

Flourish Project

e-Portfolios for Managers Animation – University of Cumbria

This is John, he's a newly appointed Manager at the University of Happytown. In his new post John acknowledges that he faces a number of challenges but the central one seems to be keeping in regular communication with his staff and being fully informed about important events and issues in his faculty. Asking for and receiving more emails to keep him up to date is not a good way forward. John is already overwhelmed with emails and can't seem to keep up with the information pouring in to his inbox. John's faculty is spread over two campuses and staff rarely get an opportunity to meet face to face making them all reliant on emails, chance conversations or formal committee meetings so John needs a solution that will:

00.47 One

Reduce the amount of emails in everyone's inbox.

Two

Replace some of the paper processes, reducing the risks associated with this way of working

Three

Give him and his colleagues an overview of work being done in his faculty which he can view at a time that suits him and that's created by his staff

Four

Allow for various ways of relaying information, including sound and pictures

01.13 This is Sandra, she is one of the faculty's lecturers and she has been using an e-portfolio to record and reflect on her own work and development. An e-portfolio is an easily accessible online space where you can store all your work notes and personal documents. Sandra has completed her appraisal using the e-portfolio, sharing it with John who is her line manager. When John looks at the e-portfolio in a short space of time he was able to gain an overview of Sandra's work and interests. He can read about the workshops and conferences she has attended over the past year and follow links to the papers she has presented, learn how she was progressing with her doctorate, gain an overview of work she was doing with a colleague – they're working on a nationally funded project together and hope to apply for more money in the near future. Although John does not read in depth all of the information provided by Sandra, he feels reassured that he can go back to it at a time that is convenient to him. He's also aware that Sandra has shared parts of his appraisal with others in the faculty but not all of it because she wants the online conversations with her line manager to remain private.

02.22 John decides to take a small step. He gets his own e-portfolio account and uses it to write a faculty newsletter introducing himself to his new colleagues. He finds that he can put together some headlines, a few sentences, a profile and a photograph in a format that looks much more professional than a word document and he can share this with his faculty staff on both campuses.

With Sandra's permission he creates a link to Sandra's summary of her conference attendance so staff can read about her experiences as well.

02.52 Once the newsletter has gone out John is delighted to see that colleagues add their comments and their experiences of conferences. On the back of this some colleagues also start to use the e-portfolio to record their work and development sharing parts of this with John so that he can gain a brief overview of their work. This John finds very helpful and quickly helps him grasp key issues rather than going through a series of email reports and having to plan for and make requests for updates. John is delighted that the small step he has taken has had such a positive reaction and can see more areas of his working life that would benefit from using an e-portfolio to save paper, endless emails and wasted time. John is currently studying a Leadership and Management course and has decided to use the e-portfolio to reflect upon his progress and learning. In the long term he hopes that by using his e-portfolio he will be able to collect evidence that will enhance his application for HEA Level 3 professional standards and ultimately his CV. John is keeping his fingers crossed that promotion is on the horizon