

LEARNING HANDBOOK

Guidance and tools to support systematic learning before, during and after project activity in health and care

Knowledge sharing cultures

Learning occurs best in a culture that values knowledge and knowledge sharing. Accordingly, the cultural traits and values that boost knowledge sharing should be encouraged and nurtured.

Recent research into knowledge sharing cultures highlights four experiences that potential knowledge sharers must relate with positively if they are to continue sharing:

- **Positive experience of helping others:** if a member of your organisation shares learning, they should receive recognition for this. By recognising and rewarding this in an open way, others will be encouraged to share as well. Recognition and rewards can come in many forms; a simple and easy approach is the offer of feedback from the person who has received the knowledge in return so that knowledge sharing becomes an exchange rather than a one way process. In other words, if someone shared knowledge with you, share knowledge in return – something valuable to inform their work. This also boosts knowledge self-efficacy (see fourth bullet point).
- **Positive experience of knowledge reciprocation:** if participants are unable to trust that their colleagues will also share information when needed, they are unlikely to continue sharing. Members of the organisation may also hold back knowledge if they do not believe those they share it with will utilise it in a useful or productive way – this is why feedback, as stated above, is essential.
- **Positive experience of the knowledge sharing process:** to encourage members of your organisation to share knowledge, the knowledge sharing process should be easy and fluid. Ensuring the right communication channels are in place can help this, however engagement from the organisation should be sought to ensure that any channels put in place are in line with the needs of the organisation. Feedback should also be regularly sought to ensure that the organisation as a whole is satisfied with the knowledge sharing process.
- **Positive sense of self-efficacy:** those who believe that their knowledge sharing makes a real difference are more likely to continue sharing their lessons learned than those who do not. Therefore, contributors should be linked regularly with those who have received the information to understand how it has been used. This can be seen as a main part of the knowledge sharing process designed by [Patient Opinion](#).

Further reading:

- Christy Chueng & Matthew Lee - [What drives members to continue sharing knowledge in a virtual professional community? The role of knowledge self-efficacy and satisfaction](#)

