

What is blue sky thinking?

To open up your mind as far as possible

If you want to encourage blue sky thinking in your department / section to enhance professional learning, these ideas may help:

- Consider the wide range of challenges you face, undeterred by practicalities such as time and funding constraints. You need to know what the ideals are; not what compromise may be.
- Do not assume that something is impossible. You never know, there may be a way and every suggestion and request deserves consideration.
- It is natural for professionals to sell themselves short, even in their blue sky thinking. However, it's important to move past that; this may be the public sector, but without pushing boundaries, standards will never rise.
- Encourage blue sky thinking to be an opportunity to challenge. Without that, learning is at best limited.
- Don't allow pessimism in blue sky thinking. It serves no purpose.
- Work through the initial ideas with patience, as the really valuable suggestions are likely to flow towards the end of the exercise.
- Encourage people to think in terms of the individual and the organisation. One needs to be balanced by the other at all times.
- You can use blue sky thinking to reach agreement on what will build trust in your organisation, particularly when it comes to professional learning.

- Aim to determine the organisation's most compelling ideal and vision for learning.

Is this shared by all staff?