

UNIT SUMMARY

What is the unit about?

This unit is about your role in making sure that the organisation gets the technology it needs and uses it in the best way possible. Technology might mean information or communications technology, equipment, machinery and so on. It does not necessarily mean using complicated technology or the latest invention. Instead it is about assessing the use of technology and improving it, which might mean making better use of what is already in place or even shifting to a lower-tech solution if that is appropriate.

You are not expected to be a technology specialist but you would be expected to be able to work with specialists as appropriate.

For the purposes of this unit, an 'organisation' can mean a self-contained entity such as a private sector company, a charity or a local authority or a significant operating unit, with a relative degree of autonomy, within a larger organisation.

Who is the unit for?

The unit is recommended for senior managers.

Links to other units

This unit is linked to units **B2. Map the environment in which your organisation operates**, **B3. Develop a strategic business plan for your organisation**, **B4. Put the strategic business plan into action** and **C3. Encourage innovation in your organisation** in the overall suite of National Occupational Standards for Management and Leadership.

Skills

Listed below are the main generic 'skills' that need to be applied in promoting the use of technology in your organisation. These skills are explicit/implicit in the detailed content of the unit and are listed here as additional information.

- Thinking strategically
- Involving others
- Questioning
- Communicating
- Problem-solving
- Thinking systematically
- Monitoring
- Reporting
- Contingency-planning
- Consulting
- Information management
- Benchmarking
- Networking
- Reviewing

- Planning
- Innovating
- Leadership

OUTCOMES OF EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

You must be able to do the following:

1. Identify the approach(es) to and current use of technology within your organisation and any plans to discard or introduce technology or use existing technology for different purposes.
2. Consult with relevant people across the organisation and other relevant parties in order to identify the successful use of technology.
3. Consult with relevant people across the organisation and other relevant parties to identify opportunities for introducing technology or using existing technology for different purposes.
4. Ensure that the organisation has a strategy for using technology and that it fits with the overall vision, values, objectives and plans of the organisation.
5. Communicate the strategy for using technology across the organisation and to other relevant parties.
6. Ensure that the use of technology is driven by customer needs.
7. Carry out benchmarking to identify good practice in relation to the use of technology and what lessons can be learnt and applied to your organisation.
8. Establish systems to monitor implementation of the strategy and report on the overall performance of the organisation in relation to the use of technology.
9. Seek and make use of specialist expertise to assist in developing, implementing and reviewing the strategy for using technology and monitoring overall performance of the organisation.
10. Ensure that resources and support are provided across the organisation to enable colleagues to make the best use of the available technology.
11. Ensure that contingency plans are in place in case technology fails.

BEHAVIOURS WHICH UNDERPIN EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

1. You constructively challenge the status quo and seek better alternatives.
2. You take personal responsibility for making things happen.
3. You anticipate likely future scenarios based on realistic analysis of trends and developments.
4. You articulate the assumptions made and risks involved in understanding a situation.

5. You take timely decisions that are realistic for the situation.
6. You balance risks against the benefits that may arise from taking risks.
7. You constantly seek to improve performance.
8. You use communication styles that are appropriate to different people and situations.
9. You create a sense of common purpose.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

You need to know and understand the following:

General knowledge and understanding

1. Different types of technology.
2. How to keep up to date with the key developments in technology.
3. The main factors to consider when assessing the use and/or introduction of new technology, including the full costs and benefits.
4. The importance of consulting with colleagues and other relevant parties in relation to technology.
5. What an effective strategy for using technology should cover.
6. The importance of contingency-planning in relation to the ongoing use and/or introduction of technology and how to do this effectively.
7. Different techniques and methods for communicating the organisation's approach to and strategy for using technology.
8. How to benchmark your organisation's use of strategy against other organisations.
9. Sources of specialist expertise in relation to technology.
10. How to establish systems for reviewing the implementation of the strategy for using technology and identifying areas for improvement.
11. The type of resources and support needed to enable colleagues to make the best use of the available technology.
12. How to identify sustainable resources and ensure their effective use to support the use of technology.

Industry/sector specific knowledge and understanding

1. Trends and developments in your industry/sector in relation to technology.
2. The types of technology that are available to your industry/sector and their main features, benefits and drawbacks.
3. Legal requirements, government policies and industry or sector guidelines relating to using technology.
4. Financial or other incentives or support that may be available for investing in technology in your industry/sector.

Context specific knowledge and understanding

1. The approach(es) to and current use of technology within your organisation.
2. Plans to discard or introduce technology or use existing technology for different purposes.
3. Who needs to be consulted across the organisation in relation to technology.
4. Other relevant parties with an interest in your organisation's use of technology.
5. The overall vision, values, objectives and plans of the organisation.
6. Your organisation's specific strategy in relation to using technology, including contingency plans.
7. The needs of your customers.
8. The role of technology in your organisation's culture and how to build on this.
9. Systems in place for effective monitoring and reporting on the use of technology.
10. The organisations that are similar to your own and the technology they use.
11. The specialists who can advise your organisation on using technology.
12. What technology has already been tried in your organisation and what the outcomes were.