

Picking the easy route

According to Argyris (2002) people who are well-educated professionals are, surprisingly not very good at learning. They rarely experience failure, so when they do fail to meet expectations they become defensive and pass the blame to other factors and people (Argyris, 2002). This idea is quite understandable. These professionals would have huge pride in meeting and surpassing bench marks, so when something does go wrong they refuse to believe that they could have made a mistake. Throughout the readings for week seven I was considering how it applies to my own experiences with MikesBikes.

After completing the readings I am glad that I selected to be grouped with people that were learning orientated rather than a more academic, in it to win it team. All members in my own team contribute to discussions each week on what we need to improve. However, as Argyris (2002) points out, how we think, or say we behave has little correlation with how to actually act. The goals that we all put onto our CVs at the beginning may not resemble how we are all feeling now. We did well in our practice roll over, we definitely did not fail, but perhaps we would have learnt more if we did take more risks and "failed" in some some of our results. After these readings I really started to doubt the way that my team learns from our mistakes and also successes each week.

Every week when we get together we easily identify what we did well and what needs improvement. Needless to say the past few rollovers have been abit rocky with our results not being what we expected. Obviously the question for each week is something along the lines or "how do we fix this problem?" Which is exactly what Argyris (2002) mentions as a mistake when striving to become a learning focused organisation. Learning is being defined too narrowly as purely problem solving (Argyris, 2002). Each week we overcome a problem that has already occurred rather than trying to prevent these problems from occurring. Its like a constant catch up game. A possible reason as to why we are following the single loop rather than the double loop would be because our problems are clear and the solution is also clear. However, the solutions that are obvious may not be the best ones. We do question our decisions along with the results they cause, but we aren't asking why they are occurring. Every department and decision in MikesBikes is interrelated, so when we are not producing enough the obvious answer has always been we need more capacity. But what else will contribute to this? Marketing, supplier relations, Research and Development to bring down the required SCUs per unit are all extremely important. We cannot afford to ignore these decisions. Perhaps the reason why we are not following the double loop is because we are not being critical enough. According to Synnott (2013) Critical Reflection is about developing new understandings and possibilities for action. I understand that the past few weeks have been filled with assignments and tests so hopefully when we have more time we can all focus more on the underlying assumptions of the decisions to support our goals.

To make the transition from a single loop learning to the double loop which stimulates critical reflection we need to dig deeper into why the results are the way that they are. What are the underlying assumption? Is there a better alternative?

Argyris, C. (1991). *Teaching smart people how to learn. Reflections, 4*(2), 4--15

Synnott, M. (2013). Reflection and double loop learning: The case of HS2. *Teaching Public Administration, 31*(1), 124--134. doi:10.1177/0144739413479950