ICiPS

CONNECT • DEVELOP • DELIVER • IMPROVE

The Institute for Continuous Improvement in Public Services

10 measures that HR Professionals can take to embed continuous improvement

About The HR Module

The module introduces you to the 3 ABC steps that can help you to embed CI in the employee lifecycle.

Case studies, tools and templates can be downloaded from the ICiPS website. www.icips.org

This document may be downloaded and shared in its current form, but extracts may not be used.
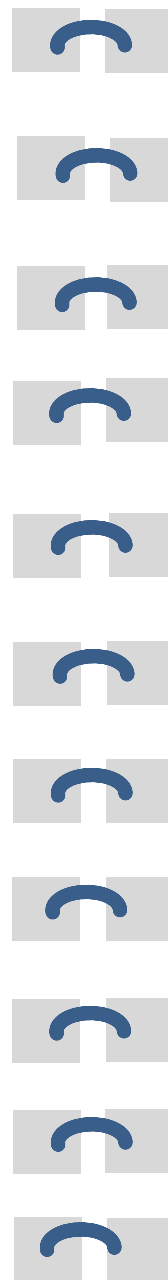
What you will learn and what it will enable you to do

By the end of this module, you should understand how to support your organisation embed CI as a way of working.

We will consider:

- The principles of CI
- Practical measures that HR can take to help embed CI throughout the employee lifecycle.
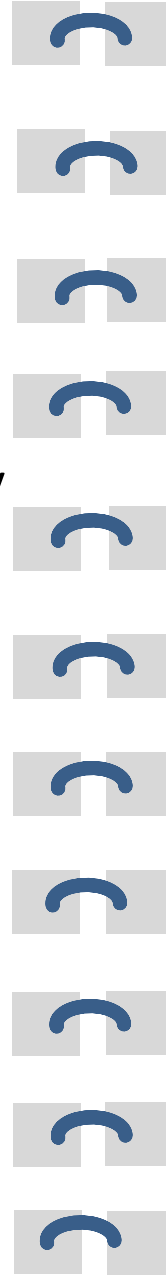
Some benefits of developing a CI culture

Organisations have

Leaders focussed on quality

Improved employee retention

More efficient and effective delivery

Less knee-jerk change

Increased collaboration

Opportunities for improved quality and efficiency savings

Customers are

More likely to receive right service first time every time

The employee benefits include

More ownership over quality and outcomes

Less change fatigue

Improved motivation and sense of purpose

Opportunity for self and career development

Less Frustrations about things that keep going wrong

Workload is more manageable

Understand what is happening and ready to respond

Time focussed on value adding activity

This can aid retention , lessen sickness absence and improve the organisations resilience.

CI considers every aspects of the organisation

The secret to embedding CI is not in mass training or in teams of experts delivering change projects; but in embedding it at every level in in every activity

It is about engaging people.
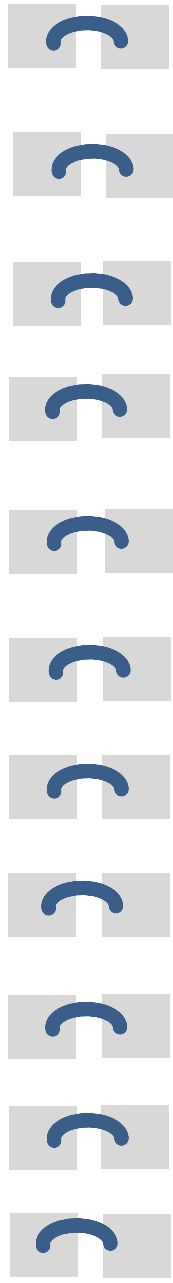
HR professionals can help embed CI

1. Ensure purpose and principles are clearly defined and embedded
2. Develop leaders who champion CI.
3. Encourage collaboration
4. Develop managers to empower and support staff in making improvements
5. Ensure objectives focus on quality and effectiveness.
6. Foster a no blame culture where errors inform learning.
7. Celebrate successes large and small
8. Ensure development is integral to the role.
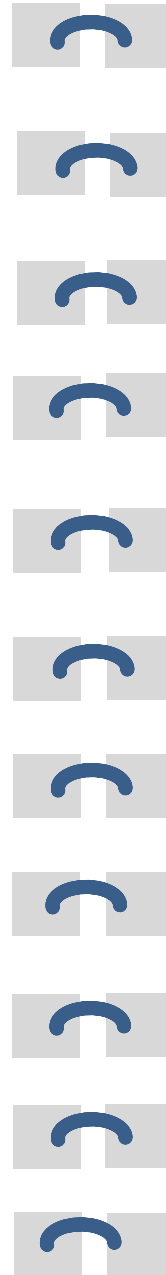9. Develop a common language that promotes an improvement culture

