



Residential School Alumni Workshop

Success and Failure in Change Leadership: Can You Have One Without the Other?

Workshop, Thursday 11 June, 14:00 - 15:30
(During the Annual Conference, University of Edinburgh, 10 - 12 June 2026)

The 2026 Residential School Alumni network face-to-face workshop will take place on 11 June 2026 at the University of Edinburgh. It will focus on people, looking at strategies and approaches to help leaders become “change ready”, understand the need to work differently and act proactively to support profound organisational transformations in their institutions.

Change is a learning opportunity. It rarely goes smoothly, especially where people are involved. How do we learn from these challenges and do change better the next time? It is too easy to define change projects as “failures” and quickly move onto the next one, but difficult does not equal failure. We will only get better if we take a learning-focussed and people centred approach to change.

Critical to positive change management is leadership. As senior leaders in universities, more than ever we are expected to be adept at implementing change, yet it always feels difficult. What leadership qualities are needed? Strength of conviction yet being willing to compromise, collegiality, good communication, empathy, empowerment – these are all key.

The workshop will aim to address some of these important aspects of change leadership. It will be organised as a co-creation exercise where participants will be invited to share their experiences and lessons learned. It will leave participants with a change leadership toolkit

Workshop short contribution: Jen Wylie, Head of HR, University of Edinburgh, HUMANE Summer School Alumni

Workshop moderators: Will Chicken, Erkki Raulo