

QUADULTRAINERS PROJECT

Laboratory of Innovation

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1 Community of Practice

Communities of practice are formed by people who engage in a process of collective learning in a shared domain of common work: a group working on similar problems, a network of persons sharing their know-how.

In a nutshell:

Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.

Note that this definition allows for, but does not assume, intentionality: learning can be the reason for the community to come together to an outcome of member's interactions. Not everything called a community is a community of practice. A neighbourhood for instance, is often called a community, but is usually not a community of practice.

Three characteristics are crucial:

1. **The domain:** A community of practice is not merely a club of friends or a network of connections between people. It has an identity defined by a shared domain of interest. Membership therefore implies a commitment to the domain, and therefore a shared competence that distinguishes members from other people. The domain is not necessarily something recognized as "expertise" outside the community.
2. **The community:** In pursuing their interest in their domain, members engage in joint activities and discussions, help each other, and share information. They build relationships that enable them to learn from each other. A website in itself is not a community of practice. Having the same job or the same title does not make for a community of practice unless members interact and learn together. The members of a community of practice do not necessarily work

together on a daily basis, but their interactions were essential to make a community of practice.

3. ***The practice:*** A community of practice is not merely a community of interest - people who like certain kinds of movies, for instance. Members of a community of practice are practitioners. They develop a shared repertoire of resources: experiences, stories, tools, ways of addressing recurring problems -in short a shared practice. This takes time and sustained interaction. The development of a shared practice may be more or less self-conscious.

It is the combination of these three elements that constitutes a community of practice. And it is by developing these three elements in parallel that one cultivates such a community.

Communities develop their practice through a variety of activities. These are a few typical examples:

- ✓ Problem solving
- ✓ Requests for information
- ✓ Seeking experience
- ✓ Reusing assets
- ✓ Coordination and synergy
- ✓ Discussing developments
- ✓ Documentation projects
- ✓ Visits
- ✓ Mapping knowledge and identifying maps.

Communities of practice are not called that in all organizations. They are known under various names, such as learning networks or thematic groups.

While they all have the three elements of a domain, a community, and a practice, they come in a variety of forms. Some are quite small; some are very large, often with a core group and many peripheral members.

Some are local and some cover the globe. Some meet mainly face-to-face, some mostly online. Some are within an organization and some include members from various organizations.

Some are formally recognized, often supported with a budget; and some are completely informal and even invisible.

Communities of practice have been around for as long as human beings have learned together. In fact, communities of practice are everywhere. They are a familiar experience, so familiar perhaps that it often escapes our attention. Yet when it is given a name and brought into focus, it becomes a real perspective to create common visions, knowledge and experiences.

2. Laboratory of Innovation

This document aims to provide a description of the Laboratory of Innovation: its concept, how it is going to work and the outcomes that are foreseen in using it.

The Laboratory of Innovation will be a virtual space where different key actors will meet to share their best practices.

Based on the Internet it will be accessible to all Associations and Bodies which are interest in confronting themselves with other organisations throughout Europe.

The Laboratory of Innovation will be composed and characterised by the following elements:

- 1) it will be the place for **experiments** among organisations of the Banking sector
- 2) it will encourage **collaboration** among different stakeholders
- 3) it will be the place where to **work** and produce **new knowledge**

Experiment

The Laboratory of Innovation is intended to be a virtual space where to carry out experiments related to sharing of good practices and knowledge with specific reference to the Adult Trainer Profession.

Cooperation

The Laboratory of Innovation will be a site for cooperation among the Stakeholders, it aims indeed to: 1) start a beneficial dialogue between different key actors across Europe to share their experiences in reference to different and emerging subjects linked to the Human Resources development and management; 2) overcoming boundaries related to culture and competition.

The collaboration among different Associations and Institutional bodies becomes a natural consequence of their involvement into the Laboratory of Innovation: it will facilitate the dialogue among different organisational cultures of the banking sector who will benefit from the sharing of experience and practices. For instance, comparing one another experiences about topics that will facilitate them in the process of understand how crucial it is to introduce the implementation of these approaches and policies into their organisations for their competitiveness.

Produce / work

While comparing policies, approaches and structures among organisations, the Laboratory of Innovation will serve multiple aims, among which: working together and producing new Learning to share. The Lab. aims to be the place where key actors will find the way of working together, share and produce valuable knowledge that will integrated into the process of the organisation as part of the development strategy.

