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FINAL THESIS REPORT

**FINNISH SMEs AND eLEARNING:
Possibilities and obstacles**

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ABSTRACT

I got the idea for this final thesis as an assignment from Professia Ltd. and the topic was clarified in discussions with them. Professia Ltd is a consultancy and development company specialized in service business. The office locates at Tampere and they operate on Pirkanmaa region.

No matter how qualified and competent the employees of a company are, there will always be a need for training. eLearning is one of the central means by which the knowledge can be developed and shared within a company or an organization. There are different ways for companies to implement their e-learning strategies.

The aim of this thesis was to find out the possibilities and obstacles of eLearning in small and medium sized as well as micro companies in Tampere region. Furthermore, the aim was to find out what impressions and possible preconceptions people have about eLearning and what people who have attended an eLearning course thought about it.

The data collected for this paper was mainly qualitative. I used two different methods of data collection for this thesis: documentary research and case study. Since there is quite a large number of articles and texts about eLearning especially on the Internet, I had to consider very carefully which of them can be regarded as relevant and reliable information when it comes to this final thesis. The interviews for the case study were conducted during March and April 2006 in face-to-face situations with the interviewees.

Results from the case study show that generally speaking, companies are interested in using eLearning in corporate training and employees are interested in learning online, but the problem seems to be that owners and managers of companies do not know enough about the possibilities that eLearning can offer and even more importantly, they do not know whether anyone is offering courses that they could use in their personnel training. Furthermore, the biggest obstacles for the use of eLearning in companies interviewed are money, time and the nature of training needed.

It is crucial that company managers as well as the rest of the company staff should be open-minded and unprejudiced when finding the best possible learning method for corporate training. eLearning as a learning method should not be abandoned just because of old and deep-rooted habits. Managers and owners should be willing to try to find the best training solution for their company.

Avainsanat: eLearning SMEs learning environment corporate training

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

I got the idea for this final thesis as an assignment from Professia Ltd. and the topic was clarified in discussions with them. Professia Ltd is a consultancy and development company specialized in service business. The office locates at Tampere and they operate on Pirkanmaa region. Professia Ltd is taking part to several projects and these projects had a great effect on determining the topic for this final thesis. The projects are called COMPeTERE and Mikrotie, which includes ICT caretaker. I will tell more about the projects on chapter three. Thus, considering the needs and wants of Professia Ltd., and the requirements of Tampere Polytechnic the topic was formed: Finnish SMEs and eLearning: possibilities and obstacles.

No matter how qualified and competent the employees of a company are, there will always be a need for training. Whenever a company introduces a new product or service, implements a new business process or software application, modifies its structure or goals, or seeks to make improvements in overall operations, training is critical. The question is which method of training yields the best results?

Over the past 10 years, the phenomenon of eLearning has gained a lot of interest. The prospect of a “virtual campus”, in which learners communicate, study and work together with each other and teachers from different locations, brings both challenges and opportunities for eLearning service providers as well as for the learners. The work life and society are changing fast and it sets great challenges for the personnel training in organizations. Know-how has become one of the most significant competition factors and therefore success of a company or an organization is even more closely connected to the knowledge of its members and to the willingness to invest in personnel training.

“In most professions nowadays, new expertise and competence requires an ability to use information and communication technologies, particularly the ability to construct and use knowledge. The traditional working methods of education have not given much support to the new requirements set by the information society.” (Koli & Silander 2003)

eLearning is one of the central means by which the knowledge can be developed and shared within a company or an organization. Bringing a virtual learning environment to life and making it functional requires a minimum of administrative support, strategic planning, technical solutions, teacher and student motivation, educational vision and online contents. And, more importantly, there are different ways for companies to implement their e-learning strategies.
(<http://www.elearningeuropa.info>)

1.2 Aims and scope

The representatives of Professia Ltd wished that the thesis would concentrate on the possibilities and obstacles of eLearning in small and medium sized as well as micro companies in Tampere region and that the companies taking part on the research would have less than 15 employees. Furthermore, the aim was to find out what impressions and possible preconceptions people have about eLearning and what people who have attended an eLearning course thought about it. Because the thesis will be public, the names of the interviewed companies will remain confidential.

The first part of the thesis forms a theoretical framework for the research. Previous knowledge and researches dealing with eLearning emphasizing the Finnish point of view are in chapter two. Moreover, the second part of the thesis continues with the practical research about the possibilities and obstacles of eLearning in Finnish SMEs which can be found in chapter three. Conclusions from the research are in chapter four. Recommendations for both eLearning service providers as well as for the companies that consider acquiring eLearning services are in chapter five. The used references and appendices are in chapters six and seven.

1.3 Methodology

The data that was collected for this paper was mainly qualitative. I used two different methods of data collection for this thesis: documentary research and case study. Documentary research was especially important for this thesis. Documentary research is needed in order to gather all relevant existing data. Therefore I did not have to produce data of my own, which would have been very time consuming and merely impossible for the theory part of the paper. Since there is quite a large amount of articles and texts about eLearning especially on the Internet, I had to consider very carefully which of them can be regarded as relevant and reliable information when it comes to this final thesis. The interviews for the case study were conducted during March and April 2006 in face-to-face situations with the interviewees.

2 eLearning

eLearning is revolutionizing today's training world. It offers unlimited possibilities for organizational training. These days it is almost essential for a company to operate globally. This means that personnel of the company might be fairly dispersed. The idea of virtual organization is getting more and more familiar in business world.

Arranging training by traditional training means for personnel that is widely spread all around the world has many obstacles. Firstly, it is very difficult to organize the training session. Trying to gather personnel from all around the world in the same

place at the same time is at least challenging. Secondly, it costs a great deal of money. Travel expenses might become huge not to mention the expenses followed by hotel, living and other expenses related to travelling at work. These things alone create lost productivity. eLearning offers multiple advantages to today's training challenges. With help of eLearning, companies can design and implement a training program specifically for themselves. By monitoring learning effects they can target the training in the areas where they are especially needed.

2.1 What is eLearning?

The concept eLearning means that Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) are used as a learning method, working method or as a learning tool. eLearning is learning, training and outlined information that is being experienced with help of ICT. ICT tools can be Internet, intranet, computer-based technology or interactive television. The education material can be delivered either synchronically (in real time in classroom) or from distance asynchronously (with time lag in some appropriate time). eLearning makes it possible for a student to study when s/he wants when ever and where ever as soon as the needed tools are available. Nevertheless, despite of the possibility to learn away from teachers and other students eLearning is also a social process and it must include interaction and collaboration with other persons in order to be effective.

Wide access to information and services is part of eLearning and thus eLearning can widen and enrich learning experience. Very often when talking about eLearning companies have expectations of benefits. These benefits can be such as obtaining savings in expenses and efficiency of the training.

2.2 Central concepts

There are several concepts that are closely linked to eLearning. Some concepts may be defined a bit differently when looking from a different source. The following concepts are mainly from two different sources: www.eoppimiskeskus.net and book Web-based learning: Designing and guiding an effective learning process by Koli Hanne and Silander Pasi.

Time Dependency

Time dependency appears in several different levels of the educational system. Concept of openness in learning is closely related to time dependency. It means the freedom concerning dependency on time and place.
(<http://www.eoppimiskeskus.net/>)

Open and distance learning

Open and distance learning offers the possibility to study very independently away from classrooms and to use different learning methods. Nowadays one of the most important methods is eLearning. (<http://www.eoppimiskeskus.net/>)

Open learning environment

When the learning process and its contents are considered, an open learning environment is “open” in the sense that learners can produce new content, for instance, exercises. Open learning environments are often web-based; environments on the World Wide Web enable learners both to build knowledge and to comment on and discuss it collaboratively. Web learning is not dependent on time and place; even learners separated by long distances can form a virtual learning community. An open learning environment is not limited to the information and communication technologies in a classroom, but extends openly into society and into different disciplines. (Koli et al. 2003)

Lifelong learning

Lifelong learning means that nowadays learning is considered to be continuous transaction rather than something that ends when a person graduates from school. It takes place in a variety of environments in and outside the formal education and training systems and continues through whole life.

The World Bank (http://www1.worldbank.org/education/lifelong_learning/) gives a clear definition of lifelong learning that can be used here, as well:

Lifelong learning is more than just education and training beyond formal schooling. A lifelong learning framework encompasses learning throughout the life cycle, from birth to grave and in different learning environments, formal, non-formal and informal.

Learning platform

A ‘learning platform’ is a generic term covering a variety of different products, all of which support on-line elements of learning in some way. Learning platforms can range from products which provide electronic learning resources with its own dedicated delivery mechanism, to software which provide facilities for uploading your own and third party learning content, to more complex systems that not only allow practitioners and learners to upload resources, but include a learner tracking system, communications tools, on-line assessment, and the ability to share data with existing management information systems.

There are three main types of tools that can form a learning platform:

- **Content:** this includes tools that enable the delivery of electronic learning content, whether this content is written in house, or imported from other sources such as nationally produced or commercial packages;
- **Communications:** this area covers electronic tools that support any type of communications and group work, for example, e-mail, discussion lists and bulletin boards;

- **Management:** this includes any tools or systems that support the management of the teaching and learning process such as formative or summative assessment or tracking of progress. It is more effective if any new learning management tools can share data with the existing management information systems in the college.

Learning environments

The concept learning environment refers to the entity in which the learning occurs. When learning takes place mostly on-line the learning environment can be referred as web-based learning environment. (<http://www.eoppimiskeskus.net/>)

ICT (Information and Communications Technologies)

Technologies such as radio and the newer digital technologies like computers, satellite, mobile phones and the Internet. Furthermore, Information and Communication Technology is the term used to describe exciting and innovative ways to provide lifelong learners with global access to information, learning and support. Information systems that are seamlessly linked to learning support systems, that are enjoyable to use and which enable management. (<http://www.eoppimiskeskus.net/>)

Functionality

Functionality means all the possibilities that eLearning systems, the use of those systems and cooperation deriving from the use of eLearning offer from different users' point of view. (<http://www.eoppimiskeskus.net/>)

Tutor

Tutor is a member of the course provision team whose primary purpose is to ensure that the learners get the most out of the educational experience, by providing additional academic interpretation of and back up to the teacher, lecturer or course provider's material. This usually involves providing tutorials, either face to face or via electronic means. The role can overlap with that of a facilitator but the tutor usually has subject expertise as well as facilitation skills.

If a tutor is working as an expert s/he will also be responsible for the pedagogic content of the process; how it is being divided into themes, what and how the material is to be used, what kind of exercises are to be included, how the students are being evaluated and so on. (<http://www.eoppimiskeskus.net/>)

Tutoring

Tutoring includes all the various means of influence a tutor can use to facilitate learning. (Koli et al. 2003)

Web-based learning environment

A learning environment can be defined as "all the factors that influence learning". It includes the place, space, community or mode of action, the purpose of which is to facilitate learning. Such terms as web-based or net-based learning may refer to either networked learning or to technical web-based environments. Virtual learning environments are open environments that have been developed on the basis of cognitive research and with the help of new information and communication technologies. They have been designed to assist a collaborative structuring of knowledge and interaction among students, and between tutors and students. In addition, the knowledge produced by students is often public, in which case the environment forms a common working space for the entire learning community. (Koli et al. 2003)

2.3 eLearning vs. traditional learning methods

Many organizations have recognized that in order to maintain their competitive advantage, they need to find other training solutions than traditional training to ease and boost their employees' learning process. Demand for knowledge and competence is in constant change in R&D, production, marketing, sales and among retailers and customer training. Especially specialist organizations and hi-tech companies constantly have to learn more, pass their knowledge forward to others and to estimate future needs and development direction. Competitive advantage and action ability require faster and more flexible methods of learning and training. (Alamäki & Luukkonen 2002)

Training people is not IT-tricks or pedagogical receipts and methods; it is a functional entity and a sum of many success factors. If properly packed, information can be delivered faster, more illustrative, more versatile and just in the right time and the learning becomes more effective. eLearning creates new possibilities for this situation. The most essential thing is that a learner does not have to travel to the training; training comes to a learner when the learning process is most effective. That is when a learner has a need for information. Learning is functional and usually bound to a certain situation and operation environment. (Alamäki et al. 2002)

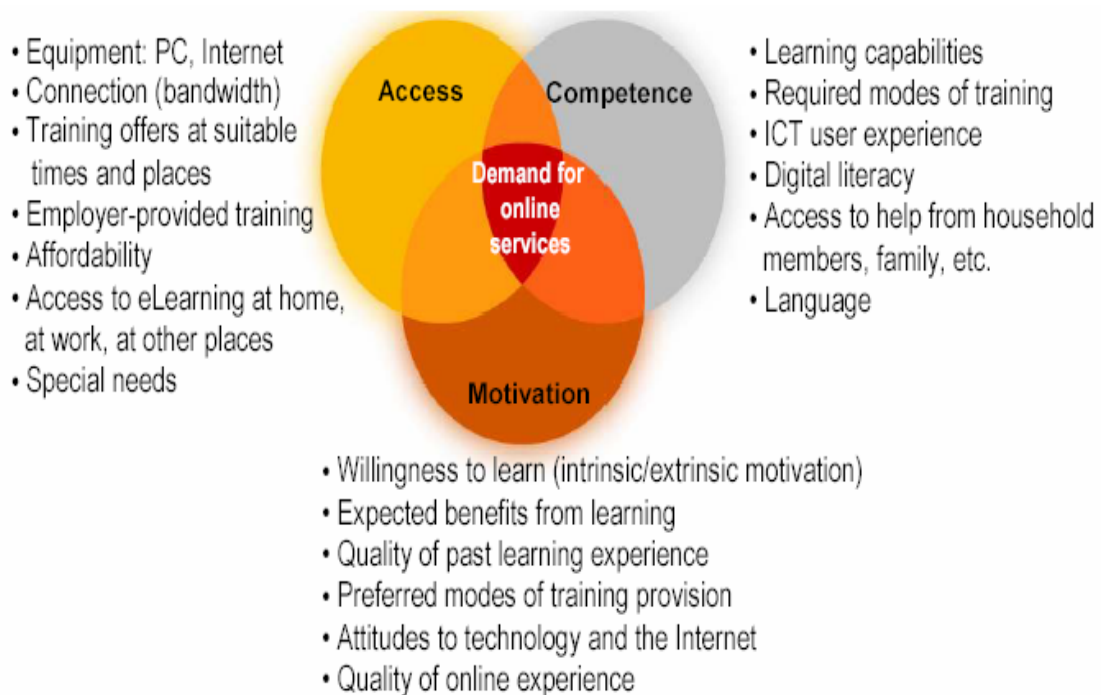
Traditional training is mainly tied up with time and place and it consists of classroom training, which includes several separate events. Web-based training, on the opposite, uses the internet for delivery of training content and allows students to access course materials, reference information, and exams anywhere and anytime their schedule permits. The student uses his/her own computer at home or at work. In web-based learning environment students may correspond and share ideas with other students taking the same course via e-mail and correspond with instructor/mentors for clarification of concepts. Group discussions can be mediated by the instructor and facilitated in real time via any of several chat services. Furthermore, online training allows instructors to concentrate on clarifying specific concepts one-on-one rather than delivering lecture to an audience.