1 – Ensure clarity of purpose & principles

Principles to embed CI could include:

In doing so, employees will understand why their role exists.

Without this understanding employees are less likely to empathise with the need to improve or demonstrate behaviours conducive to a CI culture.

Reinforce this by taking every opportunity to weave it into communication

We foster and support active involvement by every employee in continually improving performance.
We build and sustain working partnerships both within and outside of the organisation in order to understand and improve performance.
We plan, monitor and evaluate information to enable us to improve services and to meet customer need.
We never blame or judge: we learn from what has gone well and also from what has *not* gone so well.

2. Develop transformational leaders

Leaders of CI communities require a particular set of skills.

As well as ensuring transactional requirements are met, leaders need to be visionary, championing CI and creating a following of engaged and enthused employees who embrace CI not as a bolt-on activity, but rather as an integral way of working.

HE can support the development of leaders.
See the attached sheet for the leadership development journey

PDF
leadership matrix.pdf
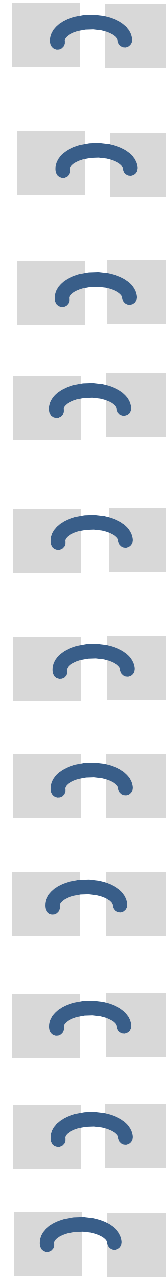
3. Develop CI Communities of practice

CI communities work as one to embed CI in working practices. They:

- Have a common sense of purpose.
- Have a sense of belonging.
- Support all individuals.
- Work as one to meet customer need.
- Work as one to improve performance.
- Share information and insight.
- Communicate ideas for change.

HR can support the creation of communities. Of learning and practice.

4. Empower & support employees

The essence of CI is employee driven change; promoting a sense of ownership and enabling faster resolution of problems.

Requiring ideas for improvement to be submitted to a suggestion schemes or CI lead can lead to disengagement when suggestions are lost in the system or are not acted on.

HR can support managers to empower their employees to implement change within defined boundaries – a concept that some find hard.
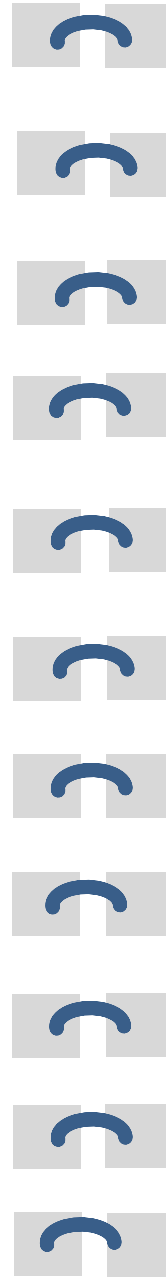
Defining the boundaries

Empowerment means letting go of control and passing it to someone else. This brings with it implications that need to be addressed:

What range of activities are employees empowered to make?

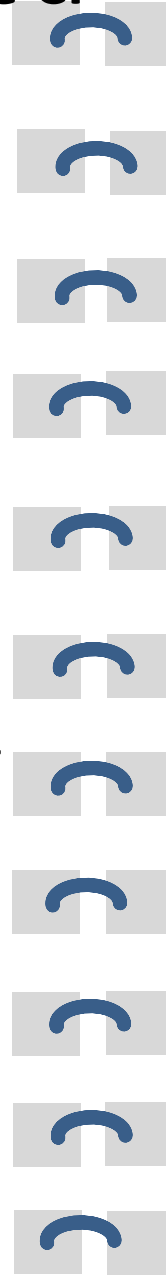What does this means in terms of risk?

