

# Learning from learning networks. Experiences of the Finnish Workplace Development Programme

Tuomo Alasoini

This paper examines the feasibility of a learning networks-based strategy to improve the ability of publicly supported workplace development programmes to produce broad-based and long-term learning effects in working life. After looking at typical shortcomings of programmes based on the utilisation of demonstration projects, critical prerequisites of an alternative strategy based on the utilisation of learning networks are explored. The empirical part of the paper makes an analysis of five learning network projects funded by the Finnish Workplace Development Programme TYKES (2004-10). The analysis shows that of three levels of developmental learning, the networks succeeded best at the level of local sustainability, whereas their results concerning external generativity fell short of the aim. At the end reasons for that are discussed.

**Key words:** development programme, developmental learning, learning network, workplace development

## 1. Introduction

This paper examines learning networks as a vehicle for improving the ability of publicly supported workplace development programmes to produce broad-based and long-term learning effects in working life. We first analyse shortcomings of a traditional programme strategy based on the utilization of demonstration projects and possibilities provided by an alternative strategy