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RESOURCE

Developing T-shaped Water Professionals: Reflections on a Framework for Building Capacity for Innovation through Collaboration, Learning and Leadership

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Description / Abstract

In developed and development contexts, change is an increasingly central theme for water professionals. Growing populations, rapid urbanization and increasing demands for water, food and energy, are set against a backdrop of changing rainfall patterns and emerging trade-offs between the water required for water supply, energy provision, food production, livelihoods and ecological support. Building the capacity of water professionals to lead the changes in policy, planning, management and communities required to tackle these issues systemically is an essential component of our collective response to global water challenges. This paper provides a contribution to the fields of water leadership and capacity development by outlining, then critically discussing how a concept, the T-shaped professional, is being used as a framework to guide the design and delivery of postgraduate education programs to build leadership capacity in the water sector. The T-shaped concept integrates insights from leadership, learning theory, collaboration, critical thinking and praxis. In doing so, the concept and the way in which it has been applied in the context of postgraduate education provide an intellectually coherent and practical approach to developing the skills and knowledge required by water professionals to stimulate and lead change.

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