

This doesn't mean formal training isn't important. It simply recognises that much of your development is likely to come from the opportunities you take on in your day-to-day role and from the people you work with.

How to use the model for your own development

When setting your development goals (for example, in your PDR or a 1:1 with your manager), try to think broadly about the mix of experiences that could help you grow.

Start with your work (70%)

- Are there stretch tasks, projects, or secondments you could take on?

- Could you lead part of a project, try out a new process, or take responsibility for solving a current challenge?

Think about relationships (20%)

- Who could you learn from inside or outside your team?

- Could you find a mentor, shadow a colleague, or join a network?

- Would regular coaching or feedback help build your confidence or capability?

Use formal training where it adds value (10%)

- Are there knowledge gaps that need a structured course or workshop?

- Would training underpin your practical experience or support a career goal?

- Is it the right time for a qualification, CPD, or accreditation?

Resources to help your development

- **Leading projects**

  Taking on a project is a great way to stretch yourself and learn new skills, but a lack of prior experience or confidence may feel like a barrier. There are resources available to help you, including the **Project Management for Non-Project Managers e-learning** and our **Change Toolkit.**

- **Opportunities to learn with and from others**

  The University provides a host of ways and opportunities to learn with and from others. These include **Mentoring and coaching schemes**, as well as various fora, conferences and networks, for example, the **Educational Leaders Forum (ELF)**.

- *Formal learning*

  There is a wide range of resources available on Staff Learning, including the various workshops and programmes listed above, and a host of online resources. Visit the **Staff learning portal** to see what is available.

  If you're unsure where to begin, a framework can be a useful starting point to reflect on your strengths and identify areas for development. At Oxford Brookes, you can use the **Essential Skills Framework**, which incorporates a development plan template and links directly to relevant **development resources** (see **How to use the Essential Skills Framework**) If you're in a leadership role, or aspiring to be, the Leadership and Management Capability Framework (see **Developing your leadership and management capabilities**) offers clear guidance on the skills that matter most alongside a range of **development resources**.

  You might also find value in a relevant profession-specific framework — such as the **Association of HE Professionals (AHEP) Professional Framework** for university administrators or **Professional Standards Framework** (which underpins **EXPLORE**), for teaching and learning. Exploring the framework most relevant to your role can help you focus your development.

  In addition to providing a funded route for relevant professional qualifications, **apprenticeships** can also be used as a tool to inform professional development more generally. Every apprenticeship has a documented standard that clearly outlines the knowledge, skills, and behaviours (KSBs) required to be competent in a particular role or occupation. These can help identify strengths as well as development areas.

Using development resources flexibly

Development resources like the ones in our **Mindtools Platform** can support all three elements in the **70:20:10 model,** depending on how you choose to use them. Making it a flexible development resource. Here's how:

- **10% Formal learning**

  - Mindtools' structured resources - articles, modules, toolkits, videos, and guides support formal learning, enabling you to purposefully build knowledge or skills in a particular area (e.g. project management, communication, resilience). We have linked to resources and playlists within Staff Learning to help signpost relevant content.

- **20% Exposure to others**

○ You can use Mindtools resources collaboratively - for example, working through one of the exercises with others in your team, discussing an article in a community of practice, or using a tool as part of coaching/mentoring, helping to support the **20%** "learning through others" space.

● **70% Experience**

○ Mindtools can also *support* the 70% category if you apply what you've learned from a resource to a real workplace challenge. For instance, you might read about a time management tool and then test it out in practice on a busy project.

A practical example of using the 70:20:10 model

If you want to develop your leadership skills, your plan could look like this:

● **70%** – Lead a working group or take responsibility for a team initiative.

● **20%** – Receive coaching from a senior colleague or peer.

● **10%** – Attend a leadership development workshop.

By looking at development in this way, you can create a more well-rounded plan that makes the most of the learning opportunities already around you - not just the ones in the classroom.