When managers and organizations are determining the best training delivery approach for their staff or organization, it is important for them to consider a number of different factors. According to M. A. Webb (Comparing Costs: eLearning vs. Traditional, 2005) these factors include: efficiency, timeliness, consistency and appropriateness of the delivery method. She remarks that for most organizations the key factor is program cost. Program cost may be comprised of a number of related sub-factors, too, which may include: development costs, instructor time, materials, travel, and opportunity costs for the students and participants. All these factors can have a wide variance, even in similar programs, due to the delivery method used.

Ms Webb suggests that managers should develop their own mathematical model to better understand the relationship between costs and delivery of their training programs. She states that many managers have found a common key element when they have analyzed the costs of their learning programs. Their key finding is that e-learning is less expensive to deliver almost regardless of the participant population. For example: in populations where the participants number 100 or more, e-learning had clear cost advantages and as the population number increases, so does the cost advantage. Cost advantages were still measurable in groups of 100 or less and even with classes as short as one hour in length. In a corporate study conducted by Caterpillar, they determined that e-learning was 40% less expensive than the traditional classroom models.

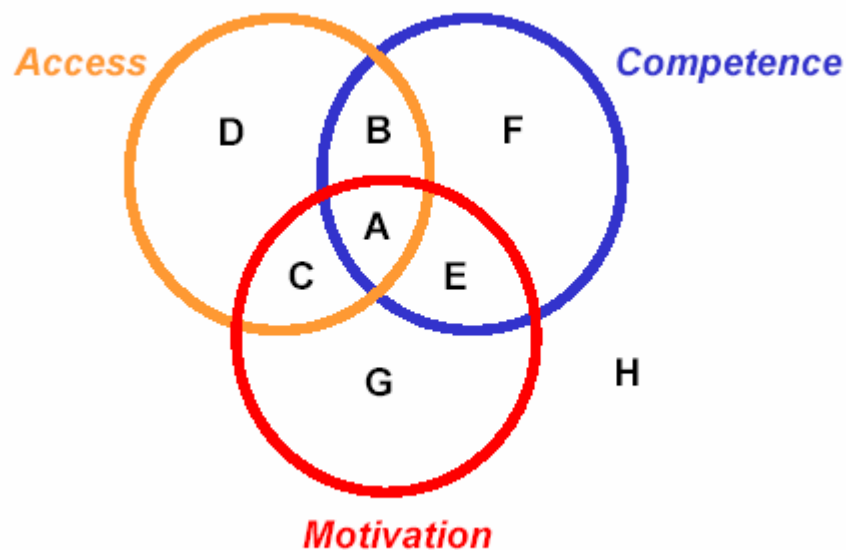
According to general beliefs, learning is a social event. New knowledge is usually created in social interaction or it requires combining already existing knowledge. But we need to remember that in order to do so, some kind of basic knowledge is required and learned things still need to be understood and remembered. Finding the right combination of training methods is a problem that is more linked to an organization's action culture than a technological development challenge. Technological solutions will be available as soon as objectives, needs methods and attitudes towards training development are in order. (Alamäki et al. 2002)

Figure 1: Diversity of (non)users A (Online services of public interest: Results from the eUser 10-country population survey 2005)



In 2005 eUser carried out a research about the use of services of public interest in three domains: Government & public administration (eGovernment), Lifelong learning / adult training (eLearning) and Healthcare (eHealth) in ten European countries (Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, U.K., Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia). The aim of the study was to find out attitudes, preferences and experiences concerning the three mentioned online services. The figure in Table 1 shows pretty clearly how demand for online services is formed: demand for online services is where access, competence and motivation encounter.

Figure 2: Diversity of (non)users B (Online services of public interest: Results from the eUser 10-country population survey 2005)



In Figure 2 the image of Figure 1 is presented a bit differently. The three circles (access, competence and motivation) on top of one another form 7 sectors that are named from A to H. As can be seen from Table 2, in the optimal situation (situation A) all three areas, access, competence and motivation, meet each other. The second best situation for eLearning is in situation B where access and competence encounter and so on. The situation H is naturally the worst possible since there is no access, competence or motivation.

In conclusion, eLearning may not be the best delivery method for all training. For example, programs that require role-playing, individual or group interaction or observation of the participants are not conducive to online learning. On the other hand, the total cost of delivering instructor-led classes to many students must be taken into consideration whenever the organization begins planning a large training program. Cost analysis may reveal that a combination of both eLearning and traditional classroom can deliver the optimal training delivery needs of the organization. Nonetheless, eLearning shouldn't be seen as a replacement for traditional training. Instead we should think about how to take the best advantage from the combination of those two methods.

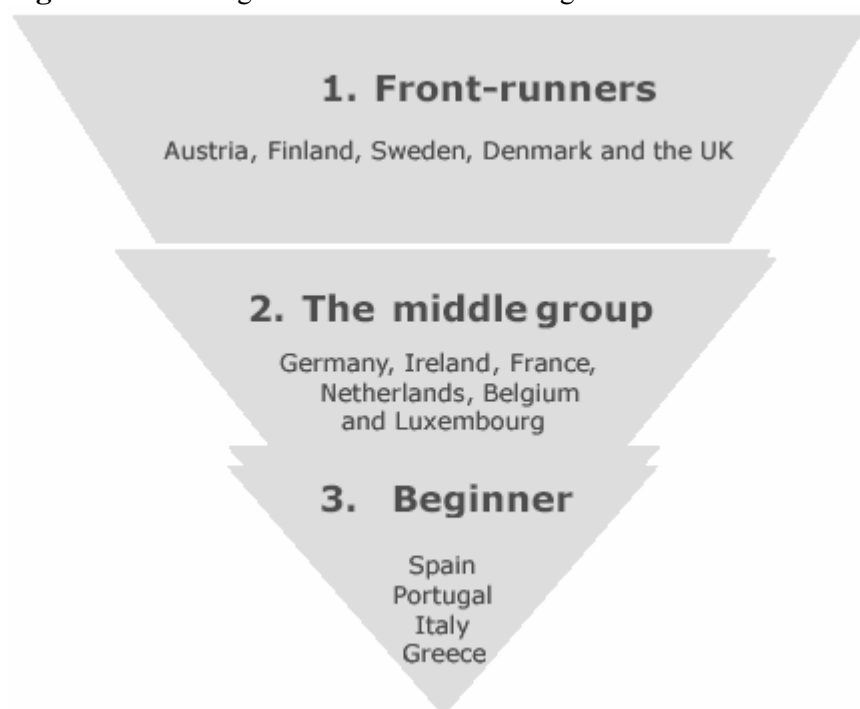
2.4 eLearning in Finland

In a study commissioned by the EU Commission, DG Education & Culture in 2005 (The use of ICT for learning and teaching in initial Vocational Education and Training) the extent to which e-learning is integrated into initial Vocational Education and Training (iVET) was researched. The study indicates that the EU as

a whole is at an early stage of the process of integrating eLearning into its iVET systems. In addition, the study shows that the use of eLearning in iVET varies greatly among the European Union Member States, as some are still at the beginning of their development in this area while others have been working to implement eLearning in iVET for several years.

Accordingly, the study has categorised the European Union Member States into three categories (front-runners, the middle group and beginners) regarding the integration and use of eLearning in accordance with the data collected through telephone interviews, studies of relevant literature and statistics, and case studies. These categories are shown in Figure 3:

Figure 3: The integration and use of eLearning in EU Member States



The categories give an overall picture of the extent of eLearning integration in iVET in the European countries. However, it should be pointed out that the interviews and case studies show that there are big differences concerning the integration of eLearning between iVET institutions within each country, for instance on a regional and/or institutional level.

Furthermore, the study shows that the main characteristics of the category Finland belongs to are as follows:

- Have a high technology penetration in their societies
- Have a high degree of e-readiness compared to other European Union Member States
- Tend to have specific strategies concerning use of eLearning in iVET at both national and institutional levels

- Teachers and students have a generally positive attitude towards eLearning and relatively advanced IT competences
- At most institutions, eLearning has become integrated into the daily teaching and learning and is used by students and teachers
- Many institutions are working with innovative ways of using new technology
- Many institutions are co-operating with private partners and/or other European institutions. (The use of ICT for learning and teaching in initial Vocational Education and Training 2005)

The entrepreneurs, employers and employees of the near future are on primary and secondary schools today, thus I wanted to briefly show how eLearning impacts the school system in Finland before going to details on how eLearning is being utilized in Finnish companies and organizations. The information concerning the use of eLearning in Finnish primary and secondary school is collected from a research “E-Learning Nordic 2006” carried out by the Finnish National Board of Education, the Swedish National Agency for School Improvement, the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, the Danish Ministry of Education, and Ramboll Management. E-learning Nordic 2006 was carried out in Finland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark. More than 8000 persons (pupils, teachers, headmasters and parents in primary and secondary schools) participated.

2.4.1 Use of eLearning in education

Data collection in the E-Learning Nordic 2006 -study was based on an internet-based survey conducted among 224 Nordic schools. More than 8000 persons participated in the survey. Respondents were teachers in the 5th and 8th grades in primary school and the 11th grade in secondary school, pupils in all these grades, their parents, as well as the headmasters at the participating schools. Furthermore, 12 follow-up visits to schools in all four Nordic countries were carried out.

The data collection took place primarily in 2005. Results of the E-learning Nordic 2006 –study show that ICT has a positive impact on the schools’ overall target – improving the pupils’ learning. But the study also indicates that the potential of ICT is not being fully realised at all schools. The use of ICT as a tool for pedagogical development is not in focus and the impact of ICT on knowledge-sharing, communication and home-school co-operation is only moderate. Below are presented the main results from E-learning Nordic 2006 within the three key areas.

2.4.1.1 The impact of ICT on pupil performance

The results of this study show that pupils, teachers as well as parents assess that ICT has a positive impact on improving the pupils’ learning. ICT impact is assessed by teachers to be strongest on subject- related performance. Another area where ICT has had a positive impact is learning basic skills such as reading and writing. The teachers see ICT to be a valuable tool to support differentiation. The use of ICT to support differentiation also has a positive impact; the E-Learning Nordic

2006 -study shows that the majority of teachers have experienced that ICT has a positive impact on both academically strong and academically weak pupils.

Avoiding exclusion is still an issue with the use of ICT in schools. The E-Learning Nordic 2006 -study indicates that girls, as well as pupils with other native languages, are more dependent on learning ICT at school. Furthermore, according to pupils they generally use the computer more outside school than in school, but there are differences in what types of ICT competences they learn each place; standard office programmes are learned in school, the rest outside school.

2.4.1.2 Impact of ICT on teaching and learning processes

Results from E-learning Nordic 2006 –study show that ICT generally has a positive impact on the teaching and learning situation. However, some people expected that ICT could in some ways revolutionise the teaching and learning processes at school, and compared with this view, the impact must be seen as more limited. On the average, half of the teachers had used ICT between 1 and 5 hours the week before they answered the questionnaire and generally, the pupils would like to use computers more in school than they do now.

The results indicate that the pupils and teachers who use ICT the most are also the ones who experience the greatest impact. The study shows that use of stationary computers and internet is firmly rooted in the school, but new technologies are also getting a foothold. Digital cameras, mobile phones and chat have entered the schools. The results also indicate that the use of these new technologies support teachers in differentiating their teaching. It must be noticed that ICT does not revolutionise teaching methods; the teachers are mostly focused on using ICT to support the subject content.

