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Lifelong Learning at workplaces

Associate Professor Steen Høyrup
The Danish School of Education
Aarhus University
Denmark

Lifelong learning and life wide learning

- The concept of lifelong learning has a very long history
- The term life **wide** learning was coined in 2000
- The concept underline:
 - important learning is going on in working life, at workplaces, as part of the daily work
 - learning is not restricted to schools (formal learning)
 - workplaces are important and very fruitful arenas of learning
 - learning is both formal (schools) and informal: experience based learning in and at the workplace

Learning for who?

- For the **individual**:
 - development, interests, competencies
- For the **collective, society**:
 - development of the workforce, for the labour market, economy, growth policy are important players

Why do we learn so well at work?

- We meet a lot of **problems** (challenges) asking to be solved.
- We get a lot of **experiences**
- The learning material/content is **authentic**: it is real life you face, not books and theories
- You have to **act**: do something with your experiences

- You get **feed-back** on your actions: did you fulfill your intentions?
- You have **responsibility**
- You may have the possibility to **share experiences** and knowledge, to create new knowledge

The workplace as a learning environment: Important factors supporting learning at work

1. Work tasks can promote learning:

- Possibilities for variation in job-performance in terms of: what the employee have to do, how to do it, where, with whom, and when
- Employees receive feed-back on job-performance
- A certain degree of autonomy (discretion) in interpretation and performance of the work task

1. Work tasks promote learning

- Delegation of work tasks
- Possibilities to develop an overall picture of the workplace
- Possibilities to learn from faults and mistakes

2. Support of learning in everyday work, - through

- Meetings focusing on exchange of experiences
- Space for reflection
- Supervision, Coaching

3. A learning culture at the workplace that value:

- Openness and trust
- Initiative and risk-taking
- Acceptance/tolerance in terms of differences, insecurity and faults
- Support for alternative ways of thinking and challenge of established routines

4. Involvement in developmental projects at the workplace
5. Priority of resources for competence development and future education
6. Management support: Management on all levels of the firm do understand the importance of learning and developmental processes and have competence for management of learning- and developmental activities in the firm.

Informal and formal learning: both are important

- Formal and Informal learning
 - “school learning” and experience based learning –
- have to support each other in the learning process,
- both of them are indispensable to develop genuine, deep and applicable learning.