

Learning Networks for Professional Development & Lifelong Learning

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Overview

- Use Cases for Lifelong learning
- Learning Networks for Lifelong Learning
- Design for Learning Networks



Use Case 1a

A multinational wants to do away with its travelling road show of trainers and stimulate its employees to *study online*, at the place, pace and time of their liking. While at it, they also want to stimulate the build-up of a collective *knowledge base*.



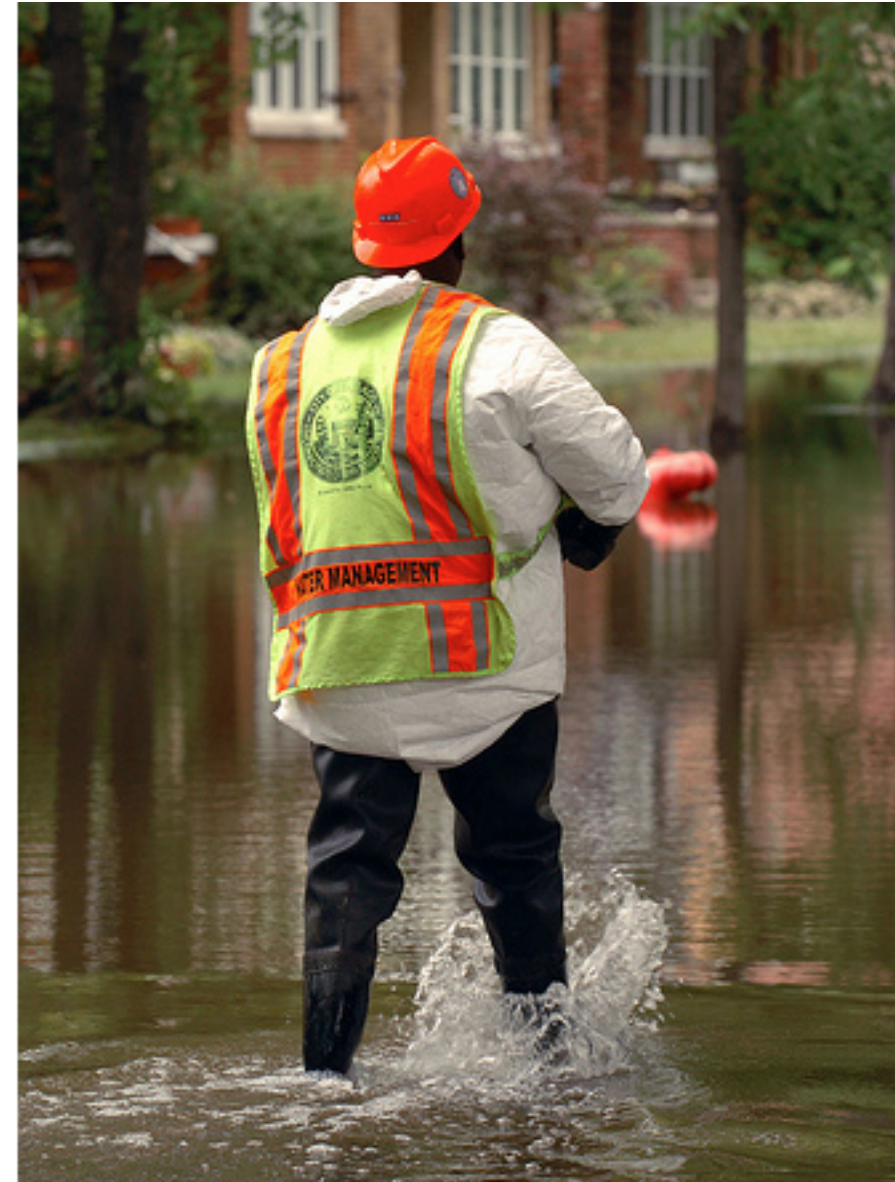
Use Case 1b

The association of public libraries wants to rethink its role in society and retrain its personnel in the process. *Collaborative open innovation and creativity as well as joint sense making are key.*



Use Case 2a

James is a chemical engineer working for an SME. He wants to pursue a career as a water manager with the local water board. He therefore needs to *update* and *upgrade* his skills.



Use Case 2b

Jean, a lawyer working for a pharmaceutical company, finds out she needs to *expand* her knowledge in order to get a more thorough understanding of the science part of the company, in particular about biotechnology.



	formal learning	non-formal learning	informal learning
initial education	'ordinary' education	rare occasion	out of scope
post-initial education	continuous' education	lifelong learning	out of scope



Thesis I

- Do not model post-initial education after initial, mandatory education, as we have been in the habit of doing ('continuous education').
- That model is ineffective as it cannot meet the demands for logistic, pedagogical and subject-matter flexibility; it ignores self-determination and self-directedness



Thesis 2

- Post-initial education is best practiced in the context of Learning Networks
- A Learning Network is an online, social network **designed** to support and facilitate lifelong learning (a **learning** 'ecosystem')



[Thesis 3]

- Parenthetically, initial education should smoothly transition into post-initial education, otherwise lifelong learning has no chance to thrive
- This sets demands to initial education, which have mostly gone unnoticed



Design: Made to measure

- The Learning Network should help learners to decide on
 - an appropriate learning goal
 - the learning activities suited to reach it
 - the best string of activities given their current capabilities



Design: self-organisation

A network diagram with several red circular nodes connected by grey lines. Some nodes contain smaller grey network structures. A red paperclip icon is attached to a line on the right side of the diagram.

- Social help by mobilising the weak ties in the network and turning them into strong ones (Granovetter)
- Ad hoc transient communities form an emerging patchwork of partially overlapping communities

Design: peer recommendations

- on knowledgeable experts
- on content suited to learning goals
- on collaboration opportunities
- on study progress (coaching)
- (a thoroughly human touch)



Design: architecture focus on organisation

- use existing company 'network' and let it acquire learning network characteristics through tooling and guidelines
- use dedicated, 'closed' infrastructures
- use CMS like Drupal or portlet system like Liferay, iGoogle



Design: architecture focus on individual

- use group functionalities of existing social networking sites, LinkedIn, FaceBook, Hyves and expand
- use ensemble existing social networking sites, provide site-specific services through their APIs (open social!)



Questions?

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