Naturally, when talking about use of eLearning in primary and secondary schools, pupils are far more often consumers than producers when using ICT, and they work more often individually than together. Still, the impact of integrating ICT in teaching can be measured in pupil engagement, differentiation, creativity and a less waste of time. It must be remembered that it is not obvious to have a positive impact in teaching and learning process with the use of ICT; the impact of ICT is very dependent on how it is used. Furthermore, many headmasters view ICT as a valuable tool for pedagogical development but fewer actually experience this impact.

2.4.1.3 The impact of ICT on knowledge-sharing, communication and home-school co-operation

It is being noted that ICT is a very powerful tool; however the use of the tool organisationally has not yet fully matured. The preconditions for using ICT for knowledge-sharing, communication and home-school cooperation are at hand, and ICT is indeed being used for this in many schools, however the positive impact is

as yet only moderate. The preconditions for using ICT for knowledge-sharing, communication and home-school co-operation are in place. The technical ICT infrastructure (such as computers and internet) and the organisational ICT tools (such as home pages and intranets) are available in schools and among teachers, pupils and parents.

Many schools, teachers, pupils and parents use the ICT infrastructure for informational and collaborative purposes. But the results also show that the tools are mostly used for communication among teachers, while the use of ICT to support dialogue between teachers and pupils, and to improve home-school co-operation is more limited. The study shows, that in spite of high volume of ICT-based communication within the teaching staff, the positive impact on co-operation and knowledge-sharing is assessed only to be moderate. Furthermore, about 50% of the parents use ICT in their communication with their children's school. Generally these parents assess that the communication with the teachers/school to a large degree has become easier. However, the parents report that they only to a moderate degree feel better informed or find that this dialogue has improved. At home, the pupils use ICT as a collaborative tool; they use e-mail, chat and mobile phones to communicate with classmates, giving and receiving help when doing their homework.

2.4.2 Use of eLearning in Finnish companies

The use of eLearning varies greatly between different organizations. According to Törmälä, Harju, Junttila, Liimatainen, Riihilä and Tolmunen (2003) less than one third of companies reports that they have used eLearning as a learning method. Training intensive organizations, service sector organizations and large companies are the ones using eLearning the most. On the other hand, perhaps surprisingly, use of eLearning in IT companies is relatively minor. (Törmälä et al. 2003)

eLearning is applicable to be used in several different purposes in an organization. Alamäki and Luukkonen (2002) say that for the moment the widest area of application is in personnel development that is being carried out within the company. Digital means are being utilized in training and development needs that have earlier been carried out through traditional contact teaching or alternatively personnel of the company have separately had to teach the needed knowledge and skills to the new employees. At the moment eLearning is being utilized in personnel development in areas such as information technology, language training, initiating training and marketing training. (Alamäki et al. 2002)

Another growing area where eLearning is being used in companies is in training of the under contractors. The role of which is emphasized as the networks of business world are developing and growing. It is essential for companies to take care of the knowledge development of the under contractors as well as of the mutual interaction in order to ensure that the product or service totality would be as high quality as possible from the customers' point of view. The benefit gained from the use of digital means is especially big if the number of the trainees varies and the

trainees are in different physical locations, for instance in different districts or maybe even in different countries. (Alamäki et al. 2002)

2.5 What can be taught on-line?

There are three characteristics from the instructors' point of view that should be considered when selecting an online course or section. First, and by far the most important, the instructor must be comfortable teaching online and must understand electronic media. Second, the subject of the course must lend itself to online teaching; writing and computer programming courses work well. Third, the methods of instruction must be appropriate; self-paced, project-oriented courses work well.

As far as I can see, the best predictors of success for an online course offering are the instructor's understanding of the electronic media to be used and learner's motivation. Instructor needs to know a great deal about how to prepare online materials and how to get them in the hands of her/his students. There are always technical problems, and the instructor must know how to solve the problems, or know how to work around them. Furthermore, since learning in web-based learning environment is quite independent and there is no one to push one to do the required exercises, the learner must be motivated to learn.

Based on their subjects, some courses seem to work well by distant means, and others do not. The theory-based subjects like marketing and information technology are often suitable for eLearning and can quite easily be converted into online courses. It is quite obvious that subject like negotiation skills and customer service are very difficult, if not impossible, to learn and teach online because of the nature of the courses. Some courses require significant discussion and it may be difficult to stimulate discussion via online means. Nevertheless, when online discussion does take place, the comments may be even more thoughtful than in face-to-face discussion due to the fact that one must write the answer before sending it and not only say what comes to one's mind.

I believe that courses are theory based or alternatively where one must produce something are natural classes to teach online since the medium of exchanging information and messages is writing, and writing is the subject of study. Because technical writing tends to be based on somewhat mechanical rules and there are relatively predictable problems, it may be the best course to teach online. When students have problems, they describe the problems in email messages. Students would often find answers to their problems as they thought about how to describe them.

Many of the traditional methods of teaching, for instance engaging lectures and pop quizzes, are not available for online teaching; at least they are not available in exactly the same way as in traditional contact teaching. However, courses that are self-paced and project-oriented tend to work well online. In conclusion, if the instructor is comfortable teaching online and understands electronic media and

learner's motivation is good, there is a good possibility for an eLearning course to be successful.

3 Case: Finnish SMEs and eLearning

3.1 Professia Ltd

As mentioned in the introduction, Professia Ltd is a consultancy and development company specialized in service business a knowledge-mediating organization and a network player. Professia is a business consultant for municipalities and specialize in the development of local government service processes using means such as the application of information and communication technology. They assist start-up companies in particular to grow and develop. Furthermore, they offer versatile business development services. For start-ups, many of their services are free of charge. They play their part in transforming the Tampere Central Region into an increasingly vibrant business environment by attracting investment to support the region's business and expertise. At all times they seek the best solution for each customer. Part of the work they do themselves, but they find solutions to a significant proportion of problems through their partners. Professia has a permanent staff of 15. Professia coordinates the Tampere Region Centre of Expertise programmes for knowledge-intensive business services and media services, and is responsible for the activities of the Tampere International Business Office (TIBO).

Professia Ltd merged with Oy Media Tampere Ltd on 15 March 2006. The shareholders of the company created through the merger are Alma Media Corporation, Elisa Corporation, Finnvera Plc, Fujitsu Services Oy, Nokia Corporation, the City of Tampere, the University of Tampere Foundation and the Tasku I Ky capital investment fund administered by Sentica Partners Oy. The personnel from the two former companies continued their employment with all benefits intact in the new company created through the merger.

With the new company, the exploitation of new knowledge and research-based expertise in Tampere will gain distinctive new vigour. Even though small is often beautiful, in this context the amalgamation of previously separate resources into a single company increases the range of possibilities and enhances the impact of its activities on Tampere's business policy.

3.1.1 COMPeTERE project

COMPeTERE project is a study on the e-learning and ICT needs of SMEs and micro-firms. There are working groups from five European countries; United Kingdom, Finland, Belgium, Spain and Poland. The five partners have agreed to work collaboratively to address the following common areas of interest:

1. To help strengthen the adaptability of employees, owners and/or managers of small and micro firms (SMFs) to technological change that affects their ability to succeed in today's digital economy.
2. To evaluate the role of e-Learning as an informal and formal training medium within SMFs and thereby identifying and understanding better the barriers in using ICT as a means of learning within the context of e-Learning.

Various appropriate methodologies will be considered in order to find pragmatic solutions to the following underlying problems as identified by partners:

- The slow process in the adoption of e-learning as a training method,
- absence of learning model that is particularly appropriate for micro firms, which will help firms to use ICT more appropriately but could also be channelled for other kinds of training that is associated with workforce development,
- failure by firms to embrace ICT which leads to their exclusion from the labour market, making the employees, owners and/or managers and the firms itself become marginalised and therefore disadvantaged,
- the shortage of appropriate tools including software and training programmes that which would assist small and micro firms to engage in the use of ICT and therefore help increase their competitiveness,
- the lack of employee motivation brought about by poor pedagogy in teaching whether it is on-line or blended learning,
- the inappropriate use of technology as a learning and e-learning vehicle and the overabundance of poor quality ICT and e-learning teaching materials,
- lack of understanding of the learning culture using ICT as a medium within the small and micro firms.

The transnational work programme was designed around the following two fundamental objectives that cut across the partners - national projects:

- **ICT** - to analyse the challenges that the employees, owners and/or managers of SMFs faced during the process of adapting to changes in ICT (Information and Communication Technology), and ultimately to design strategies and/or tools that could offer pragmatic solutions.
- **e-Learning** - to understand the learning pedagogy of the same target group as above and to explore ways in removing the barriers to learning within the context of e-learning.

The Finnish Development Partner is called Mikrotie and the leading organization is Kouvola Region Federation of Municipalities / Expertise Centre. The products to be developed in COMPeTERE project by Mikrotie are; Learning model for micro companies, Online Information package for entrepreneurs and Regional ICT support services.

3.1.2 Mikrotie –project and ICT caretaker

Mikrotie is a part of Equal-program and it runs between November 2004 and December 2006. Mikrotie-projects target group is micro entrepreneurs who have will and need to exploit ICT in their business, but are in danger of staying behind in the development of information society. Specific sub-groups are women and older entrepreneurs. Micro firms are very small enterprises (max staff of 10, mainly 1-4). In addition to lack of skills, the lack of time and adaptable, reasonably priced IT solutions are also a problem for small businesses. To support the deployment of new technology, business specific training and support is needed, especially training organized at the workplace.

Mikroties' aims are to strengthen micro firms' workforce development and ability to succeed in today's digital economy as well as to reduce gaps in competence in micro firms. In addition, the aim is to upgrade the level of micro entrepreneurs' IT skills by offering on-the-job coaching (live mentoring) and developing a coaching model based on the needs of the micro firms, by assisting in finding suitable service providers and by developing an on-line tool kit for small businesses.

Empowerment through partners' networks, the polytechnics of Kymenlaakso, Lahti and Tampere, regional entrepreneur associations and enterprise networks involved in action. Through regional entrepreneur associations involved in project design and planning, participating in guiding, running and evaluating the Development Partners' work. The polytechnics of the regions participate through student work (theses, surveys and coaching).

ICT caretaker –service is a big part of the Mikrotie-project. In large companies and organizations small ICT problems can often be solved by just calling to a handy co-worker. In a small company, on the other hand, it can take a lot of time when the management or other employees are trying to solve problems with computer or its programs. ICT caretakers help small companies with several ICT related problems. A company can call ICT caretaker for help in case of an emergency or they can have a continuing contract. It would be a good idea for a small company to have an ICT caretaker since s/he is an expert of hers/his own area just like an accountant in financial matters. ICT caretakers help small companies (max staff of 10) in concrete matters such as: common and acute ICT related problems, basic infrastructure, data security, updates, internet connections, mobile use and basic software.

3.2 Implementation of the research

As a basis for the questionnaire I used the questions that the five countries participating in the COMPeTERE-project had commonly decided. These questions would be asked in every five countries and in addition to those questions I added some questions impressing the eLearning part. Since almost all of the most meaningful questions in terms of this final thesis were open questions I decided not

to put the answers from different interviews to any template. Hence, I analyzed the important questions one by one and draw the conclusions at the end. This was possible as the number of interviews was rather small. The questionnaire forms can be found in appendices in chapter eight.

The interviews for the case study were conducted during March and April 2006. Since the time to make the interviews was quite limited I wanted to make sure I would get adequate number of answers within the given time frame. Thus I decided to do the interviews personally, face-to-face with the interviewees. Furthermore, that way I could also ensure that both, the interviewee and I, would understand the questions and answers the same way and I would not have to try to interpret the answers on a later phase.

The number of interviews was clarified in discussions with Professia Ltd. I wanted to interview people from companies that have not been trading that many years as well as from companies that have already been trading for several years in order to see whether it has any influence on the willingness to adapt new ways to train company's personnel. Furthermore, the interviewees were selected with the aim of getting answers from both groups; people who already have experiences of learning online as well as people who have not participated an eLearning course. By selecting the interviewees this way, I wished to get both, opinions based on experiences and in comparison, impressions and possible preconceptions towards eLearning from those who yet have not learned online.

3.3 Requisites and obstacles

eLearning is a relatively new method of learning and teaching and when company is changing its learning culture towards eLearning, company faces challenges just like when changing any other business actions to digital services or trade. Alamäki and Luukkonen report that very often the reason why company or individual learner faces problems, bad experiences or fails in a project is because of unawareness, wrong methods or improper technical solutions. When people face bad experiences or the contents of something is not fulfilling the expectations, they often generalize it and expect it to deal with the whole trade. In order to minimize the possible problems Alamäki and Luukkonen recommend trusting on professionals. They say using a professional right from the beginning will pay itself back very fast. (Alamäki et al. 2002)

3.3.1 Company's point of view

If a company decides to engage on eLearning, it may require quite large financial investments from the company. For instance, the company may not have the required equipment (computers and internet connections) and it obtaining those is a big investment. Furthermore, companies may have computers and internet connections but if eLearning courses use lot of multimedia, for instance videos and sound, as a learning material the medium-level internet connections may be too

slow for the material. However, as most of the companies do have the required equipment nowadays the obstacles usually arise on other matters.

