The Case of Employability ePortfolios

Mr Peter Rees Jones
JISC-CETIS

Abstract:

Recessions are time of destruction of the old order, a time when assumptions are questioned and nascent practices and ideas are given space to flourish.¹

This presentation reviews the development of a national ICT infrastructure within the UK by organisations such as JISC through the Managing Information Across Partners programme ² giving individuals real control over their personal information.

Could this represent a radical shift from institution-centred data management systems to a new paradigm in which individuals integrate what they are learning and applying in many contexts. The knowledge I have constructed within a Portfolio becomes a resource I can integrate with other resources to continually update re-factor and apply what I know to new contexts, exploiting the real potential of the web for the first time. We need to explore connectivism.

These initiatives focus on new pathways into Higher Education to enhance the skills of young people and workers in employment:

- How should the employability Portfolios in development in UK relate to education portfolios? I qualify three of Helen Barrett’s priorities to move the emphasis from benefits to the individual and the family to take account of how individuals acquiring, skills benefit themselves, the economy and society.

Three Key Themes

A new paradigm should enable individuals to:

- acquire, integrate and deploy skills to their personal benefit and that of society
- exercise legitimate control of their personal data not just within an ePortfolio but wherever it is held, providing them with the confidence to...
- collaborate with other people in the development of networks which increase the social capital available to all people.

¹ Lynda Gratton London Business School, Financial Times 2008 12 10
² http://www.miap.gov.uk/about/partners.htm
I set out 3 keystones for a new paradigm:

- The future of ePortfolio is as a 'dynamically generated view of distributed data', not an aggregation tool. 
- The exploitation of new network technologies such as CISCO AON to allow learners to control their data
- Developing the concept of connectivism to deconstruct the idea of Portfolio as a collection of information to an agile means of connecting data on the web enabling the individual continually to update re-factor and apply their expertise.

Senior managers and practitioners need to do more than specify requirements. Rather we need to understand and engage with the potential of the technology for remaking education and training to help remake a broken economy. And technologists need to develop new means of communicating possibilities, establishing an on-going dialogue.

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3 [http://www.jisc.ac.uk/publications/publications/heepssfinalreport.aspx](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/publications/publications/heepssfinalreport.aspx)