

First SeAMK Learning Circles Ever – Collaborative Peer Learning

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It is difficult to develop skills on your own. Well, of course, something can be done to develop my own expertise, I can search for related information, read, watch videos, try all by myself. Maybe I'll ask a colleague in a difficult situation. But learning is at its best in the group. We can also influence the competence of others by participating in the learning circles that we launched at SeAMK in February organised by DigiSkills. Learning circles are open to everyone, and anyone can set one up. The leader just needs interest and enthusiasm, one doesn't have to be an expert on the subject. Topics for learning circles can arise from, for example, the wishes and needs of colleagues. Or set up a learning circle with a small group of people. This way we can share good tips, and often the solution can be found together.

A total of 60 SeAMK employees and students have already participated in the learning circles organised so far. In the Digital Image learning circle, we have discussed digital image features such as different file formats, image composition and Adobe Photoshop. In the Office learning circle, we have tested, among other things, Sway features from an accessibility perspective. The WordPress learning circle is aimed at people who are part of the WordPress admin network. The group has considered the technical characteristics of the platform, and even a piece of code there has been found to work. The WordPress.com-themed learning circuit, which was open to all, also included search engine optimization. These learning circles were organized through Oppimispiirit (The Learning Circles) Teams channels, but of course physical meetings are also possible.

Individual and Community Competence Identity

Diversity and the individual's ability to lyric their own skills vary. When an individual has a strong competence identity, one identifies and perceives one's own competence and knows how to apply it. Similarly, a certain degree and commitment are needed to build a professional identity, where the change is gradual. Rapid change, not through a degree, but through competences, builds a competence identity that includes the possibility of many professional identities during a career. Technologies are changing and industries are disappearing, but when a community recognizes the competence strengths of its staff, it will keep up with the change. What is important is how the know-how can be applied. And once we identify our own weaknesses, we can build partnerships. Thus, when an organisation recognizes its own needs, it can also participate in ecosystem work that creates value. So, let's learn together. (Huttula, T., 16.3.2022). After all, competence is never static, but develops and takes shape throughout life (Tulevaisuuden osaaminen syntyy ekosysteemeissä, 2022, p. 17). So, we always can learn and develop. Because if we feel complete, we come to a stop (Tulevaisuuden osaaminen syntyy ekosysteemeissä, 2022, p. 18).

Each of Us is a Learner

At the heart of learning and the application of new things, is probably also needs-oriented. When I realize how learning benefits myself and my team, it also increases my inner motivation. How is it fed and managed? How do we help build the competence identity of the individual and the community, especially in working life? Trust is important when we develop competences together. We also need the courage to admit that we do not know, but also the time and space to accelerate learning, both at the individual level and within the organisation. Only the learning of individuals can accelerate the competence of the community. At best, the organization also promotes and supports learning, not hinders it. The well-being of the individual is also the well-being of Finland. (Ihanainen-Rokio, O., March 16, 2022). We all play an important role in the SeAMK community. Let's help each other to learn.

What's your learner identity like, how do you learn? What about the rest of us, could you share your expertise with us? Peer learning gives movement to the organisation. We want to enable interaction. Soft and clichéd? I challenge you to try it.

Thank you to all of you who have already participated in learning circles, without you they would not exist! And welcome new ones! We also encourage you to launch new learning circles!

Jk. Read more about learning circles.

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Sini Karjalainen
Expert, R&D
SeAMK

The author is working as an expert on an ESF REACT-funded DigiSkills – Developing and utilizing digital capabilities -project. Read more: DigiSkills – Developing and utilizing digital capabilities -project



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