Welcome to the latest issue of the iROWE newsletter, in which we share with you the latest research and developments within the world of organisations, work and employment.

Current research within the team include projects on: clinical commissioning engagement; the Attrition of Union Learning Representatives; Unison Organising Initiatives; the relationship between union initiated learning in the workplace and the reduction of conflict; the disputant’s experience of mediation; and the impact of fair trade upon female producers, and throughout the newsletter more detail is provided.

Our evening seminar series is going from strength to strength. Peter Monaghan the Acting Area Director of ACAS came and talked about Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) at Work in May. Then after a break for the summer a panel of experts including Mark Robinson a Change Consultant from University of St. Andrews, Simon Powell a Corrective Actions Coordinator from Leyland Trucks Ltd, and iROWE’s Emma Thirkell and Douglas Martin; discussed organisational change through Lean.

Our next evening seminar will be in the new year, with details to be confirmed shortly. This is because we will be holding a full day seminar on December 12th on conflict in the workplace, full details on page 10.

We are also very pleased that iROWE’s research is influencing policy and practice. In particular Ian Ashman’s study into the effect of downsizing upon those who have to ‘envoy’ the challenging messages of redundancy to staff has made a substantial impact see page 7 for more information.

Congratulations also go to Dr Barbara Menera who gained her PhD this autumn. looking at factors triggering conflict within and between professions, and determinants of career success.

**Workplace Conflict Seminars**

iROWE are currently hosting a series of day long seminars on ‘Reframing Resolution - Managing Individual Workplace Conflict’.

Recent years have seen increased concern over a perceived rise in individual workplace conflict. As a result, the resolution of individual employment disputes has become a crucial issue. This seminar series brings together, for the first time in the UK, academic researchers, policy-makers and practitioners to explore workplace dispute resolution and the management of conflict. This ESRC seminar series, is also sponsored by Acas, CMP Resolutions, Consensio Partners and the TCM Group.

Each seminar will be held at a different university across the UK and will focus on a different aspect of workplace conflict such as legal regulation, mediation and employee voice. The seminars are free to attend, but booking is essential as they are attracting unprecedented demand. To register your interest or to find out more information about the series:

www.uclan.ac.uk/workplaceconflictseminars
REFRAMING RESOLUTION - MANAGING INDIVIDUAL WORKPLACE CONFLICT
ESRC Seminar Series 2012-2013

Recent years have seen increased concern over a perceived increase in individual workplace conflict. As a result, the resolution of individual employment disputes has become a crucial issue. This seminar series brings together, for the first time in the UK, academic researchers, policy-makers and practitioners to explore workplace dispute resolution and the management of conflict.

11th October 2012
Understanding individual employment disputes.
University of Strathclyde

18th April 2013
The management of workplace conflict – structures, systems and strategies.
Queen’s University Belfast

12th December 2012
Resolving workplace disputes – employee voice, engagement and representation.
University of Central Lancashire

Summer 2013
The changing face of legal regulation – rights, resolution and efficiency.
University of Warwick

14th February 2013
Mediation and alternative dispute resolution – outcomes and impacts.
Swansea University

5th September 2013
Managing conflict and resolving disputes – synthesising research, practice and policy.
University of Westminster

With kind sponsorship from: Acas, CMP resolutions, Consensio, the TCM Group.

For more information and to book a FREE place please go to:
www.uclan.ac.uk/workplaceconflictseminars
The University of Strathclyde hosted the first ESRC seminar from the series 'Reframing Resolution - Managing Individual Workplace Conflict' on 11th October 2012. The topic of this seminar was 'understanding individual employment disputes'. It attracted unprecedented attention and delegate places were fully booked. Attendees came from Acas, universities, mediation companies, citizens advice bureau, utility companies, justice services, the employment tribunals service, consultancy firms, trade unions and financial services.

It was a very successful day, with great discussions throughout the seminar. The roundtable session to explore the audiences’ views on the drivers and future of individual employment disputes was particularly stimulating.

Andrea Broughton started the day by highlighting factors that may influence an employee to pursue an employment tribunal and recommendations that may reduce a dispute from escalating into legal action.