Innovation

Methodology

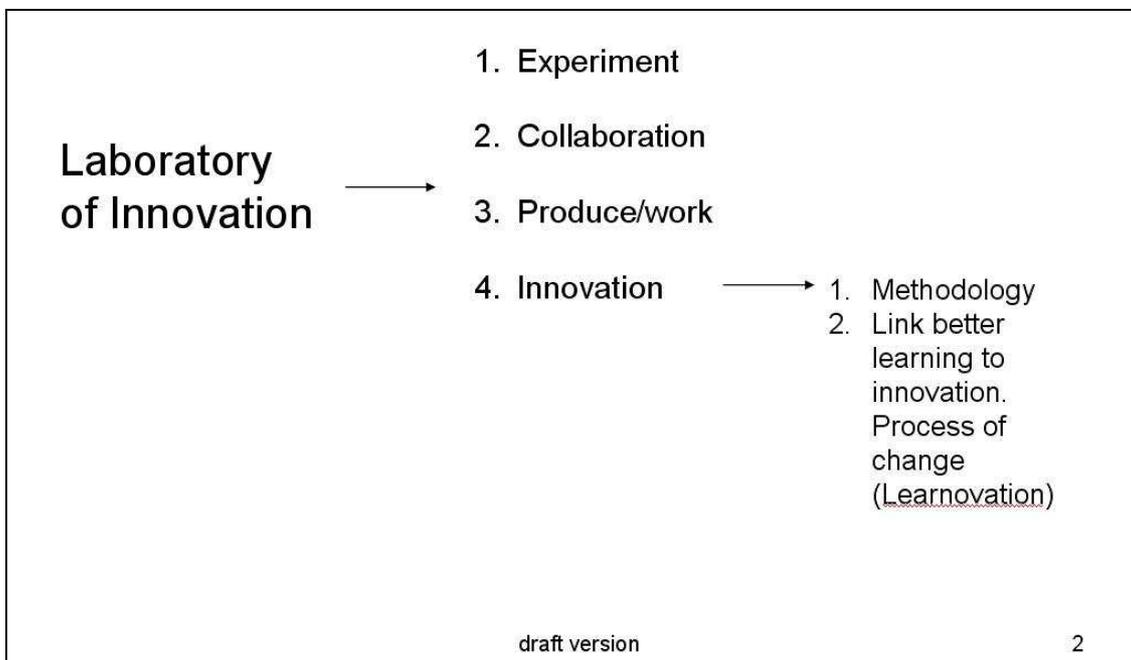
The Innovation of the Lab. stands in the approach to benchmarking and learning: using the web as a virtual arena where different realities of the Banking sector meet and share their experience across borders is a definite trait of innovation, not just for the tool but for the approach itself, a new way to conceive benchmarking and its value not as a mere competitors analysis, but as a way to understand where the Organisation stands in terms of development and ultimately learn from other experiences in the sector.

Link better learning to innovation: Learnovation

Learning is a process that implies change. Change in its positive attribution of value means growth, evolving into something better. The Laboratory of Innovation intends pursue this objective: Learning as an experience which will bring positive change, therefore innovation.

It can be reassumed as a simple correlation:

sharing experience → learning → change → innovation



Technical and visual aspects

The “Laboratory of Innovation” is inside Quadultrainers Project website www.quadultrainersr.eu.

The Quadultrainers *community of practice* is composed by the following actors:

Quadultrainers Partners	NIBE SVV EBTN – SCIENTER HWR Berlin – University of Economics and Law IFB – The Portuguese Bank Training Institute AIF – Associazione Italiana Formatori IFB – Instituto de Formacao Bancaria Advisory Board Members
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As planned in the project proposal, will be set up a shared communication platform, creating the conditions for international collaboration and exchange of information and experiences.

Moreover, the Laboratory of Innovation will include a virtual environment where Banks can log in after registering, download instructions and guidelines and fill in the benchmarking/benchlearning questionnaire.

Permission to register will be granted only to certain professional roles, will be *ad personam* and the results will be completely anonymous and elaborated in real time by the data base.

The use of community of practices to diffuse and implement the concepts of the Adult Trainers Profession allows a faster and more efficient communication flow, with significant gains both in terms of process efficiency and of procedures related to Knowledge-Management.