When asking what would be the biggest obstacles for the use of eLearning in the company the interviewee is working for the most common answers were money, time and the nature of training needed. Even if the companies have all the relevant equipment they may not have budget for training and sometimes new skills are obtained by learning-by-doing. This is common especially in companies where the number of employees is rather small. It is obvious that not all training can be transferred into online courses. As already mentioned, negotiation skills and customer service are areas which can be almost impossible to learn and teach online. Furthermore, some practical tasks such as grinding a lens of glasses are also skills that need to be learned on the spot with the help of skilled instructor.

Several interviewees said that they would be interested in learning online and they could make use of eLearning in their company but they do not know whether anyone is offering the courses they would consider to be useful for them at the moment. So it seems that the company management is seldom aware of possibilities of eLearning since they have not been offered courses they could use. As several companies offering eLearning services do also offer courses that are tailored to meet the company's training needs and use training material that the company buying the service has provided, there should be possibility to use eLearning as a training method in almost every company.

3.3.2 Individual learners' point of view

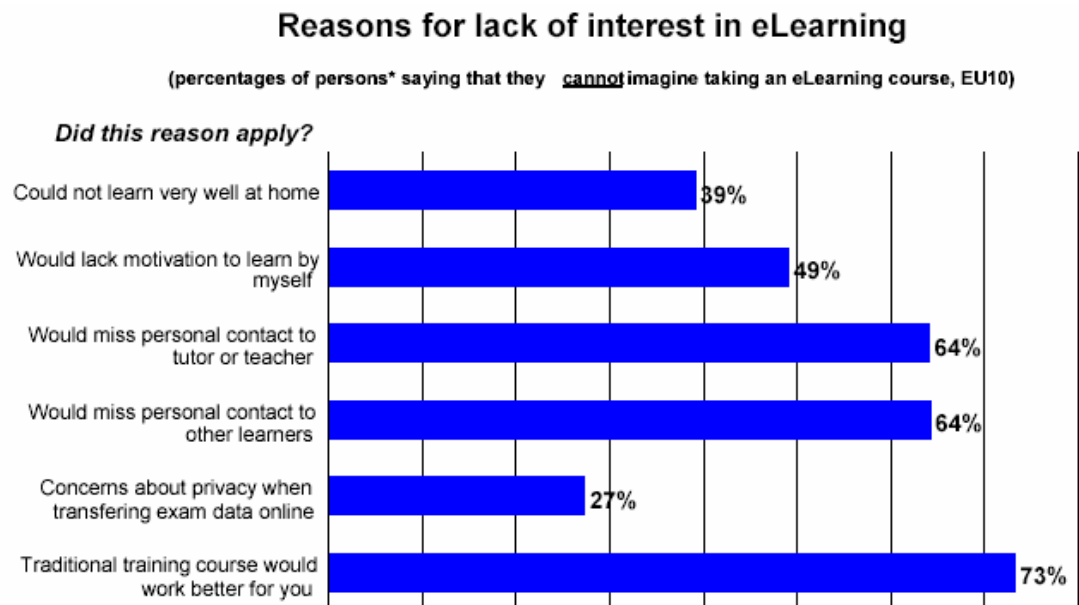
In terms of utilizing eLearning as a method of training company personnel one of the biggest obstacles from individual learners' point of view appears to be the need to have personal contact with teacher. When the interviewees were asked to determine what kind of support they think is necessary when doing an eLearning course, almost all of them preferred to have face to face meetings with tutor rather than email or telephone support from tutor, for instance. It is obvious that eLearning is not suitable method of learning for everyone. Some learners go to courses particularly to get in interaction with teacher or tutor and other learners.

Sometimes it may be difficult to loosen from everyday duties on a workplace and spent some time studying online along with typical everyday tasks. In those cases learning can easily be left forgotten and the quality of learning process can suffers to a great extent. Thus some people prefer to go to the traditional contact teaching courses where they can better focus on learning. And naturally in some cases going away for a while to attend on a course or training event can improve work motivation and result on better effectiveness. One of the interviewees said: "Going away and leaving the work place for a while is what makes the training worth while. Meeting other people from same area of business is crucial in terms of keeping my professional connections up to date."

Alamäki and Luukkonen (2002) mention the feeling of being left alone as one of eLearning's possible obstacles from individual learners' point of view. They say that learning is always a personal process and it requires some personal effort but learning online still presumes some kind of reference group. Programmers can learn a big part of programming just by reading manuals and trying things on practise and storage workers can check things from co-workers. When learning is more formal than learning-by-doing, it presumes systematic planning and a feeling that one is doing something desired and that on the background there is a group in which s/he is belongs to.

The feeling of being left alone can bear already in the beginning if the introduction is not handled persistently enough. For instance, during a six month online course two discussion sessions can be arranged where the learners can meet each other. By far, the most important thing is how the work community, nearest superiors and co-workers feel about learning online and whether thing that one has learned during an online course are being discussed within the work community. Even if learners have the inner motivation to learn, encouragement from outside is also needed. (Alamäki et al. 2002)

Figure 4: Reasons for lack of interest in eLearning (Online services of public interest: Results from the eUser 10-country population survey 2005)



**Only respondents engaged in lifelong learning in 12 months prior to the survey*

Online training offers wide freedom (i.e. time and place dependency) for learners but it also requires quite a lot. For instance, learner must be motivated to learn and push her/himself to learn since there is no one to do that. In 2005 research carried out by eUser 73% of the persons answering the survey thought that traditional training course would work better for her/him. Furthermore, 64% of the persons would miss personal contact to tutor or teacher as well as to other students.

However, people are not too concerned about the privacy when transferring exam data online. Only 27% of the persons answering the survey had concern about the privacy (Figure 4).

Obvious requisite for the use of eLearning from individual learners' point of view is the technical skills needed in order to be able to navigate in web-based learning environment. The research, perhaps expectedly, revealed that the computer familiarity is fairly good. Every interviewee answered s/he can use internet and email as well as word processing and spreadsheets. Only the use of databases and presentations is not that familiar.

3.3.3 Weak quality of learning material and learning environments

Alamäki and Luukkonen point out that most of the library-type ready made courses on the market are of weak quality digital material on both, communication and pedagogical, means. Several of the courses are based on the texts of schoolbooks that have just been squeezed up a bit and revised to fit the online environment. They continue that another form of digital learning material that is of weak quality is the learning material produced by company's professional. In those materials the content is probably good but how many people would really want to read material that has been written with word processing program from the computer screen even if it would be followed by questionnaire measuring the understanding of the content? (Alamäki et al. 2002)

The market of eLearning solutions is constantly growing and Alamäki and Luukkonen remind that there are several learning platforms on the market and the quality and usability of the platforms varies greatly. They continue that technological development is so fast that some of these services will soon fall out of the market. For the user it is important that the needed information can be easily found and that the user interface of the learning platform is clear and easy to use. Learners should not have to use much time learning to use the learning platform before they can start studying the real subject. (Alamäki et al. 2002)

These kind of digital learning materials are practically digital books where the only media element that is promoting learning is the text. They can also include a picture or a graph that anyway does not support the learning or understanding in any way. Most people would prefer reading matters from magazines or from paper in general not to mention listening a funny and interesting lecturer rather than reading material from the screen. Towards this background it is fairly understandable why reading digital learning material containing only text and pictures can benumb even the most tenacious learner if the content does not respond to fast and unexpected need for information. (Alamäki et al. 2002)

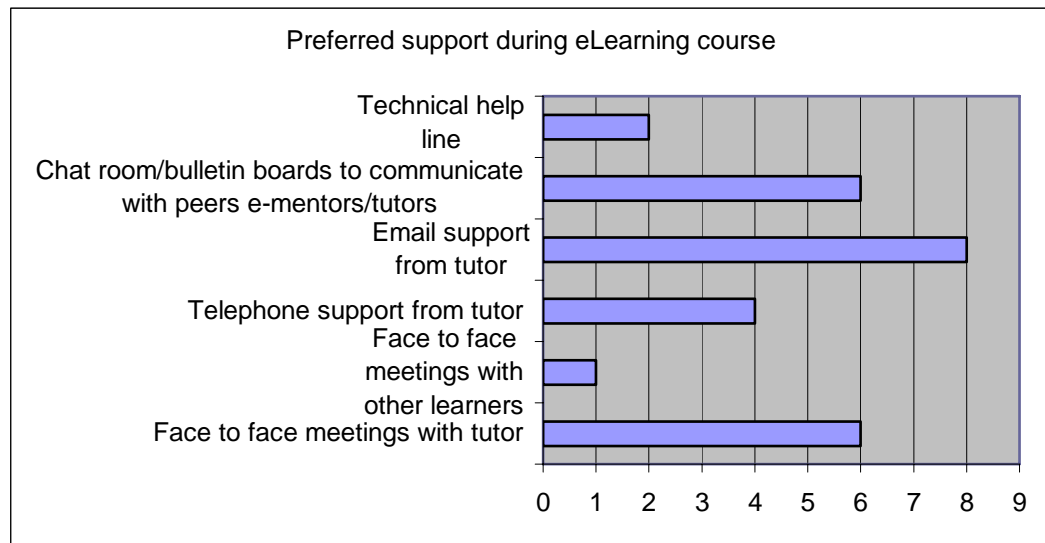
Kauppinen points out, that problems with the concrete usability of the learning environment, for instance with navigation, finding the right information and signing in, may cause breaking offs or slow down studying. Entrepreneurs feel that they do not have time to learn to use complicated learning environments. (Kauppinen 2004)

3.3.4 Lack of supervision and support during courses

Digital training and knowledge development as a new learning and teaching method has faced complications especially due the reason that people regard it to be as traditional teacher-led contact teaching. Lecturer or teacher has told what is to be done and has possibly given some exercises in advance and has lead the course of the learning period almost with minute-timetable. In addition, most of the people who are already in the working life have learned to study in a teacher-led way and they often perceive learning and teaching as passive performance of given exercises. That is especially why the implementation of the initiation phase should be thought very carefully in order to be able to guide the learners to study and learn more independently. (Alamäki et al. 2002)

Weak quality digital learning material that has been designed without taking into consideration that the material is for self-directed learning always causes the need for supervision and support. Good and pedagogically right formed content always includes study instructions and description of the learning material in the beginning. Learners may need supervision and support with technical issues such as in registering, in installing a browser or they may experience other unexpected technical problems. These are, however, problems that persons in IT-support handle on everyday basis. Bigger challenges are things related to learning technique and the overall rules of learning in digital environment. For instance, it may be unclear for the employees whether their test results will be saved somewhere, when the course has to be finished or if there will be a tutor that can be reached while the course is running. Support and supervision should be agreed on always before employees sign in to the learning environment or before the online course is opened. (Alamäki et al. 2002)

The persons interviewed for this final thesis preferred to get email support from tutor as well as face to face meetings with tutor and chat room or bulletin boards to communicate with peers' e-mentors/tutors (Figure 5). Regardless of the willingness to attend to traditional contact training in order to meet other learners, only one interviewee wished to have face to face meeting with other learners during eLearning course. As the computer-related skills of the interviewees were rather good, only two of them wished to have technical help line as a support service of an eLearning course.

Figure 5: Preferred support during eLearning course

In 2004 research by Kauppinen Riitta (commissioned by Finnish Ministry of Trade and Industry) the aim was to find out the potential of eLearning in developing the expertise of SMEs. For the research, 10 people from organizations offering training and development services were interviewed. They said that online learning must support the objects of the training. Some of the trainers felt that up till now online learning and teaching has been led by technology and not pedagogy like it should. Furthermore, some of the trainers expressed their dissatisfaction with the quantity and quality of support and supervision occurring in online learning environments. (Kauppinen 2004)

The interviewed trainers also impressed the importance of thorough planning and building of feedback systems. Trainers have experienced that learners are more motivated when they can expect to get adequate feedback. Learners have anticipated getting constant feedback about the exercises and progress of the learning process from the trainer. Furthermore, contact teaching occasions and other meetings where learners have opportunity to discuss with peer group, trainer and professionals keep up the motivation. Entrepreneurs also felt that it is easier to make the exercises within the given time limit if there is a contact teaching occasion to come. First meetings with peer group were considered to be extremely motivating. (Kauppinen 2004)

3.4 Advantages of eLearning

Corporate managers are constantly looking for more cost-effective ways to deliver training to their employees. One of the biggest advantages of eLearning in comparison to traditional contact teaching is that it is less expensive. In addition, many expenses, booking training facilities, travel costs for employees or trainers, plus employee time away from the job, are greatly reduced.

3.4.1 Company's point of view

eLearning makes it possible for a company to develop and share knowledge within the company more efficiently and thus improve company's competitiveness. If the personnel of the company is geographically divided to different districts or even to different countries use of eLearning can increase the level of interaction within the company. Learning can also be directed more accurately according to development needs both time wise and to the right target group. If the digital learning material is carried out carefully it can be utilized over and over again in different occasions and revised to meet the needs of a different target group. When the same training session using the same curriculum is offered on multiple occasions, the delivery will not be consistent. With eLearning all of trainees are getting the same message every time the information is presented.