Then Richard Saundry presented findings from iROWE research, which suggests there may be an increasing 'resolution gap' in organisations due to the decrease in HR and trade union involvement in handling disputes, and the difficulties line managers face in picking up this role.

Charlie Irvine took us through a case study demonstrate the psychological processes that may contribute to workplace conflict and argued that mediation may enable these influences to be identified and for disputants to better understand their behaviour and that of others involved.

Rachel McCloy explained the shift in policy focus to ‘behavioural economics’ recognising that decisions and actions during disputes are unlikely to be based on rational behaviour. Instead we need to understand the ‘mindspace’ of disputants, taking into account the social, emotional, psychological and cultural influences upon them.

Gill Dix summarised recent policies on employment relations, and noted the continuous focus upon reducing the number of disputes that result in employment tribunals and early resolution.

Phil Taylor argued that workers rights are being eroded, and that many contemporary practices are subtly intensifying work leading to hidden injustices and conflict. His presentation provided humour and raised awareness of the challenges many workers are facing in terms of stress and overwork, with limited options to resolve conflict other than exit.

Presentations are now available online: www.uclan.ac.uk/workplaceconflictseminars
Conferences presented at by iROWE

- Barbara Menara ‘Trust and social mobility in Britain’ at the Nordic Sociological Association Conference University of Iceland, Reykjavik, 15-18 August 2012
- Ashman, Ian ‘Managing downsizing change: a comparison of envoys in the public and private sectors’, BAM 2012 (British Academy of Management), 11-13th September, Cardiff University **winner of best paper**
- Thirkell, Emma; Robinson, Mark ‘Rapid Improvement Events and Employee Perceptions: development or dismissal?’, BAM
- Thirkell, Emma; Ward, Carolyn ‘Lean Leadership for Change’, BAM 2012( British Academy of Management), 11-13th September, Cardiff University
- Barbara Menara , 'Developmental processes of inter-professional conflict in enterprise contexts: evidence from Britain’. Interim Conference: Isa Research Committee 52 (Sociology of Professional Groups), Professions and Enterprise, University Campus Suffolk, 11-12 November 2012
- Douglas Martin presented a paper on “The challenge of Lean and the trade union response: a case study in the UK Civil Service”, BUIRA Conference June
- Richard Saundry and Michael McKeown (from the School of Health) ‘Relational organising in a health care setting’ BUIRA Conference
- Tony Bennett discussed ‘Mediation: A critical analysis of the changing nature of dispute resolution in the workplace’ BUIRA Conference University of Bradford
Recent iROWE publications

- Willcocks S G 2012 Exploring leadership Effectiveness: nurses as clinical leaders in the NHS Leadership in Health Services.
- S G Willcocks (2012) The entrepreneurial role in primary care dentistry, British Dental Journal
- Elmer P (in press) Public Relations People: the social construction of PR work and workers
Carol Jones and Richard Saundry’s article on the roles of managers and HR professionals in workplace discipline has just been published in Human Resource Management Journal. The paper suggests that the interactions between operational managers and HR practitioners may shape the nature and outcomes of disciplinary procedures and processes. Furthermore, it argues that this relationship is crucial in determining the prospects for a shift towards greater flexibility in the management of discipline, as called for by Gibbons and reinforced by the Employment Act 2008. Therefore, findings suggest that questions of managerial preparedness to embrace this new agenda must also consider the role played by HR practitioners.


PhD Student Symposium Friday 14th September

The first ever iROWE PhD symposium took place on Friday 14th September and included presentations from iROWE PhD students and other invited students. Their presentations were as follows:

- Tony Thornton ‘The changing nature of employee representation in the UK Telecommunications Industry’
- Gwen Boothby ’Workplace Diversity in Traditional Manufacturing & Engineering Industry”
- Greg Allen ‘Cross Cultural Management in Poland: A Postcolonial Perspective’
- Sayo Abimbola 'The Effect of Advertisement on Body Image and Consumer's Bodyweight in Nigeria”,
- Virginia Branney ’Suspicious minds: the role of trade unions in workplace mediation’

These presentations were very interesting and were an opportunity for our students to discuss their projects with iROWE researchers and their colleagues.

