

## WBL-PRO Professional Peer Network: The team talks with the professionals – Inger-Lise Vanja Lund Petersen, Copenhagen, Denmark

It is our pleasure to present to you today **Inger-Lise Vanja Lund Petersen** - Associate Professor at University College Copenhagen, Counselling & Guidance Department, Denmark.



Please find below what she has shared with the WBL-PRO team:

1. Please share with us what the main advantages with respect to work-based learning are:

I'm interested in work-based learning partly because I regard worked-based learning as a way to enhance inclusion for people in danger of being excluded, excluded of the educational system and society.

Lave & Wenger (1991) regard learning as a social process where knowledge is co-constructed.

By enabling people to acquire professional skills on the workplace, we help them to enter the world of work and thereby obtain a legitimate peripheral participation (Ibid.).

Along with practical working skills, worked-based learning will also provide participants with:

- the specific vocabulary used in a certain trade,
- a so called lived insight into adequate ways of behaving,

-a network

and finally but not least with

-Empowerment (Andersen & Siim, 2004) & Agency (Bandura, 2006)

By Empowerment is meant ability to take action in one`s own life along with awareness, which could also lead to a greater self-confidence. And Bandura`s concept Agency: people can acquire the power to shape their life circumstances.

Furthermore work-based learning could perhaps become a way that the educational system in co-operation with the labour market could give the hackschoolers (young people hacking their way to an education by online courses etc.) an opportunity to satisfy their search for innovative, individualized ways of learning in a society characterized by disruption.

## **2. Please share with us what the main challenges with respect to work-based learning are:**

The time-issue and economical aspect are two challenges we have to deal with.

If we agree that learning is a social process where knowledge is co-constructed, we need to facilitate possibilities for participation in work practices where there is room for reflection and time to slow down the work process when different practices must be shown and explained.

We also have to collaborate on how to avoid that learners are let to some of the same work practices, because they are good at them and because it saves time and money instead of introducing them to a palette of possibilities.

## **3. Please describe any solutions with respect to challenges and/or weaknesses related to work-based learning.**

A labour market and a society in a period of disruption need new ideas and ways of interacting that might be provided by inviting learners and new workers to participate in work practices.

Many companies are interested in creating a socially responsible image and are interested in supporting sustainability in a broad understanding.

As professionals: counsellors, teachers, researchers etc. we have to be explicit about the advantages of investing time and money in work-based learning.

**4. Please share what the most important knowledge skills and competences for the work-based learning professional are according to you. What kind of trainings are necessary to acquire them?**

I find it important that the work-based learning professionals have or acquire good communication & listening skills and that they are aware of that they should interact in an ethically sound manner.

Finally when we are involved in teaching processes it could be very helpful to be aware of different roles and positions and how you, by what you are saying, can shift to a more fruitful position. If we want learners to see the world/situation from different perspectives the art of questioning could be elaborated.

The training to acquire the skills and competences needed could be organized as roleplays and discussing and analyzing cases from the professional world together with other work-based learning professionals.

**5. Please share information about work-based learning projects you are involved in - name, the funding program, the main aims, the target groups, the intellectual outputs, link to website, facebook group etc.**

At University College Copenhagen we have had and have projects dealing with work-based learning. Currently I am working on a Mentoring course for company owners who want to become mentors for our students studying Knitwear Design, Handicraft and Communication. The course should help the company owners to establish close and fruitful relations to their mentees in an ethically sound manner and is partly funded by The Foundation of Danish Entrepreneurship.

Once our students have finished their education most of them will start their own business or/and find project employments. Having a mentor could provide the students with: a network, experiences from starting up a company, a professional vocabulary, empowerment, agency and motivate them to finish their education.

The Mentoring course will among others deal with communication skills, listening skills (Withworth, 1998), different ways of asking questions (Karl Tomm) and awareness of different roles and positions in the mentor relationship.

Along with the course we are working on a toolkit book for mentors.

- Lave & Wenger (1991) *Situated Learning. Legitimate peripheral participation*, Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press
- Andersen J., Siim B. (2004) *The Politics of Inclusion and Empowerment – Gender, Class and Citizenship*. Palgrave Macmillan, London

- Bandura, A. (2006) Toward a Psychology of Human Agency, Perspectives on Psychological Science, Volume 1 Issue 2, June 2006, Sage Publication

Please feel most welcome to like our facebook page and join the linkedin group to get acquainted with many best practices and other useful materials, tools and resources supporting the high quality performance of work-based professionals around Europe and beyond its borders!

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