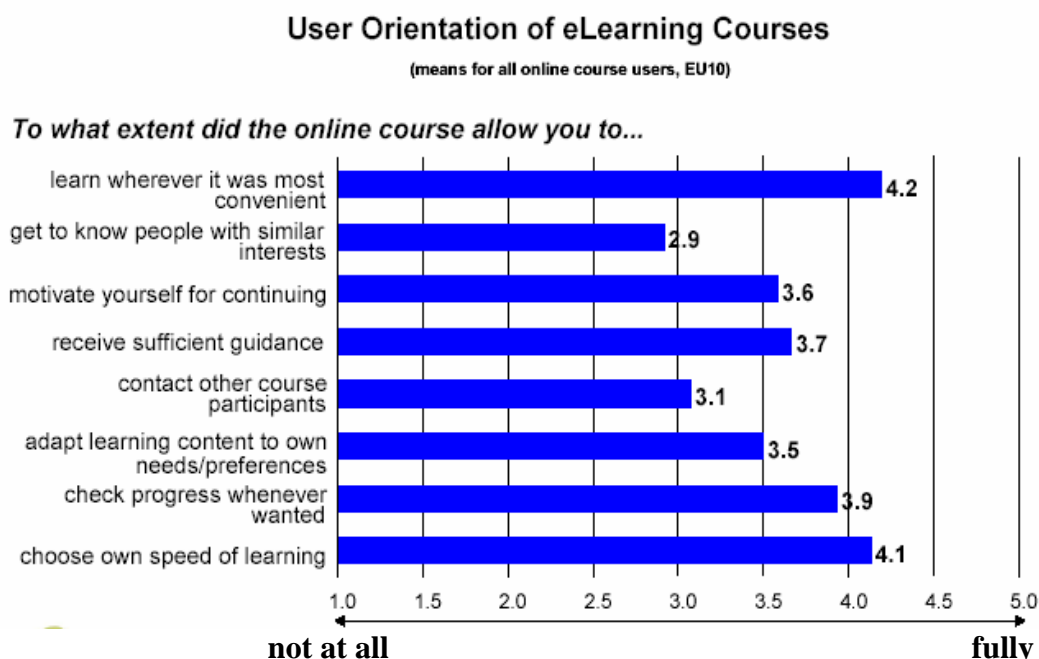
As already mentioned, especially in the long term eLearning makes it possible to save on expenses when travelling costs, rents of training facilities and lecturer fees decrease. Besides the mentioned savings, the use of digital learning material is almost unlimited because after the material has been put online the duplication and distribution costs are nearly non-existing. Furthermore, the maintenance and updating of the material is easy and inexpensive compared to for instance printed learning material. (Alamäki et al. 2002)

eLearning also provides opportunities for measuring employee understanding and retention of trainings' key points during the training. Before any training is initiated, learners can easily be pre-tested in order to see what training is actually needed. Furthermore, the efficiency of the training can be followed up with a post test that measures exactly what employees have learned.

3.4.2 Individual learners' point of view

It is quite natural that in companies where eLearning is used the ICT expertise and network communication skills of the personnel strengthen. Learning process can be more tightly connected with practical work situations and problems. For instance in many customer service situations employees need to use foreign languages and the most common situations can easily be learned online. If foreign languages are taught online, special attention must be given for making the user interface functioning. On ground of my personal experiences, also languages can be taught online but it requires a lot from both learner and from the user interface.

Figure 6: User orientation of eLearning courses (Online services of public interest: Results from the eUser 10-country population survey 2005)



Benefit that is most often connected with eLearning is the freedom to choose when and where to study. Employees can receive training anytime and anywhere, as long as the needed equipments, computer and internet connection are at hand. Training can happen during down-time instead of being forced when it is not conducive to productivity. eLearning is said to fit into everyone's schedule and to make the most of everyone's time. The results of eUser research in 2005 revealed that the persons answering the questionnaire gave quite high grades for eLearning concerning the freedom point of view (Figure 6). eLearning offers a freedom to learn whenever it is most convenient and everyone can choose their own speed of learning.

3.4.3 Learning process' point of view

The use of multimedia in online training offers opportunity to present things to be learned in a more concrete way. It also widens the area of subjects where eLearning can be used. For instance, the use of sound is essential when attending a language course online. It has been said that languages can not be learned and taught online but based on my personal experiences from an online language course I can say that when the learning environment is well designed and tutors are professionals in what they do, even languages can be learned and taught online.

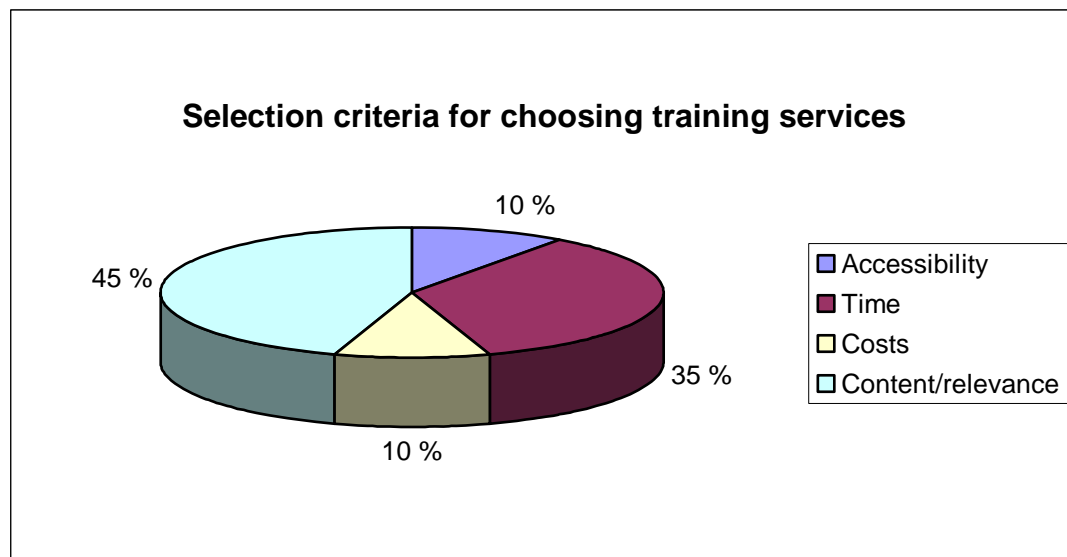
When the learning occurs online, the interaction between the participants can be increased for instance with online discussions. The online environment is especially suitable for constructive, critical dialogue. One significant advantage of online discussion is that the messages are saved and there is no need to draw up separate

notes based on the discussion. That also makes it possible to take some topics that have earlier been shortly discussed, but have already been forgotten, to be dealt more precisely.

3.5 Reasons for choosing one method of training over the other

The interviewees were asked to determine their selection criteria for choosing training services. Out of four (4) alternatives they were asked to choose two (2). There were two factors that seem to influence the decision the most; content and relevance of the training as well as the time factor. The content of the training and its relevance for the company appeared to be the most important criteria when selecting training services; nine interviewees out of ten (9/10) said it to be one of the two most important criteria. That is 45% of all answers as can be seen from Figure 7. Time of training (whether the training occurs inside or outside of working hours) was selected seven times and had portion of 35% of all answers. Accessibility of the training and perhaps surprisingly the costs of the training both were selected only two times, giving both options 10% share of all answers.

Figure 7: Selection criteria for choosing training services



Same kind of results were perceived in 2004 survey of the potential of eLearning in developing the expertise of SMEs (Kauppinen 2004) In the survey seven entrepreneurs who had attended an eLearning course were interviewed. They had experienced that eLearning itself had not been the decisive factor when seeking to training and furthermore, eLearning was not decisive factor even when attending to training (despite all the comments about time and place dependency). The most important factor for choosing and attending training was the content that was seen important in terms of developing the business. In terms of motivation the

entrepreneurs felt it was important that person taking part in training could be available for the company within working hours and training could be arranged outside of working hours. (Kauppinen 2004)

When taking part to training, entrepreneurs have a clear picture of what they want from that particular training and in practise they carry out ideal learning which includes applying the learned theory in real life. Entrepreneurs want to apply the obtained new knowledge and skills instantaneously which means that entrepreneurs have readiness and motivation to learn at work. (Kauppinen 2004)

4 Conclusions

Generally speaking, companies are interested in using eLearning in corporate training and employees are interested in learning online, but the problem seems to be that owners and managers of companies do not know enough about the possibilities that eLearning can offer and even more importantly, they do not know whether anyone is offering courses that they could use in their personnel training.

People know about the advantages that are most commonly linked to the use of eLearning such as decreased expenses in the long run, possibility to self-paced learning and the convenience of eLearning. But companies have not yet realised that with the use of eLearning they can develop and share knowledge within company more efficiently. Another advantage that is often not realized is that learning can be directed more accurately according to development needs both time wise and to the right target group.

The positive economic benefits, for instance decreased travelling costs and other advantages such as convenience, standardized delivery, self-paced learning, and variety of available content, can make eLearning a tempting alternative when choosing method for training company personnel. Much of the discussion about implementing eLearning has focused on the technology, but as several researchers have reminded us, eLearning is not just about the technology, but also many human factors.

Case study revealed that the biggest obstacles for the use of eLearning in companies interviewed are money, time and the nature of training needed. Companies may have all the relevant equipment but not the required budget for training. Furthermore, especially in companies where the number of employees is rather small new skills are often obtained by work shadowing or from more experienced colleagues. In addition, not all training can be transferred into online courses. Knowledge and skills like negotiation skills and customer service are areas which can be almost impossible to learn and teach online.

Several interviewees said that they would be interested in learning online and they could make use of eLearning in their company but they do not know whether anyone is offering the courses they would consider being useful for them at the moment. Therefore it seems that the company management is seldom aware of

possibilities of eLearning since they have not been offered courses they could use. As eLearning service providers also offer tailored training solutions, there should be possibility to use eLearning as a training method in almost every company.

There is always a focus on the cost factor in corporate training; the comparatively low costs of eLearning are attractive. Even so, more corporations are looking at such options as blended learning, using more than one method of delivery for instance, eLearning plus traditional classroom delivery of content, to increase training effectiveness, even if it raises costs. However, it seems that many training managers are not sure how to find the optimal blend for their corporate training programs. It is possible that managers are making decisions based on programs they are familiar with rather than on concrete information about which programs actually produce effective results. Cost analysis may reveal that a combination of both eLearning and traditional classroom can deliver the optimal training delivery needs of the organization. Nonetheless, eLearning shouldn't be seen as a replacement for traditional training. Instead companies should think about how to take the best advantage from the combination of those two methods.

eLearning services providers have been able to demonstrate cost-savings and other benefits. However, it is still very difficult for managers to decide which educational products and which learning technology providers actually produce effective results and how to balance product quality with training costs. Someone has said to new corporate adage to go: "Wise training managers realize the bitterness of poor quality remains long after the sweetness of low price has been forgotten." To justify making decisions about training programs, managers need consider very carefully what they want to achieve with corporate training and how much money, time and resources they are willing to invest in it.

5 Recommendations

In this paragraph I will concentrate on some development recommendations for both companies providing eLearning services as well as for companies acquiring eLearning services. These recommendations are not completely finalized but they could show the way for future brainstorming.

Firstly, I believe companies providing eLearning services should invest more on making their services recognized. Almost all of the companies interviewed in case study research were interested in using eLearning in corporate training but minority of them knew whether anyone is providing trainings they could benefit from. Even though eLearning as a word is familiar to almost everyone, very few really know how it can be used in organizations and where to look for possible trainings. When service providers are setting the price and marketing their complete services, all information must be correct and accurate in order to ascertain that the customer will get exactly what s/he is ordering.

Furthermore, as some of the learning platforms may still be of mediocre quality, eLearning service providers should pay even more attention to developing the learning platforms and making them easy to use, visually tempting and thus even

more user-friendly. It should also be remembered that the learning platforms are designed for learning purposes and therefore the platforms have to be planned bearing in mind that they are planned pedagogically correctly to serve the learning process.

For the companies considering to implement eLearning in corporate training the first thing necessary is to ensure that they have adequate and appropriate infrastructure and equipment that will enable them to use the selected learning method efficiently and adequately. Furthermore, it would be recommended to develop and implement a clear and focused eLearning strategy which matches the needs and possibilities at the company in question.

Moreover, company managers as well as the rest of the company staff should be open-minded and unprejudiced when finding the best possible learning method for corporate training. eLearning as a learning method should not be abandoned just because “We have never used eLearning. We are used to traditional contact training.” Managers and owners should be willing to try to find the best training solution for their company. It may require some time to find out whether traditional contact training, eLearning or perhaps combination of these two is the best method for that particular company, but no matter what, I am sure, it is worth finding out.

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7 Appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaire form

QUESTIONNAIRE

This survey is strictly confidential and all replies will remain anonymous.

