

TTnet thematic workshop

Results of the TTnet project on:

“Professionalisation of VET teachers for the future - PROFF”

(May 2002 – May 2003)

Session 2: Professional well-being: attracting and retaining good VET teachers

An example of innovative practice: the META-project, Finland

Background

Hard competition has come to stay both in working life as well as the whole society. Change has become a permanent state in many work places and the pressure on the employees is increasing and changing. Thus VET is confronting great demands.

To tackle these demands education and training must be developed continuously. One of the main areas of development in the cooperation between vocational upper secondary institutions in the area of Etelä-Savo is the development of staff under the theme *From individuality to a culture of collegiality*. One of the aspects in the programme is to increase the professional well-being of the teachers and thus reject the threat of teacher shortage.

Aim

- to renew operation modes,
- to develop a permanent culture of collegiality,
- to pool people, skills and equipment,

- to raise the quality in learning, teaching and management through long-term collegiality,
- to emphasise learning in one's own job.

Content of CVET provision

The participants take part in the project on three different levels, in collegial groups, networks and training camps.

Collegial groups are teams of 2-4 persons generally within the same institution. The formation should be voluntary, based on the individuals' own choices. The main aim of the teams is to support the members in developing and renewing their teaching.

Networks are open projects built around a certain theme (cf. themes listed below). All those enrolling should actively participate in the work of the network, i.e. be prepared to receive and deliver ideas, knowledge, experiences and skills.

Training camps are arranged 2-3 times per year and is a forum for presenting new ideas, innovations and current issues as well as for sharing the models and adaptations developed on the collegial groups.

Themes of the networks:

- internationalisation,
- special needs education,
- general subjects,
- clothing and textiles,
- natural resources,
- cooperation with working life,
- web-based pedagogy,
- curricular development,
- learning methods,
- apprenticeship learning/adult education,
- coping with work/professional well-being,
- pedagogical leadership,
- support functions.

Duration

The project's duration is from 2002 to 2005 but many of the models and practices are meant to be permanent. Through networking so called know-how centres will be developed facilitating the exchange of resources.

Mode of delivery

Working in teams in one's own institution, working as a member in a network using email and the Internet as well as training camps arranged twice or three times annually. Cf. model above.

Target group

Teachers, instructors and management in six VET institutions in the Savo region.

Number of participants

At present the number of participants is 100+, the final number is estimated at 200+.

Admission requirements

All teachers in the six institutions are eligible providing that they are willing and committed to participate actively in the collegial exchange.

Trades

Natural Resources Sector, Business and Administration Sector, Tourism, Catering and Home Economics Sector, Health and Social Services Sector, Culture Sector, Leisure and Physical Education Sector, Technology and Transport.

Geographical coverage

The network within the project comprises 20 municipalities within the Savo region. Savo is rural and typical for this area is geographical fragmentation (lake district), scarce population (all towns and municipalities have a population under 50 000 inhabitants), high unemployment rate, aging population, lower educational level than average in Finland and migration from the area.

Stakeholders

ESF, institutions involved, participants, students, Provincial State Office of Eastern Finland.

Funding

ESF, Provincial State Office of Eastern Finland, institutions involved

Certification/validation/accreditation

Participation is a demonstration of activity on the part of the teacher in updating his/her vocational and pedagogical skills. The coordinators in the project (each network has two coordinators) will probably receive university credits for their training and activities.

Skills/Competences developed

Development of the deeper qualities in teaching: attitude to teaching, concept of learning, tutoring and counselling students. Also understanding the role of the teacher as a wider concept (e.g. tutoring and co-teaching) as well as dealing with new learning environments.

Concrete results expected:

- increased attraction of vocational upper secondary education,
- regional cooperation and utilising expertise existing in the areas and the institutions,
- cooperation in purchasing costly equipment,
- increased attraction to the VET teaching profession (<=increased professional well-being of the teachers).

Teaching material, tools and resources developed

Web-tool for sharing view, ideas, materials and methods. Also works as a discussion forum.

Evaluation

Continuous feedback from participants, feedback from the training camps → evaluation reports → external evaluation → final report.

Innovative dimension

- The project is part of the in-service strategy of the consortium of municipalities. The strategy enables the purposeful planning and implementation of CVET within and between the institutions;
- the participants are no more objects of training, instead they are subjects, developing the training scheme through their active participation;
- CVET is an integral part of their work load, no part of the training is done in the teachers' spare time;
- "job sharing", e.g. the school-level curricula are produced together among the teachers of the same fields in the different institutions as well as co-teaching.

Bibliography/Web sources/Related research

www.eskoulotus.com Joint website of the institutions involved in the project

Sahlberg, P. & Sharan, S. (toim.) 2002. *Yhteistoiminnallisen oppimisen käsikirja*. Helsinki: WSOY.

Sahlberg, Pasi, *Opettajana koulun muutoksessa*

Asko Leppilampi ja Ulla Piekkari: *TERVE, TERVE opitaan yhdessä oppimisen ja elämän taitoja*

Asko Leppilampi ja Ulla Piekkari: *Opitaan yhdessä. Aikuiskoulutusta yhteistoiminnallisesti*

http://www2.niwl.se/saltsa/doc/Schools_working_condition.doc

Project on work organisation and school work-life