

How to...

Gain buy in for learning with social media



We've all heard stories of or witnessed the powers of social media, so why not create your own success stories by embracing these technologies and embedding them in your learning strategy? Often, the problem is how to get buy in from the business. So here are Saffron's top five tips for taking the first steps towards winning support in your organisation:

1 **Build a solid, measurable plan**

Ask yourself what your learning and development goals and objectives are for engaging in social media. This will give you ammunition for building the case in the first place.

2 **Decide between ease of use and creative flexibility**

There are so many social media apps out there so decide what features you're looking to utilise and seek 'business friendly' alternatives to these. Then, once you've found out all you need to know, why not try it yourself? Write a blog, post on a wiki... start with the simple things.

3 **Choose your words carefully**

There are still reservations surrounding social media, so try to stick to more familiar terms. For instance, instead of 'social networking', consider replacing it with 'online forum'. Also, present social media in the context of building capabilities, collaborating and exchanging knowledge within your organisation - this will be far more persuasive!

4 **Blitz the stigma**

Social media apps are worthy tools for enhancing learning - it's not all fun, fun, fun. Yes, people use them for dating and socialising but they can also be applied for embedding and retaining learning more effectively, consequently shifting the learning culture in your organisation.

5 **Educate the decision makers**

Show them how social networks can be used in business and learning, and iron out any myths and misconceptions. Explain your plans to create a community of practice and develop members' capabilities through sharing knowledge.