How will employees be supported to introduce improvements?

What does this mean in terms of line management accountabilities and sign offs?

How will change be captured and communicated?

5. Ensure objectives encourage CI and quality

Employees engaged in CI will be using many skills from problem solving to team working. The setting of personal objectives is therefore an ideal opportunity to embed CI whilst;

- Improving motivation
- Supporting employees on their career pathway
- Acquiring knowledge
- Developing skills and behaviours
- Closing the knowing – doing gap

……. And improving efficiency and effectiveness

Edgar Schein's Personal Career Anchors

Schein defined 3 areas that form a an individuals 'career anchors'

1. **Skills and competencies – what you are good at**
2. **Motives – the things you want**.
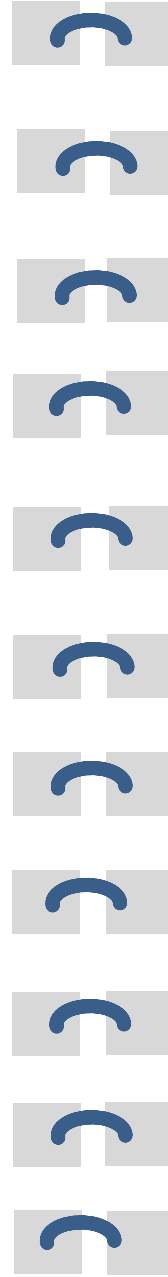3. **Values – what is most important to you.**

There are 8 categories that describe what motivates individuals, most of which can be satisfied by actively engaging with CI.

career anchors and ci.pdf

CI related objectives can also help meet motivational need

David McClelland's work on motivation concluded that employees have needs that influence their performance at work. One is Achievement Motivation - an individual's need to meet *realistic goals*, *receive feedback* and experience a sense of accomplishment.

 CI is about making a positive difference. HR can help managers set met through SMART objectives linked to CI, thereby meeting a raft of employee needs.

Examples of objectives that promote CI

- Improve one aspect of their work e.g. reduce complaints, eliminate re-work, deliver correctly first time every time.
- Demonstrate ownership of improvement.
- Demonstrate CI related behaviours.
- Demonstrate they have worked in line with the principles.
- Work with your supplier and customer to understand their requirements.
- Work with your delivery chain to address one problem area.

6. create a no-blame culture where errors inform learning.
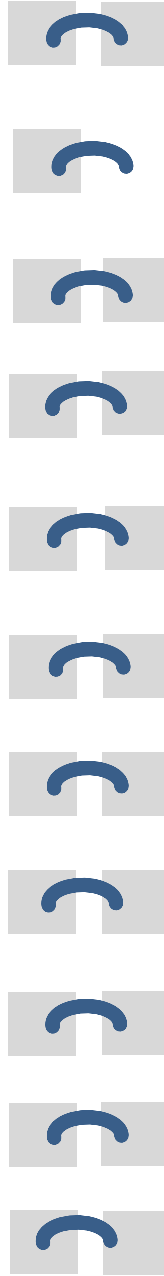
CI organisations have a learning culture. Employees feel able to ask difficult questions, to challenge.

They are comfortable to try something and admit failure if it doesn't work, knowing they won't be blamed and the experience will be learned from.

HR should ensure communication channels enable the flow, capture and dissemination of knowledge, ensuring the right insight is available at the right time and place.

Innovation

Innovation result in breakthrough improvements

What is deemed to be innovative will vary, but it is safe to say that things that are innovative are untried, and therefore trying them introduces a degree of risk.

Leaders and managers need to understand this, to define what level of risk they are prepared to take, and to establish how to manage innovation and the risks associated with it.

7 . Ensure personal development for all

One of the largest challenges of a organisation is addressing the knowing-doing gap .

The transition from knowing to doing is often lacking so employees will need support to close this gap.

