

Interactive work community skills in the professional context

This paper explores the connection between work community skills and professional communication competence. It aims to increase understanding of interaction in the work community and the emergence of work community skills in the context of expert work. The research answers the following questions: What kind of communication competence is emphasised/relevant in expert work? What features of communication competence required in the professional context are considered to be functional and to promote work community skills? The data consist of open-ended questionnaire responses gathered from ITC specialists. The responses were coded and analysed using thematic content analysis, and the results were placed in the framework of relational communication and work community skills theory. The findings indicate that versatile communication competence is key in expressing work community skills, as the communication competence of the experts focused, for instance, on feedback and a willingness to cooperate. The analysis of the features of effective work community interaction exposed three levels of interaction, the functionality of which contributed to the willingness of experts to use their work community skills. Unlike in the established models, the importance of interaction and constructive criticality, analyticity, and questioning skills emerged as key features in good work community skills and communication behaviour. Work community skills were regarded as interactive social skills that form a starting point for de-veloping the whole enterprise, for expressing the understanding and capability of the members of the organisation to take responsibility for their own work and the organisation as a whole, and for enabling each member of the organisation to participate in the intangible value creation of the organisation.