Details of the Enterprise

Q1.1 Name of Enterprise Q1.2 Number of years trading Less than 12 months <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 years <input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 years <input type="checkbox"/> More than 5 years <input type="checkbox"/>	Q1.3 Number of employees 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6-9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10-19 <input type="checkbox"/> 20-49 <input type="checkbox"/> Q1.4 Main types of outputs Service <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/> Service and manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/>
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Could you describe the busy and slack periods of activity within the enterprise over the year

Q1.5 Do you have busy and slack periods of activity in the enterprise over the year? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Go to Q1.6</u> No <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Go to Q1.8</u> Q1.6 Seasonal busy periods Quarter 1 (Jan-Mar) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 2 (Apr-Jun) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 3 (July-Sept) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec) <input type="checkbox"/> Q1.7 Seasonal slack periods Quarter 1 (Jan-Mar) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 2 (Apr-Jun) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 3 (July-Sept) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec) <input type="checkbox"/>	Q1.8 Shift work Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Q1.9 Daily busy and slack periods Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please specify Q1.10 Could you be available for learning and development in working hours? High availability <input type="checkbox"/> Some availability <input type="checkbox"/> Little availability <input type="checkbox"/> No availability <input type="checkbox"/>
---	--

Q1.11 Could you be available for learning and development outside of working hours?

- High availability ☐
- Some availability ☐
- Little availability ☐
- No availability ☐

Q1.12 Is there a staff development plan within the business?

- Yes, linked to appraisals ☐
- Yes, not linked to appraisals ☐
- No ☐
- I do not know ☐

Q1.13 If skills gaps are identified are they linked in with business needs?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q1.14 Is there a budget for training?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐
- I do not know ☐
- None applicable ☐

General learning issues

Q2.1 Position in enterprise

Q2.2 Are you

- Owner or manager ☐
- Employee ☐

Q2.3 Age of respondent

- Under 25 ☐
- 25-40 ☐
- 41-49 ☐
- 50-55 ☐
- 55 Plus ☐
- Prefer not to say ☐

Q2.4 Gender of respondent

- Male ☐
- Female ☐

Q2.5 Number of years in this enterprise

- Less than 1 year ☐
- 1-2 years ☐
- 2-5 years ☐
- Over 5 years ☐

Q2.6 Is communication within company on a daily basis largely

- By email ☐
- By phone ☐
- Face to face ☐
- A mix (define) ☐

Q2.7 Are there regular meetings of all employees together with the management?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q2.8 Is there a need to gain new skills or abilities to enable the enterprise to continue to be competitive?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q2.9 Is capacity building in terms of new skills or abilities needed by the owner-manager or almost everyone?

- Owner-manager ☐
- Almost everyone ☐

Q2.10 Do you think there is a training that would benefit you in your current job?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q2.11 Could you outline what training you have received?

Q2.12 Experiences of external courses (personal and enterprise).

Q2.13 Experiences of internal courses (personal and enterprise).

Q2.14 In what ways have you gained new skills and knowledge?

- Work shadowing ☐
- Coaching ☐
- From more experienced colleagues ☐
- Provision of manuals/handbooks ☐
- Internet general ☐
- Business Link, Trade Association, Professional Body websites ☐
- Trade Association meetings ☐
- Professional Body meetings ☐
- Social activities ☐
- Other ☐
- If Other, please specify

Q2.15 What are your selection criteria for choosing training services (choose 2 most important)?

- Accessibility ☐
- Time (for instance courses outside of working hours) ☐
- Costs ☐
- Content/Relevance ☐
- Something else ☐
- If Something else, please specify

Q2.16 Computer familiarity

- Word processing ☐
- Spreadsheets ☐
- Databases ☐
- Presentations ☐
- Email ☐
- Internet ☐

Q2.17 Do you use computer to learn?

- Yes ☐ Go to Q2.18
- No ☐ Go to Q2.19

Q2.18 If Yes, because

- It is the easiest way to find information ☐
- It is possible to have animated information (sound, video etc) ☐
- It is readily and easily accessible ☐
- I can learn individually, at my own speed ☐
- I can learn individually, at my own time ☐
- I can learn individually, where I wish ☐
- Richness of information ☐

Q2.19 If No, because

- I do not have computer ☐
- I am not familiar with the use of a computer ☐
- I do not have access to support ☐
- It is easier to ask someone ☐
- I do not have an internet connection ☐
- I prefer to learn face to face ☐
- I prefer to learn in a group ☐
- The investment is too large ☐

Q2.20 Do you use email/web at home?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q2.21 Do you use email/web at work?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q2.22 Does using a computer on-line to attend a course prohibit the others from using a computer on-line?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐
- If Yes, the reason would be?

Q2.23 Are you interested in learning on-line?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q2.24 What experience of eLearning have you had? (Your opinion about the eLearning courses)**Q2.25 How useful was it to the enterprise?**

- Very useful ☐
- Useful ☐
- Adequate ☐
- Not useful at all ☐
- No opinion ☐

Q2.26 Do you feel you received adequate support?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q2.27 What form did the support take?

- Face to face meetings with tutor ☐
- Face to face meetings with other learners ☐
- Telephone support from tutor ☐
- Email support from tutor ☐
- Chat room/bulletin boards to communicate with peers e-mentors/mentors ☐
- Technical help line ☐
- Other ☐
- If Other, please specify

Q2.28 What support do you think is necessary when doing an eLearning course?

- Face to face meetings with tutor ☐
- Face to face meetings with other learners ☐
- Telephone support from tutor ☐
- Email support from tutor ☐
- Chat room/bulletin boards to communicate with peers e-mentors/mentors ☐
- Technical help line ☐
- Other ☐
- If Other, please specify

Q2.29 What do you think are the biggest obstacles of eLearning in your company?

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

Appendix 2: Interview 1

QUESTIONNAIRE

This survey is strictly confidential and all replies will remain anonymous.

Details of the Enterprise

Q1.1 Name of Enterprise xxxxxxxxxxxx	Q1.3 Number of employees 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x 6-9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10-19 <input type="checkbox"/> 20-49 <input type="checkbox"/>
Q1.2 Number of years trading Less than 12 months <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 years <input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 years <input type="checkbox"/> More than 5 years <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x	Q1.4 Main types of outputs Service <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/> Service and manufacturing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x

Could you describe the busy and slack periods of activity within the enterprise over the year

Q1.5 Do you have busy and slack periods of activity in the enterprise over the year? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x <u>Go to Q1.6</u> No <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Go to Q1.8</u>	Q1.8 Shift work Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x
Q1.6 Seasonal busy periods Quarter 1 (Jan-Mar) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x Quarter 2 (Apr-Jun) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x Quarter 3 (July-Sept) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x	Q1.9 Daily busy and slack periods Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x If Yes, please specify
Q1.7 Seasonal slack periods Quarter 1 (Jan-Mar) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 2 (Apr-Jun) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 3 (July-Sept) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec) <input type="checkbox"/>	Q1.10 Could you be available for learning and development in working hours? High availability <input type="checkbox"/> Some availability <input type="checkbox"/> Little availability <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x No availability <input type="checkbox"/>
	Q1.11 Could you be available for learning and development outside of working hours? High availability <input type="checkbox"/>

Some availability ☒ **x**

Little availability ☐

No availability ☐

Q1.12 Is there a staff development plan within the business?

Yes, linked to appraisals ☐

Yes, not linked to appraisals ☐

No ☒ **x**

I do not know ☐

Q1.13 If skills gaps are identified are they linked in with business needs?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Q1.14 Is there a budget for training?

Yes ☐

No ☐

I do not know ☐

None applicable ☐

General learning issues

Q2.1 Position in enterprise

Worker

Q2.2 Are you

Owner or manager ☐

Employee ☒ **x**

Q2.3 Age of respondent

Under 25 ☐

25-41 ☒ **x**

41-50 ☐

50-56 ☐

55 Plus ☐

Prefer not to say ☐

Q2.4 Gender of respondent

Male ☒ **x**

Female ☐

Q2.5 Number of years in this enterprise

Less than 1 year ☐

1-2 years ☐

2-5 years ☐

Over 5 years ☒ **x**

Q2.6 Is communication within company on a daily basis largely

By email ☐

By phone ☐

Face to face ☒ **x**

A mix (define) ☐

Q2.7 Are there regular meetings of all employees together with the management?

Yes ☐

No ☒ **x**

Q2.8 Is there a need to gain new skills or abilities to enable the enterprise to continue to be competitive?

Yes ☒ **x**

No ☐

Q2.9 Is capacity building in terms of new skills or abilities needed by the owner-manager or almost everyone?

Owner-manager ☐

Almost everyone ☒ **x**

Q2.10 Do you think there is a training that would benefit you in your current job?

Yes ☒ **x**

No ☐

Q2.11 Could you outline what training you have received?

Short trainings about specific subjects (such as components)

Q2.12 Experiences of external courses (personal and enterprise).

None

Q2.13 Experiences of internal courses (personal and enterprise).

I feel trainings have not been very useful

Q2.14 In what ways have you gained new skills and knowledge?

- | | |
|--|--|
| Work shadowing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Coaching | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| From more experienced colleagues | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X |
| Provision of manuals/handbooks | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Internet general | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Business Link, Trade Association, Professional Body websites | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Trade Association meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Professional Body meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Social activities | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If Other, please specify | |

Q2.15 What are your selection criteria for choosing training services (choose 2 most important)?

- | | |
|--|--|
| Accessibility | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X |
| Time (for instance courses outside of working hours) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X |
| Costs | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Content/Relevance | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Something else | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If Something else, please specify | |

Q2.16 Computer familiarity

- Word processing ☐ **x**
- Spreadsheets ☐ **x**
- Databases ☐
- Presentations ☐ **x**
- Email ☐ **x**
- Internet ☐ **x**

Q2.17 Do you use computer to learn?

- Yes ☐ **x** Go to Q2.18
- No ☐ Go to Q2.19

Q2.18 If Yes, because

- It is the easiest way to find information ☐ **x**
- It is possible to have animated information (sound, video etc) ☐ **x**
- It is readily and easily accessible ☐
- I can learn individually, at my own speed ☐ **x**
- I can learn individually, at my own time ☐ **x**
- I can learn individually, where I wish ☐ **x**
- Richness of information ☐

Q2.19 If No, because

- I do not have computer ☐
- I am not familiar with the use of a computer ☐
- I do not have access to support ☐
- It is easier to ask someone ☐
- I do not have an internet connection ☐
- I prefer to learn face to face ☐
- I prefer to learn in a group ☐
- The investment is too large ☐

Q2.20 Do you use email/web at home?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.21 Do you use email/web at work?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.22 Does using a computer on-line to attend a course prohibit the others from using a computer on-line?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐ **x**
- If Yes, the reason would be?

Q2.23 Are you interested in learning on-line?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.24 What experience of eLearning have you had? (Your opinion about the eLearning courses)

No experiences so far. Don't have any special assumptions, could be a good way to learn.

Q2.25 How useful was it to the enterprise?

- Very useful ☐
- Useful ☐
- Adequate ☐
- Not useful at all ☐
- No opinion ☐

Q2.26 Do you feel you received adequate support?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q2.27 What form did the support take?

- Face to face meetings with tutor ☐
- Face to face meetings with other learners ☐
- Telephone support from tutor ☐
- Email support from tutor ☐
- Chat room/bulletin boards to communicate with peers e-mentors/mentors ☐
- Technical help line ☐
- Other ☐
- If Other, please specify

Q2.28 What support do you think is necessary when doing an eLearning course?

- Face to face meetings with tutor ☐
- Face to face meetings with other learners ☐
- Telephone support from tutor ☐
- Email support from tutor ☒ **x**
- Chat room/bulletin boards to communicate with peers e-mentors/mentors ☒ **x**
- Technical help line ☐
- Other ☐
- If Other, please specify

Q2.29 What do you think are the biggest obstacles of eLearning in your company?

Company management is not familiar with eLearning and its possibilities

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

Appendix 3: Interview 2

QUESTIONNAIRE

This survey is strictly confidential and all replies will remain anonymous.

Details of the Enterprise

Q1.1 Name of Enterprise xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	Q1.3 Number of employees 1 <input type="checkbox"/> x 2-5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6-9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10-19 <input type="checkbox"/> 20-49 <input type="checkbox"/>
Q1.2 Number of years trading Less than 12 months <input type="checkbox"/> x 1-2 years <input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 years <input type="checkbox"/> More than 5 years <input type="checkbox"/>	Q1.4 Main types of outputs Service <input type="checkbox"/> x Manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/> Service and manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/>

Could you describe the busy and slack periods of activity within the enterprise over the year

Q1.5 Do you have busy and slack periods of activity in the enterprise over the year? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> x <u>Go to Q1.6</u> No <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Go to Q1.8</u>	Q1.8 Shift work Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> x
Q1.6 Seasonal busy periods Quarter 1 (Jan-Mar) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 2 (Apr-Jun) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 3 (July-Sept) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec) <input type="checkbox"/> x	Q1.9 Daily busy and slack periods Yes <input type="checkbox"/> x No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please specify Afternoons and evenings are busy
Q1.7 Seasonal slack periods Quarter 1 (Jan-Mar) <input type="checkbox"/> x Quarter 2 (Apr-Jun) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 3 (July-Sept) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec) <input type="checkbox"/>	Q1.10 Could you be available for learning and development in working hours? High availability <input type="checkbox"/> Some availability <input type="checkbox"/> Little availability <input type="checkbox"/> No availability <input type="checkbox"/> x

Q1.11 Could you be available for learning and development outside of working hours?

- High availability ☐
- Some availability ☐
- Little availability ☐
- No availability ☒ **x**

Q1.12 Is there a staff development plan within the business?