Informal learning is powerful and can include:
- Coaching and mentoring
- Job shadowing
- Briefings
- Team meetings
- Peer learning
- Action learning
- Walking the process
- Team information boards
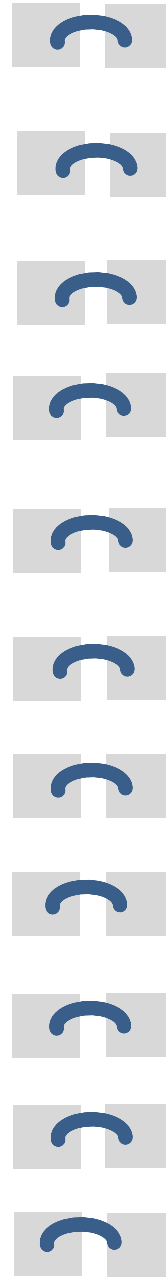
Find ways to share knowledge

A study of 1,000 organisations by the Centre for Workforce Development reported that up to 70% of workplace learning is informal, through sharing of ideas, stories about what has and hasn't worked, observation, and learning from error.

Hewlett Packard 's Strategic Planning, Analysis and Modelling Group gained the most success from transferring and implementing knowledge when it was done by those who had implemented it.

'If you do it, then you will know.' David Sun and Jon Tu

8 . Develop a common language for CI

Employees from different backgrounds will attach different meanings to the same words which can make it harder to embed CI

Think about the language around CI, and agree clear definitions to ensure common understanding e.g.

- What is your definition of empowerment?
- When you talk about purpose, what does it mean?
- When you talk about CI, what does that mean?
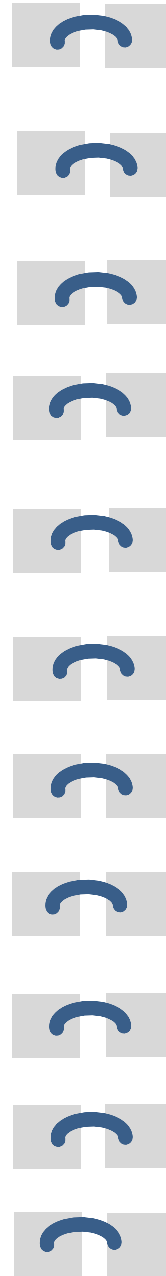
Weave these words and messages into every activity

Think about evert touch points throughout the employee lifecycle.
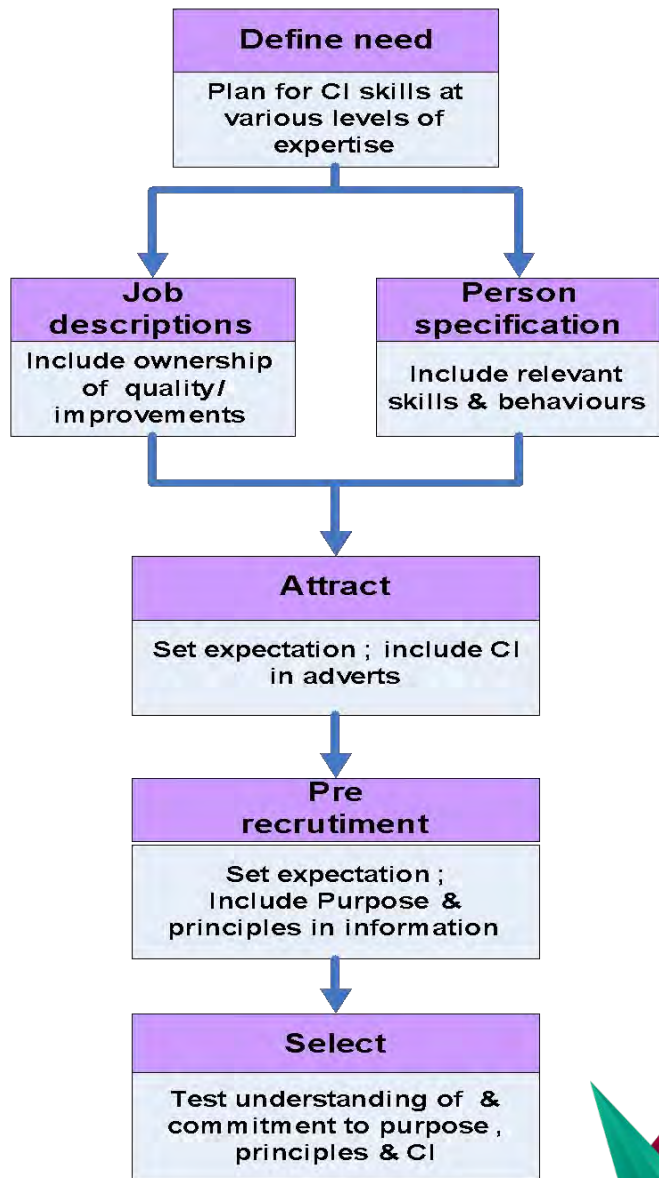
Reinforce Passively: pre-employment activity, job adverts and interviews, in newsletters and on posters