There was also an insightful session from guest speaker Dr Caroline Gatrell from Lancaster University Management School, on techniques for managing part-time PhD study. This talk helped both students and staff reflect upon the PhD process, and provided suggestions that can be applied to all of us who have to balance multiple commitments.

New publication on the roles of managers and HR professionals in workplace discipline

Issue 5, Nov 2012
New downsizing research makes an impact!

Ian Ashman’s latest Acas funded research on ‘downsizing envoys’ made a big impact when it was launched. This study builds on Ian’s previous research paper that explores the experiences of public sector employees that have been given the task of delivering the generally bad news of downsizing decisions face to face with the victims and then deal with the immediate repercussions – labelled downsizing envoys. The evidence from that paper is combined here with data gathered from envoys in the private sector in order to identify the similarities and differences in the experiences of envoys between the two sectors. The paper ‘Downsizing envoys: A public/private sector comparison’ can be accessed here: http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/d/1/1112_Downsizing_envoys_Ashman_(public-private).pdf

This research has informed new Acas policy on redundancy handling, and for a copy of this guidance go to: http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=747

Ian’s findings have also formed a paper for practitioners in People Management, the CIPD magazine [The full article ‘A new role emerges in downsizing: Special envoys’ is available on a subscription basis: http://www.peoplemanagement.co.uk/pm/articles/2012/07/a-new-role-emerges-in-downsizing-special-envoys.htm]

They inspired a further investigation by the Sunday Times [ http://www.thestatus.co.uk/sto/public/Appointments/article1115782.ece]; an interview with BBC radio Lancashire; and Acas channel on youtube [forthcoming].

The research was also featured in both local and national press and HR publications including: London Evening Standard; HR Review; Bourne local; Lancashire Evening Post Chorley Guardian; Burnley Express; Fleetwood news; Garstang Courier; Wigan Today; Glasgow Herald and Press and Journal Aberdeen.
"Fair enough? Women and Fair Trade"

Louise McArdle and Pete Thomas have just published a paper considering the impact of Fair Trade on producers with particular reference to women involved in Fair Trade production. They found that overall it has a positive impact for producers. However, the impact on gender relations within producer communities is limited although there are benefits for some women involved in Fair Trade production.

They highlight that while Fair Trade is usually considered as a positive developmental tool, its impacts are not homogeneous and are subject to the cultural gender relations that exist in producer communities. The paper highlights the need for a more systematic and longitudinal analysis of the impact of Fair Trade for women.


The experience of mediation

Tony Bennett, Richard Saundry and Gemma Wibberley have successfully secured funding from ACAS to research into the experience of mediation as perceived by the disputants in workplace conflict that was mediated by ACAS officers.

This is a new perspective on the mediation process and its outcomes. The research is currently underway, with a report on the findings available in the New Year.
Introducing mediation: An alternative approach to dispute resolution in the legal sector

Utilising funding from a UCLAN innovation voucher, Emma Mcandry from the Law School and Tony Bennett from Lancashire Business School are currently piloting a one-day workshop on mediation which they will subsequently be offering to clients as a CPD opportunity in the New Year.

- The programme has twin objectives in offering delegates: an introduction to and a better understanding of how mediation can more effectively address both cases of litigation and also workplace disputes, which can otherwise have a damaging impact on the service that legal firms provide to their clients.

- The workshop, therefore, will potentially enhance the service companies provide both to their clients and also help manage workplace conflict within their own organisation.

- As law professionals, managing conflict and resolving disputes are key elements of the work that delegates do every day, whether as line managers tasked with resolving disagreements amongst work colleagues or in providing services to their clients.

- This introduction to mediation, in contrast to other approaches to conflict resolution, will help delegates recognise that in many disputes successful resolution is more likely to be achieved when both parties feel that they have been party to finding solutions to that dispute and, therefore, more likely to accept a proposed outcome.

- In addition, mediation, whilst acknowledging the context and the history of the dispute, looks to not only resolve differences but also rebuild and maintain relationships.

