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

We are sad to announce that Ian Ashman has left his role as iROWE Director. But we congratulate him on his very well deserved readership at MMU. Read his goodbye letter inside.

We also wish farewell to Alison Hollinrake and Mary Welch, who have also left UCLAN recently. Alison’s trade union expertise was demonstrated in a range of projects on ULR reps to domestic violence. Whilst Mary’s knowledge of internal communications took her all around the world sharing these resources. Mary is now working as a masters research supervisor at The Open University. Both were key members of iROWE and will be greatly missed.

Our evening seminar series saw an interesting debate on the impact of social media on workplace conflict. More details are inside. We also supported our local CIPD branch hosting their ‘Future of HR’ seminar over the summer.

Our next seminar will be ‘Using Action Research to identify Core Values within an Organisation’. Given by iROWE’s Ruth Slater and Jayne Pook, HR Manager, Kepak Convenience Foods. The session will explore Jayne’s experience as a practitioner, of using research in her company to identify core values that could support Kepak’s mission and vision. It will be on Tuesday December 6th. Full details are available on the back page. Please book your space now!

iROWE’s staff continue to be awarded funding to carry out their research, and within this newsletter members share their findings on: resolving workplace conflict, leadership in the health sector, trade union representatives, working in the digital economy and authentic leadership.

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iROWE seeks to encourage the conduct and dissemination of high quality academic research into organisations, work and employment. In addition iROWE works closely with employers, government and trade unions in order to inform the development of effective workplace practice and policy.

Includes chapters from iROWE colleagues:
- Jones, C and Saundry, R., 'A Crisis of Confidence? Front-line Managers and the Complexities of Conflict’ pp 105-125
- Wibberley, G. and Saundry, R. ‘From representation gap to resolution gap – exploring the role of employee voice in conflict management’ pp. 127-148
- Ashman, I. ‘Downsizing: Managing Redundancy and Restructuring’. pp 149-167
- McArdle, L. and Thomas, P. ‘Workplace Mediation Schemes: Antagonism and Articulation in the Discursive Process of Organizational Conflict and Disputes’ pp265-287

http://dx.doi.org/10.12968/bjhc.2016.22.9.455


Willcocks, Stephen George (2016) Exploring leadership in the context of dentistry in the UK. Leadership in Health Services, 29 (2)
http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/LHS-02-2016-0009
Conferences/ Presentations


Ruth Slater and Jayne Pook (Kepak Convenience Foods) ‘A collaborative study using action research to identify core values to underpin organisational mission and vision statements’ at The 17th International Conference on Human Resource Development Research and Practice across Europe at Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester, June 2016

Alison Hollinrake and Gemma Wibberley ‘The role of trade unions in supporting victims of domestic violence in the workplace’ British Universities Industrial Relations Conference at the University of Leeds 29 June to 1 July 2016

Ian Ashman discussed the potential triggers for conflict within downsizing at Reframing Resolution – Innovation and Change in the Management of Workplace Conflict, Sheffield University and Acas, Sheffield. July 2016

Gemma Wibberley ‘The vital role of employee voice in resolving individual conflict’ at Reframing Resolution – Innovation and Change in the Management of Workplace Conflict, Sheffield University and Acas, Sheffield. July 2016


Recent UCLan PhD graduate Dr Kevin Ruck and IROWE’s Dr Mary Welch presented a conference paper on: ‘Employee voice: An antecedent to organisational engagement?’ at the Bledcom Conference in Bled, Slovenia in July 2016.

FORTHCOMING:

Gemma Wibberley and Carol Walton, ‘Early dispute resolution for managing staff conflict’, Lancashire CIPD Conference, 25th February 2017
Workplace conflict—reframing resolution

iROWE has drawn on its extensive research into workplace conflict to help create a new book on the topic - Reframing Resolution: Innovation and Change in the Management of Workplace Conflict.