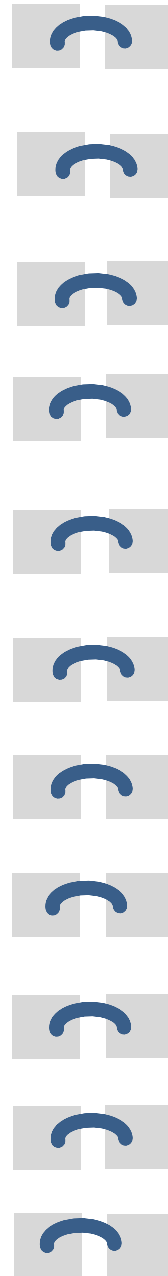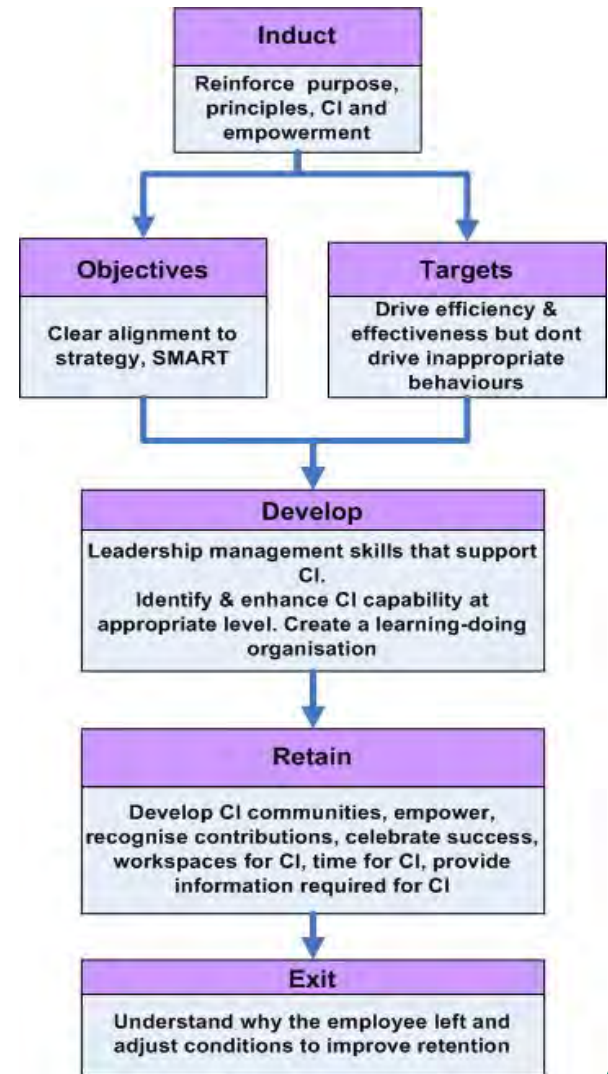**Reinforce Actively:** performance management, meetings, briefings, training, feedback.

Ensure everyone understand who is responsible for what at which touchpoint – put it in tehri job description

Weave in words at pre-employment touch points

Define need
Plan for CI skills at various levels of expertise

Job descriptions
Include ownership of quality/improvements

Person specification
Include relevant skills & behaviours

Attract
Set expectation ; include CI in adverts

Pre recrutiment
Set expectation ; Include Purpose & principles in information

Select
Test understanding of & commitment to purpose, principles & CI

Weave in words at post-employment touch points

Induct
Reinforce purpose, principles, CI and empowerment

Objectives
Clear alignment to strategy, SMART

Targets
Drive efficiency & effectiveness but dont drive inappropriate behaviours

Develop
Leadership management skills that support CI.
Identify & enhance CI capability at appropriate level. Create a learning-doing organisation

Retain
Develop CI communities, empower, recognise contributions, celebrate success, workspaces for CI, time for CI, provide information required for CI

Exit
Understand why the employee left and adjust conditions to improve retention

9. Workplace design, motivation and creativity

There are two schools of thought on this:

1) the design, colour and layout of workspaces impact the ability for employees to think creatively – for example, different colours create different behaviours.