- Yes, linked to appraisals ☐
- Yes, not linked to appraisals ☐
- No ☒ **x**
- I do not know ☐

Q1.13 If skills gaps are identified are they linked in with business needs?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q1.14 Is there a budget for training?

- Yes ☐
- No ☒ **x**
- I do not know ☐
- None applicable ☐

General learning issues**Q2.1 Position in enterprise**

Owner

Q2.2 Are you

- Owner or manager ☒ **x**
- Employee ☐

Q2.3 Age of respondent

- Under 25 ☐
- 25-40 ☒ **x**
- 41-49 ☐
- 50-55 ☐
- 55 Plus ☐
- Prefer not to say ☐

Q2.4 Gender of respondent

- Male ☐
- Female ☒ **x**

Q2.5 Number of years in this enterprise

- Less than 1 year ☒ **x**
- 1-2 years ☐
- 2-5 years ☐
- Over 5 years ☐

Q2.6 Is communication within company on a daily basis largely

- By email ☐
- By phone ☐
- Face to face ☐
- A mix (define) ☐

Q2.7 Are there regular meetings of all employees together with the management?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q2.8 Is there a need to gain new skills or abilities to enable the enterprise to continue to be competitive?

- Yes ☐
- No ☒ **x**

Q2.9 Is capacity building in terms of new skills or abilities needed by the owner-manager or almost everyone?

- Owner-manager ☐
- Almost everyone ☐

Q2.10 Do you think there is a training that would benefit you in your current job?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.11 Could you outline what training you have received?

Course on how to start a business

Q2.12 Experiences of external courses (personal and enterprise).

None

Q2.13 Experiences of internal courses (personal and enterprise).

None

Q2.14 In what ways have you gained new skills and knowledge?

- | | |
|--|--|
| Work shadowing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Coaching | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| From more experienced colleagues | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X |
| Provision of manuals/handbooks | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Internet general | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Business Link, Trade Association, Professional Body websites | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Trade Association meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Professional Body meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Social activities | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If Other, please specify | |

Q2.15 What are your selection criteria for choosing training services (choose 2 most important)?

- | | |
|--|--|
| Accessibility | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Time (for instance courses outside of working hours) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X |
| Costs | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Content/Relevance | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X |
| Something else | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If Something else, please specify | |

Q2.16 Computer familiarity

- Word processing ☐ **x**
- Spreadsheets ☐ **x**
- Databases ☐
- Presentations ☐
- Email ☐ **x**
- Internet ☐ **x**

Q2.17 Do you use computer to learn?

- Yes ☐ **x** Go to Q2.18
- No ☐ Go to Q2.19

Q2.18 If Yes, because

- It is the easiest way to find information ☐ **x**
- It is possible to have animated information (sound, video etc) ☐
- It is readily and easily accessible ☐
- I can learn individually, at my own speed ☐
- I can learn individually, at my own time ☐
- I can learn individually, where I wish ☐
- Richness of information ☐ **x**

Q2.19 If No, because

- I do not have computer ☐
- I am not familiar with the use of a computer ☐
- I do not have access to support ☐
- It is easier to ask someone ☐
- I do not have an internet connection ☐
- I prefer to learn face to face ☐
- I prefer to learn in a group ☐
- The investment is too large ☐

Q2.20 Do you use email/web at home?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.21 Do you use email/web at work?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐ **x**

Q2.22 Does using a computer on-line to attend a course prohibit the others from using a computer on-line?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐
- If Yes, the reason would be?

No computer at work

Q2.23 Are you interested in learning on-line?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐ **x**

Q2.24 What experience of eLearning have you had? (Your opinion about the eLearning courses)

No experiences of eLearning. Don't think eLearning is suitable learning method for her. Prefers traditional contact teaching

Q2.25 How useful was it to the enterprise?

- Very useful ☐
- Useful ☐
- Adequate ☐
- Not useful at all ☐
- No opinion ☐

Q2.26 Do you feel you received adequate support?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q2.27 What form did the support take?

- Face to face meetings with tutor ☐
- Face to face meetings with other learners ☐
- Telephone support from tutor ☐
- Email support from tutor ☐
- Chat room/bulletin boards to communicate with peers e-mentors/mentors ☐
- Technical help line ☐
- Other ☐
- If Other, please specify

Q2.28 What support do you think is necessary when doing an eLearning course?

- Face to face meetings with tutor ☒ **x**
- Face to face meetings with other learners ☐
- Telephone support from tutor ☐
- Email support from tutor ☒ **x**
- Chat room/bulletin boards to communicate with peers e-mentors/mentors ☒ **x**
- Technical help line ☒ **x**
- Other ☐
- If Other, please specify

Q2.29 What do you think are the biggest obstacles of eLearning in your company?

Entrepreneur does not have time for training. No need for training at the moment. No one has offered useful eLearning courses.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

Appendix 4: Interview 3

QUESTIONNAIRE

This survey is strictly confidential and all replies will remain anonymous.

Details of the Enterprise

Q1.1 Name of Enterprise XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	Q1.3 Number of employees 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6-9 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X 10-19 <input type="checkbox"/> 20-49 <input type="checkbox"/>
Q1.2 Number of years trading Less than 12 months <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 years <input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 years <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X More than 5 years <input type="checkbox"/>	Q1.4 Main types of outputs Service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X Manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/> Service and manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/>

Could you describe the busy and slack periods of activity within the enterprise over the year

Q1.5 Do you have busy and slack periods of activity in the enterprise over the year? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Go to Q1.6</u> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X <u>Go to Q1.8</u>	Q1.8 Shift work Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Q1.6 Seasonal busy periods Quarter 1 (Jan-Mar) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 2 (Apr-Jun) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 3 (July-Sept) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec) <input type="checkbox"/>	Q1.9 Daily busy and slack periods Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X If Yes, please specify
Q1.7 Seasonal slack periods Quarter 1 (Jan-Mar) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 2 (Apr-Jun) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 3 (July-Sept) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec) <input type="checkbox"/>	Q1.10 Could you be available for learning and development in working hours? High availability <input type="checkbox"/> Some availability <input type="checkbox"/> Little availability <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X No availability <input type="checkbox"/>

Q1.11 Could you be available for learning and development outside of working hours?

- High availability ☐
- Some availability ☐
- Little availability ☒ **x**
- No availability ☐

Q1.12 Is there a staff development plan within the business?

- Yes, linked to appraisals ☐
- Yes, not linked to appraisals ☒ **x**
- No ☐
- I do not know ☐

Q1.13 If skills gaps are identified are they linked in with business needs?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q1.14 Is there a budget for training?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐
- I do not know ☐
- None applicable ☒ **x**

General learning issues**Q2.1 Position in enterprise**

CEO

Q2.2 Are you

- Owner or manager ☒ **x**
- Employee ☐

Q2.3 Age of respondent

- Under 25 ☐
- 25-40 ☒ **x**
- 41-49 ☐
- 50-55 ☐
- 55 Plus ☐
- Prefer not to say ☐

Q2.4 Gender of respondent

- Male ☒ **x**
- Female ☐

Q2.5 Number of years in this enterprise

- Less than 1 year ☐
- 1-2 years ☐
- 2-5 years ☒ **x**
- Over 5 years ☐

Q2.6 Is communication within company on a daily basis largely

- By email ☐
- By phone ☐
- Face to face ☒ **x**
- A mix (define) ☐

Q2.7 Are there regular meetings of all employees together with the management?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.8 Is there a need to gain new skills or abilities to enable the enterprise to continue to be competitive?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.9 Is capacity building in terms of new skills or abilities needed by the owner-manager or almost everyone?

- Owner-manager ☐
- Almost everyone ☒ **x**

Q2.10 Do you think there is a training that would benefit you in your current job?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.11 Could you outline what training you have received?

CEO course (ongoing), Seppo Hoffren Consultancy
Some IBM Sales and Technical courses

Q2.12 Experiences of external courses (personal and enterprise).

Very useful and hugely recommended

Q2.13 Experiences of internal courses (personal and enterprise).

No experiences yet

Q2.14 In what ways have you gained new skills and knowledge?

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Work shadowing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Coaching | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| From more experienced colleagues | <input type="checkbox"/> X |
| Provision of manuals/handbooks | <input type="checkbox"/> X |
| Internet general | <input type="checkbox"/> X |
| Business Link, Trade Association, Professional Body websites | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Trade Association meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Professional Body meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Social activities | <input type="checkbox"/> X |
| Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If Other, please specify | |

Q2.15 What are your selection criteria for choosing training services (choose 2 most important)?

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Accessibility | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Time (for instance courses outside of working hours) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Costs | <input type="checkbox"/> X |
| Content/Relevance | <input type="checkbox"/> X |
| Something else | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If Something else, please specify | |

Q2.16 Computer familiarity

- Word processing ☐ **x**
- Spreadsheets ☐ **x**
- Databases ☐ **x**
- Presentations ☐ **x**
- Email ☐ **x**
- Internet ☐ **x**

Q2.17 Do you use computer to learn?

- Yes ☐ **x** Go to Q2.18
- No ☐ Go to Q2.19

Q2.18 If Yes, because

- It is the easiest way to find information ☐ **x**
- It is possible to have animated information (sound, video etc) ☐
- It is readily and easily accessible ☐ **x**
- I can learn individually, at my own speed ☐
- I can learn individually, at my own time ☐ **x**
- I can learn individually, where I wish ☐ **x**
- Richness of information ☐

Q2.19 If No, because

- I do not have computer ☐
- I am not familiar with the use of a computer ☐
- I do not have access to support ☐
- It is easier to ask someone ☐
- I do not have an internet connection ☐
- I prefer to learn face to face ☐
- I prefer to learn in a group ☐
- The investment is too large ☐

Q2.20 Do you use email/web at home?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.21 Do you use email/web at work?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.22 Does using a computer on-line to attend a course prohibit the others from using a computer on-line?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐ **x**
- If Yes, the reason would be?

Q2.23 Are you interested in learning on-line?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.24 What experience of eLearning have you had? (Your opinion about the eLearning courses)

No experiences yet. Possibly good way to develop new knowledge

Q2.25 How useful was it to the enterprise?

- Very useful ☐
- Useful ☐
- Adequate ☐
- Not useful at all ☐
- No opinion ☐

Q2.26 Do you feel you received adequate support?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q2.27 What form did the support take?

- Face to face meetings with tutor ☐
- Face to face meetings with other learners ☐
- Telephone support from tutor ☐
- Email support from tutor ☐
- Chat room/bulletin boards to communicate with peers e-mentors/mentors ☐
- Technical help line ☐
- Other ☐
- If Other, please specify

Q2.28 What support do you think is necessary when doing an eLearning course?

- Face to face meetings with tutor ☐
- Face to face meetings with other learners ☐
- Telephone support from tutor ☒ **x**
- Email support from tutor ☒ **x**
- Chat room/bulletin boards to communicate with peers e-mentors/mentors ☒ **x**
- Technical help line ☐
- Other ☐
- If Other, please specify

Q2.29 What do you think are the biggest obstacles of eLearning in your company?

Money.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

Appendix 5: Interview 4

QUESTIONNAIRE

This survey is strictly confidential and all replies will remain anonymous.

Details of the Enterprise

<p>Q1.1 Name of Enterprise</p> <p>xxxxxxxx</p> <p>Q1.2 Number of years trading</p> <p>Less than 12 months <input type="checkbox"/> x</p> <p>1-2 years <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>2-5 years <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>More than 5 years <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Q1.3 Number of employees</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>2-5 <input type="checkbox"/> x</p> <p>6-9 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>10-19 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>20-49 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Q1.4 Main types of outputs</p> <p>Service <input type="checkbox"/> x</p> <p>Manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Service and manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/></p>
---	---

Could you describe the busy and slack periods of activity within the enterprise over the year

<p>Q1.5 Do you have busy and slack periods of activity in the enterprise over the year?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Go to Q1.6</u></p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/> x <u>Go to Q1.8</u></p> <p>Q1.6 Seasonal busy periods</p> <p>Quarter 1 (Jan-Mar) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 2 (Apr-Jun) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 3 (July-Sept) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Q1.7 Seasonal slack periods</p> <p>Quarter 1 (Jan-Mar) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 2 (Apr-Jun) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 3 (July-Sept) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec) <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Q1.8 Shift work</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/> x</p> <p>Q1.9 Daily busy and slack periods</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> x</p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please specify</p> <p>Afternoons and evenings are busy</p> <p>Q1.10 Could you be available for learning and development in working hours?</p> <p>High availability <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Some availability <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Little availability <input type="checkbox"/> x</p> <p>No availability <input type="checkbox"/></p>
---	--

Q1.11 Could you be available for learning and development outside of working hours?

- High availability ☐
- Some availability ☐
- Little availability ☒ **x**
- No availability ☐

Q1.12 Is there a staff development plan within the business?