The book was co-written by two iROWE directors—Richard Saundry and Ian Ashman, along with Professor Paul Latreille (Sheffield University). It also features work from many iROWE colleagues: Virginia Branney, Carol Jones, Louise McArdle and Gemma Wibberley. In addition it features international research, and contributions from policy makers and practitioners.

It focuses on the management of workplace conflict, and the challenges this presents for trade unions, front line managers, HR and organisations. The book also looks at alternative dispute resolution, such as mediation, and innovative methods used by companies. It is written to support practitioners, policy makers and academics.

The book continues from the ESRC funded seminar series ‘Reframing Resolution’ in 2012/13 run by IROWE. Those seminars explored the nature and extent of workplace conflict, and gave practitioners, academics and policy-makers the opportunity to debate these issues together. The book features some of the key contributions from the series, along with other exciting developments in the field.

An exciting launch event for the book took place at Sheffield University. It was kindly hosted by the Work, Organisation and Employment Relations Research Centre (WOERRC – Sheffield Management School) in conjunction with Acas. The event opened with a keynote address from Sir Brendan Barber, Chair of Acas. There were also presentations from a number of leading researchers, including an entertaining international skype session. The event also included a panel discussion of key practitioner and policymakers examining 'What Next for Conflict at Work?'

iROWE thanks everyone who has been involved in the conflict management research and events over the years, with particular thanks to Acas for funding many of the studies.

A gender equality challenge: Domestic abuse in the workplace

iROWE research into domestic abuse in the workplace has recently been published in the United Nations Principles for Responsible Management Education book Overcoming Challenges to Gender Equality in the Workplace: Leadership and Innovation.

Gemma Wibberley, Carol Jones, Tony Bennett and Alison Hollinrake conducted research into domestic violence, highlighting that it can be difficult for workplaces to support staff, but that trade unions can potentially help managers and employees.

Their chapter states that “Domestic violence is a key workplace gender equality issue. Although domestic violence affects everyone, it is predominantly women who are the victims and who suffer from the most severe abuse. While rarely acknowledged in UK literature or practice, domestic violence can also affect women at work. It can hamper their performance, attendance and career development. Furthermore, perpetrators can continue the abuse at the workplace. Conversely the workplace can be a haven from domestic violence, offering support and resources. Yet far too often employers lack the capacity and capability to handle domestic violence, resulting in many victims losing their job. Our research explored the role played by trade unions in domestic violence cases, and found that representatives were a source of support for both victims and organizations in helping them better handle domestic violence in the workplace. “

The book covers a wide range of industries and contexts, highlighting the challenges organisations face in addressing gender equality, and providing examples of how they have overcome them and the benefits this brings. Reviews include:

"Overcoming Challenges to Gender Equality in the Workplace expertly lays out the business case for gender equality backing up statements with thorough research and inspiring international company examples “ (Ursula Wynhoven, Chief, Legal Officer + Chief, Governance and Social Sustainability at the UN Global Compact)

iROWE is delighted to announce that this chapter has been added to the Equality and Human Rights Commission’s (EHRC) Violence against women reading list: https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-research/reading-lists/violence-against-women-reading-list

Research updates

iROWE staff have been busy on a number of other projects including:

- Third Sector project - Cheryl Gordon, Mike Summersall and Mark Rees have been collaboratively working with other UCLAN staff to produce a new concept ‘hybrid store’ for income generation and community interaction for AgeUK WBE. They have also been undertaking an ongoing change management project with the company to develop the commercial capacity of third sector workers. This project is due to finish in July 2017 and they hope to maintain a longer term relationship with AgeUK WBE to monitor impact and disseminate to other third sector parties.

- Public sector project - Adrian Wright is part of the UCLAN team looking into productivity and SME’s. The project aims to map entrepreneurial activity, investigate barriers to entrepreneurial activity and assess the importance of education, networks and cultural/institutional capital. This project has recently started and should be finished by April/May 2017.

“If you think you’re authentic, you’re not”

Ian wrote an interesting piece on ‘authentic leadership’ for the CIPD blog, exploring some of the current thinking on this topic.

