

## Workshop Innovation in regional business and industry, NGOs and the public sector – the role of University Lifelong Learning

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### Lessons learned from co-operation – The project 'Virtual interaction with Web 2.0 in companies'

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#### Abstract

The project presented in this paper serves as a case study for the co-operation between universities and companies in the field of continuing education of companies' staff. The center of continuing university education of Hamburg university (AWW) in 2010 initiated the project 'Virtual interaction with Web 2.0 in companies – make it work' (VIN) with three major companies from Hamburg: AstraZeneca, Eppendorf AG and Hamburg Airport. The companies' staffs are spread out nationwide or worldwide. The project aimed at

- the implementation of eLearning for further qualifying and training of the companies' staff
- using Web 2.0 technologies for companywide knowledge management
- generating concepts of learning on the job
- centralising information and knowledge and making it accessible to branches worldwide

Human resource managers from the companies decided to launch the project with the center of continuing education of Hamburg University because it holds the expertise of concepts for sustainable eLearning concepts using Web 2.0 technologies. In addition they decided to undertake the project as four partners and set up a joint project management group. The benefits of a co-operation project were seen in:

- jointly taking first steps into the field of collaborative eLearning
- the benefits from counseling of the peer group
- the interchange of successful practices and learning from each other
- the transfer of knowledge between university and companies and vice versa
- sharing costs of the project among all partners involved.

To initiate a process of sustainable implementation of eLearning and Web 2.0 technologies three target groups from the companies were included:

- managers and members of worker council across companies were trained through the course 'Virtual Teamwork' by the AWW. They experienced how eLearning works and learned how to make use of Web 2.0 tools. Questions of data protection and working time regulations were raised.
- trainers across companies were qualified through the course 'Train the E-Trainer' by the AWW. They learned how to design eLearning courses adopting Web 2.0 technologies in a didactically suitable way for their companies.
- In addition the idea was to train employees through the course 'Virtual Teamwork'. They needed to learn how to combine working and learning applying eLearning and how to make use of Web 2.0 technologies in a way that supports workflows and knowledge management.

The described project serves as a case study for the co-operation between universities and companies with the following conclusions:

- Stakeholders from companies want to co-operate with universities because they need scientific knowledge about continuing qualification of employees.
- Human resource managers need concepts on how employees can combine working and learning.
- Stakeholders from companies are looking for sustainable ways of integrating new technologies in everyday work.
- Stakeholders from universities have a certain understanding of learning that aims at empowerment of the employee and enables them to improve their working environment by adopting new technologies.
- A transfer of knowledge between university and company and vice versa initiates innovative concepts.
- Openness for co-operation is worth it.