2) Others point to examples of motivated people who are creative almost anywhere - the environment doesn't inhibit.

Common to both is the need for time and space in which to be creative.
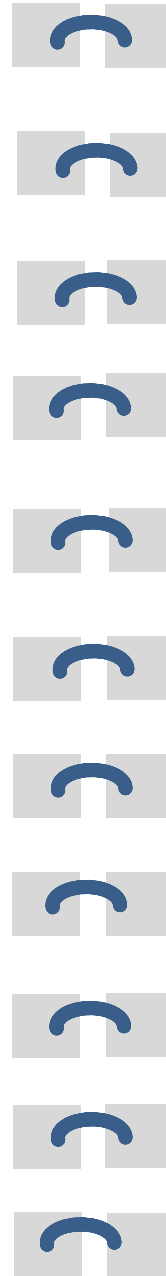
Make it acceptable to have thinking time

HR can support the 'normalisation' of thinking time; working with managers to help them understand the benefits of making time to think and identify ways in which small amounts of time can be carved out of the working day.
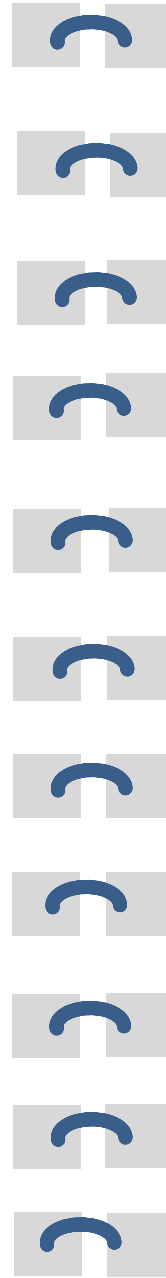
Understanding how well CI is embedded

HR gathers metrics that can help to build a picture that indicates if a CI culture is embedded, including:

- Employee surveys
- Culture surveys
- Absence information
- Exit interviews

EMPLOYEES ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN CI.pdf

ICiPS Maturity Assessment

ICiPS FREE maturity assessment assesses how effectively CI is embedded across and between key organisational functions.

A score, graphs and employee comments paints a rich picture from which improvement plans an be developed.

You data is held in you won portal and builds year on year to enable benchmarking

Sign up from the home page of our website.

Organisations with CI embedded have:

- Exemplar leadership
- Strong and inter-relating structures
- Empowered employees
- Motivated employees
- Efficient and effective delivery
- Happy customers
- They seamlessly adjust to meet future needs
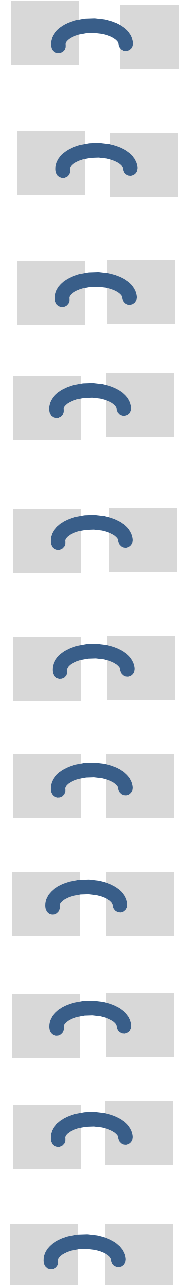
Next steps

Employees can join our CI community, access support and resources for free.

We also offer interactive and certified courses for those wanting more detailed knowledge of tools, on our Moodle Platform.

ICiPS

CONNECT • DEVELOP • DELIVER • IMPROVE

- Professional services
- Free support, guidance and knowledge for members
- Custodians of professional practice for continuous improvement

Go to our 'join now' page and become a part of our international network – guest membership is free

www.icips.org
07906 623432