Overall, the workshop will help delegates to better understand the key issues of:

- Why conflict occurs
- How mediation can help us resolve conflict
- When mediation may be a better route than more confrontational approaches to litigation
- The tools and techniques needed to effectively mediate
  - On behalf of clients
  - Between colleagues in the workplace

For law professionals, who are fully aware of the damage of conflict for clients and within the workplace, mediation offers a different perspective and approach to resolving that conflict. For further information on the workshop, please contact Tony Bennett ajwbennett@uclan.ac.uk
Ever considered doing a MBA?

iROWE staff are amongst some of the excellent lecturers teaching on the MBA at UCLAN. If you have ever considered developing your managerial skills or knowledge then apply now for the Master of Business Administration (MBA). This prestigious qualification is available part-time now at UCLAN to allow students to balance the course with their work and other commitments.

Our part-time MBA is designed for those working in a wide variety of managerial, technical and professional roles. This leading qualification will provide a rigorous and challenging postgraduate business and management education, where you will develop alongside other experienced managers and business professionals. This demanding 3 year part-time management programme will help you develop into an effective manager or professional working in a business management context. Those individuals who already possess a postgraduate general management diploma, such as the Diploma in Management Studies (DMS), and can satisfy the general admissions criterion of ability to benefit, may be able to join the MBA in Year 3. This advanced standing facility has proved an invaluable stepping stone to those DMS holders who wish to extend their programme of studies to Masters level.

For more information about the MBA please see:

http://www.uclan.ac.uk/information/courses/mba_part_time.php

If you would like to discuss the course please contact

Louise Mc Ardle LMc-ardle@uclan.ac.uk
or Judi Morgan JMorgan3@uclan.ac.uk
Social Media

iROWE began using social media in July, it was used initially to create awareness of the ESRC seminar series 'Reframing Resolution– Managing Workplace Conflict'. Hayley Cooling has been developing iROWE’s social media connections and we are now available to connect via Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Since joining social media iROWE have made over 200 national and international connections.

If you would like to be connected to iROWE via social media, then please email us or you can find us on;

- like – iROWE Seminars
  The iROWE Facebook has all the latest information about the upcoming seminars

- Follow – iROWe Uclan
  The iROWE twitter has all the latest information about research, awards and events

- Join- iROWE
  The linkedin account has a group where there are daily discussions with other iROWE connections

If you have something that you would like posting on any of our social media formats then please contact wcseminars@uclan.ac.uk

iROWE seeks to encourage the conduct and dissemination of high quality academic research into organisations, work and employment. In addition i-ROWE will work closely with employers, government and trade unions in order to inform the development of effective workplace practice and employment policy
REFRAMING RESOLUTION - MANAGING INDIVIDUAL WORKPLACE CONFLICT
ESRC Seminar Series 2012-2013

RESOLVING WORKPLACE DISPUTES – EMPLOYEE VOICE, ENGAGEMENT AND REPRESENTATION

University of Central Lancashire, 12th December 2012

Individual employment disputes have far reaching consequences for organisations and the individuals involved. But, recent research has suggested that employee representation can encourage informal resolution. At the same time, the growing number of unrepresented workers often find it difficult to resolve workplace problems through formal policies and procedures. This seminar will examine these issues – it will discuss the role played by trade union representatives and the impact of employee engagement and alternative structures of employee voice on the way that conflict is managed and disputes handled.

Confirmed speakers include:

Dr Andy Charlwood,
University of York

Richard Dunstan,
Social Policy Officer, Citizens Advice

Professor Ralph Fevre,
University of Cardiff

Paul Nowak,
Head of the Organisation and Services Department, TUC

Dr Peter Samuel,
Nottingham University Business School

Steve Stott,
Regional Manager, Unison

Dr Gemma Wibberley,
University of Central Lancashire

Other speakers,
TBC

With kind sponsorship from: Acas, CMP resolutions, Consensio, the TCM Group.

Attendance at this seminar is free of charge but places are limited. For more information and to book your place, please go to: www.uclan.ac.uk/workplaceconflictseminars

For any other enquiries, contact Richard Saundry:
rasaundry@uclan.ac.uk