He notes that authenticity is rated very highly in our leaders at the moment, throughout the business and even political worlds. That we want someone we can believe in and relate to. However, there are concerns that this value of authenticity is unrealistic and unattainable personality trait.

Ian questions that perhaps instead we should expect that “The authentic leader, if there is such a thing, doesn’t strive for authenticity but they do take responsibility for their actions. If they do that and are doing their best we shouldn’t ask for any more.”

The full post can be found at:
https://www.futureworkishuman.org/think-youre-authentic-youre-not/
Is social media a new cause of workplace conflict?

Our evening seminar in May explored the relationship between social media and conflict in the workplace.

Ian Ashman and Gemma Wibberley discussed an interesting finding from the Acas Focus Groups into workplace conflict, that suggested social media can be involved in escalating conflict and blurring boundaries of workplace issues.

The seminar was a great opportunity to discuss the role of social media in the workplace. Audience members had a range of experiences, both positive and negative, highlighting opportunities for employee voice for remote staff but also concerns around disciplinary action.


Goodbye from Ian Ashman

After twenty-four years working at the University of Central Lancashire I am moving to pastures new (although not that far away). I take up the post of Reader in Work and Organisations in the Centre for People and Performance (CPP) at Manchester Metropolitan University on 28th October.

Having been part of iROWE since its inception it has been a privilege to be Director for the past three years or so. I would like to thank everybody (colleagues, alumni and other associates) that has helped iROWE to deliver what I believe to be timely and relevant applied research and create a vibrant community through which to disseminate and evaluate the employment issues that are important to us.

My association with iROWE will certainly not end here so it is unlikely that you have seen or heard the last of me.

I should appear before long on the CPP website (www.business.mmu.ac.uk/cpp/researchers.php), where my new email address is i.ashman@mmu.ac.uk, and you can find me on LinkedIn should anybody want to get in touch.

Very best wishes – Ian.
Join iROWE on Social Media

We regularly post updates about our research activities and events via social media channels. There is also opportunity for discussion with other people interested in employment issues. If you would like to be connected to iROWE via social media, then please email iROWE at wcseminars@uclan.ac.uk or you can find us on:

- **like** – [IROWE Seminars](#)
  The iROWE Facebook has been re-launched to offer a new way to access us and our activities.

- **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 regular discussions with other iROWE connections

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**Become an associate member**

iROWE is a research institute located within Lancashire Business School at the University of Central Lancashire. It provides a forum for the development and dissemination of high quality research into organisations, work and employment. Its work has a particular emphasis on policy and practice—in short research that has an impact and makes a difference.

Therefore, iROWE brings together academics, managers, HR professionals, union representatives and policy makers. If you would like to be part of this exciting institute and kept at the forefront of research then become an ASSOCIATE MEMBER. This FREE membership is open to all those with a professional interest in organisations, work or employment. Benefits include: research e-newsletter, regular free seminars by key speakers in the field, consultancy opportunities for your organization, and networking.

To join just email Gemma Wibberley at gwibberley@uclan.ac.uk

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**Issue 13, Nov 2016**
Seminar and Audience Discussion

Using Action Research to identify Core Values within an Organisation

Speakers:

Dr Ruth Slater, Lecturer, iROWE
Jayne Pook, HR Manager, Kepak Convenience Foods

A practitioner's experience of using Action Research in a local food manufacturer to identify core values that could support the company’s mission and vision. The research was undertaken in a collaborative fashion and consisted of 3 phases of action research, designed to elicit values held within the culture of the company according to employees, making them co-creators of the company values statement.

The result of the research was that the practitioner could propose a set of 4 core values, that were reasoned, resonated with employees and capable of supporting the organisation in achieving its vision and mission. The research also demonstrates the value of using action research to promote organisation development and promote embeddedness of required behaviours.

Tuesday December 6th - 5.30 – 7pm
Brook 009, UCLAN [n.b not the normal room]

Refreshments available from 5pm
Attendance is free.
To book a place please contact Gemma : gwibberley@uclan.ac.uk