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Schofield, Keith and Tobbell, Jane

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Embracing Diversity in Organisations by Promoting Identity

Dr Keith Schofield
Dr Jane Tobbell
University of Huddersfield

Identity
- Specific organisational ‘identities’ enable success
- Constructed through previous experience, life, work
- Learning is central to identity
- Active community participation must be encouraged
- Identity is essential for understanding employee performance and engagement

Learning and Identity
- Learning is a result of the constant interplay of person, time, context and activity
- Identity shifts are required to be successful
- Participation in social practice enables learning
- Vygotskian notions of learning through relationship

The Business
- ‘Smart Debt Recovery’
- West Yorkshire, UK
- Debt purchase and collection
- 250 staff
- Telephone Negotiators (Debt Collectors)
- Telephone calls, letters, the dialler

Emergent Identities
- Constructed through:
  - Past participative acts
  - Current participatory acts
  - Projected participatory acts
- Success does not increase with participation
- There are required elements of participation
- There are additional, more complex elements of participation that may be encouraged
Alyssa
- Debt Collector of the Year
- Successful at collecting debt
- Not a collaborator
- Focused, controlling
- Identity construction around individual success

Sandeep
- New starter
- Disengaged with social practice
- Incongruent individual vs. organisational values
- Different levels of participation in SDR practices

Any questions?