- Yes, linked to appraisals ☐
- Yes, not linked to appraisals ☐
- No ☐
- I do not know ☒ **x**

Q1.13 If skills gaps are identified are they linked in with business needs?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q1.14 Is there a budget for training?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐
- I do not know ☒ **x**
- None applicable ☐

General learning issues**Q2.1 Position in enterprise**

Worker

Q2.2 Are you

- Owner or manager ☐
- Employee ☒ **x**

Q2.3 Age of respondent

- Under 25 ☐
- 25-40 ☒ **x**
- 41-49 ☐
- 50-55 ☐
- 55 Plus ☐
- Prefer not to say ☐

Q2.4 Gender of respondent

- Male ☐
- Female ☒ **x**

Q2.5 Number of years in this enterprise

- Less than 1 year ☒ **x**
- 1-2 years ☐
- 2-5 years ☐
- Over 5 years ☐

Q2.6 Is communication within company on a daily basis largely

- By email ☐
- By phone ☐
- Face to face ☐
- A mix (define) ☒ **x**

By phone and face to face

Q2.7 Are there regular meetings of all employees together with the management?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.8 Is there a need to gain new skills or abilities to enable the enterprise to continue to be competitive?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.9 Is capacity building in terms of new skills or abilities needed by the owner-manager or almost everyone?

- Owner-manager ☐
- Almost everyone ☒ **x**

Q2.10 Do you think there is a training that would benefit you in your current job?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.11 Could you outline what training you have received?

One-day beauty-related courses

Q2.12 Experiences of external courses (personal and enterprise).

Good courses, useful and up-to-date

Q2.13 Experiences of internal courses (personal and enterprise).

None so far

Q2.14 In what ways have you gained new skills and knowledge?

- | | |
|--|--|
| Work shadowing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Coaching | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| From more experienced colleagues | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X |
| Provision of manuals/handbooks | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Internet general | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Business Link, Trade Association, Professional Body websites | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Trade Association meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Professional Body meetings | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X |
| Social activities | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X |
| Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If Other, please specify | |

Q2.15 What are your selection criteria for choosing training services (choose 2 most important)?

- | | |
|--|--|
| Accessibility | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Time (for instance courses outside of working hours) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X |
| Costs | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Content/Relevance | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X |
| Something else | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If Something else, please specify | |

Q2.16 Computer familiarity

- Word processing ☐ **x**
- Spreadsheets ☐ **x**
- Databases ☐
- Presentations ☐ **x**
- Email ☐ **x**
- Internet ☐ **x**

Q2.17 Do you use computer to learn?

- Yes ☐ **x** Go to Q2.18
- No ☐ Go to Q2.19

Q2.18 If Yes, because

- It is the easiest way to find information ☐ **x**
- It is possible to have animated information (sound, video etc) ☐
- It is readily and easily accessible ☐
- I can learn individually, at my own speed ☐
- I can learn individually, at my own time ☐ **x**
- I can learn individually, where I wish ☐
- Richness of information ☐

Q2.19 If No, because

- I do not have computer ☐
- I am not familiar with the use of a computer ☐
- I do not have access to support ☐
- It is easier to ask someone ☐
- I do not have an internet connection ☐
- I prefer to learn face to face ☐
- I prefer to learn in a group ☐
- The investment is too large ☐

Q2.20 Do you use email/web at home?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.21 Do you use email/web at work?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐ **x**

Q2.22 Does using a computer on-line to attend a course prohibit the others from using a computer on-line?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

If Yes, the reason would be?

No computer online at work

Q2.23 Are you interested in learning on-line?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.24 What experience of eLearning have you had? (Your opinion about the eLearning courses)

No experiences so far. Probably not suitable training method in this area of business

Q2.25 How useful was it to the enterprise?

- Very useful ☐
- Useful ☐
- Adequate ☐
- Not useful at all ☐
- No opinion ☐

Q2.26 Do you feel you received adequate support?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q2.27 What form did the support take?

- Face to face meetings with tutor ☐
- Face to face meetings with other learners ☐
- Telephone support from tutor ☐
- Email support from tutor ☐
- Chat room/bulletin boards to communicate with peers e-mentors/mentors ☐
- Technical help line ☐
- Other ☐
- If Other, please specify

Q2.28 What support do you think is necessary when doing an eLearning course?

- Face to face meetings with tutor ☐
- Face to face meetings with other learners ☐
- Telephone support from tutor ☒ **x**
- Email support from tutor ☒ **x**
- Chat room/bulletin boards to communicate with peers e-mentors/mentors ☒ **x**
- Technical help line ☐
- Other ☐
- If Other, please specify

Q2.29 What do you think are the biggest obstacles of eLearning in your company?

Small company, no time for training. After long working days no energy to attend to courses

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

Appendix 6: Interview 5

QUESTIONNAIRE

This survey is strictly confidential and all replies will remain anonymous.

Details of the Enterprise

Q1.1 Name of Enterprise xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	Q1.3 Number of employees 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x 6-9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10-19 <input type="checkbox"/> 20-49 <input type="checkbox"/>
Q1.2 Number of years trading Less than 12 months <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x 1-2 years <input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 years <input type="checkbox"/> More than 5 years <input type="checkbox"/>	Q1.4 Main types of outputs Service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x Manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/> Service and manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/>

Could you describe the busy and slack periods of activity within the enterprise over the year

Q1.5 Do you have busy and slack periods of activity in the enterprise over the year? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x <u>Go to Q1.6</u> No <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Go to Q1.8</u>	Q1.8 Shift work Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x
Q1.6 Seasonal busy periods Quarter 1 (Jan-Mar) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 2 (Apr-Jun) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 3 (July-Sept) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x	Q1.9 Daily busy and slack periods Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please specify Afternoons and evenings are busy
Q1.7 Seasonal slack periods Quarter 1 (Jan-Mar) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x Quarter 2 (Apr-Jun) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x Quarter 3 (July-Sept) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec) <input type="checkbox"/>	Q1.10 Could you be available for learning and development in working hours? High availability <input type="checkbox"/> Some availability <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x Little availability <input type="checkbox"/> No availability <input type="checkbox"/>

Q1.11 Could you be available for learning and development outside of working hours?

- High availability ☐
- Some availability ☒ **x**
- Little availability ☐
- No availability ☐

Q1.12 Is there a staff development plan within the business?

- Yes, linked to appraisals ☐
- Yes, not linked to appraisals ☐
- No ☒ **x**
- I do not know ☐

Q1.13 If skills gaps are identified are they linked in with business needs?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q1.14 Is there a budget for training?

- Yes ☐
- No ☒ **x**
- I do not know ☐
- None applicable ☐

General learning issues**Q2.1 Position in enterprise**

Owner

Q2.2 Are you

- Owner or manager ☒ **x**
- Employee ☐

Q2.3 Age of respondent

- Under 25 ☐
- 25-40 ☒ **x**
- 41-49 ☐
- 50-55 ☐
- 55 Plus ☐
- Prefer not to say ☐

Q2.4 Gender of respondent

- Male ☐
- Female ☒ **x**

Q2.5 Number of years in this enterprise

- Less than 1 year ☒ **x**
- 1-2 years ☐
- 2-5 years ☐
- Over 5 years ☐

Q2.6 Is communication within company on a daily basis largely

- By email ☐
- By phone ☐
- Face to face ☒ **x**
- A mix (define) ☐

Q2.7 Are there regular meetings of all employees together with the management?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.8 Is there a need to gain new skills or abilities to enable the enterprise to continue to be competitive?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.9 Is capacity building in terms of new skills or abilities needed by the owner-manager or almost everyone?

- Owner-manager ☐
- Almost everyone ☒ **x**

Q2.10 Do you think there is a training that would benefit you in your current job?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.11 Could you outline what training you have received?

Product trainings

Q2.12 Experiences of external courses (personal and enterprise).

None yet

Q2.13 Experiences of internal courses (personal and enterprise).

Good and useful

Q2.14 In what ways have you gained new skills and knowledge?

Work shadowing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
From more experienced colleagues	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Provision of manuals/handbooks	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internet general	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Business Link, Trade Association, Professional Body websites	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trade Association meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional Body meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social activities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
If Other, please specify	

Q2.15 What are your selection criteria for choosing training services (choose 2 most important)?

Accessibility	<input type="checkbox"/>
Time (for instance courses outside of working hours)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Costs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Content/Relevance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Something else	<input type="checkbox"/>
If Something else, please specify	

Q2.16 Computer familiarity

- Word processing ☐ **x**
- Spreadsheets ☐ **x**
- Databases ☐ **x**
- Presentations ☐ **x**
- Email ☐ **x**
- Internet ☐ **x**

Q2.17 Do you use computer to learn?

- Yes ☐ **x** Go to Q2.18
- No ☐ Go to Q2.19

Q2.18 If Yes, because

- It is the easiest way to find information ☐ **x**
- It is possible to have animated information (sound, video etc) ☐
- It is readily and easily accessible ☐ **x**
- I can learn individually, at my own speed ☐ **x**
- I can learn individually, at my own time ☐ **x**
- I can learn individually, where I wish ☐ **x**
- Richness of information ☐ **x**

Q2.19 If No, because

- I do not have computer ☐
- I am not familiar with the use of a computer ☐
- I do not have access to support ☐
- It is easier to ask someone ☐
- I do not have an internet connection ☐
- I prefer to learn face to face ☐
- I prefer to learn in a group ☐
- The investment is too large ☐

Q2.20 Do you use email/web at home?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.21 Do you use email/web at work?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.22 Does using a computer on-line to attend a course prohibit the others from using a computer on-line?

- Yes ☐ **x**

No ☐

If Yes, the reason would be?

Only one computer

Q2.23 Are you interested in learning on-line?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.24 What experience of eLearning have you had? (Your opinion about the eLearning courses)

No experiences yet. No preconceptions.

Q2.25 How useful was it to the enterprise?

- Very useful ☐
- Useful ☐
- Adequate ☐
- Not useful at all ☐
- No opinion ☐

Q2.26 Do you feel you received adequate support?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q2.27 What form did the support take?

- Face to face meetings with tutor ☐
- Face to face meetings with other learners ☐
- Telephone support from tutor ☐
- Email support from tutor ☐
- Chat room/bulletin boards to communicate with peers e-mentors/mentors ☐
- Technical help line ☐
- Other ☐
- If Other, please specify

Q2.28 What support do you think is necessary when doing an eLearning course?

- Face to face meetings with tutor ☒ **x**
- Face to face meetings with other learners ☐
- Telephone support from tutor ☒ **x**
- Email support from tutor ☒ **x**
- Chat room/bulletin boards to communicate with peers e-mentors/mentors ☒ **x**
- Technical help line ☐
- Other ☐
- If Other, please specify

Q2.29 What do you think are the biggest obstacles of eLearning in your company?

Lack of time.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

Appendix 7: Interview 6

QUESTIONNAIRE

This survey is strictly confidential and all replies will remain anonymous.

Details of the Enterprise

<p>Q1.1 Name of Enterprise</p> <p>XXXXXXXXXX</p> <p>Q1.2 Number of years trading</p> <p>Less than 12 months <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>1-2 years <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>2-5 years <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>More than 5 years <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Q1.3 Number of employees</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>2-5 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>6-9 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>10-19 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>20-49 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Q1.4 Main types of outputs</p> <p>Service <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Manufacturing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Service and manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/></p>
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Could you describe the busy and slack periods of activity within the enterprise over the year

<p>Q1.5 Do you have busy and slack periods of activity in the enterprise over the year?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Go to Q1.6</u></p> <p>No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Go to Q1.8</u></p> <p>Q1.6 Seasonal busy periods</p> <p>Quarter 1 (Jan-Mar) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 2 (Apr-Jun) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 3 (July-Sept) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Q1.7 Seasonal slack periods</p> <p>Quarter 1 (Jan-Mar) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 2 (Apr-Jun) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 3 (July-Sept) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec) <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Q1.8 Shift work</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Q1.9 Daily busy and slack periods</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please specify</p> <p>Q1.10 Could you be available for learning and development in working hours?</p> <p>High availability <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Some availability <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Little availability <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No availability <input type="checkbox"/></p>
---	--

Q1.11 Could you be available for learning and development outside of working hours?

- High availability ☐
- Some availability ☐
- Little availability ☐
- No availability ☒ **x**

Q1.12 Is there a staff development plan within the business?

- Yes, linked to appraisals ☐
- Yes, not linked to appraisals ☒ **x**
- No ☐
- I do not know ☐

Q1.13 If skills gaps are identified are they linked in with business needs?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q1.14 Is there a budget for training?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐
- I do not know ☐
- None applicable ☐

General learning issues**Q2.1 Position in enterprise**

Quality engineer

Q2.2 Are you

- Owner or manager ☐
- Employee ☒ **x**

Q2.3 Age of respondent

- Under 25 ☐
- 25-40 ☒ **x**
- 41-49 ☐
- 50-55 ☐
- 55 Plus ☐
- Prefer not to say ☐

Q2.4 Gender of respondent

- Male ☒ **x**
- Female ☐

Q2.5 Number of years in this enterprise

- Less than 1 year ☐
- 1-2 years ☒ **x**
- 2-5 years ☐
- Over 5 years ☐

Q2.6 Is communication within company on a daily basis largely

- By email ☒ **x**
- By phone ☐
- Face to face ☐
- A mix (define) ☐

Q2.7 Are there regular meetings of all employees together with the management?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.8 Is there a need to gain new skills or abilities to enable the enterprise to continue to be competitive?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.9 Is capacity building in terms of new skills or abilities needed by the owner-manager or almost everyone?

- Owner-manager ☐
- Almost everyone ☒ **x**

Q2.10 Do you think there is a training that would benefit you in your current job?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.11 Could you outline what training you have received?

Customer loyalty, Product data management, Quality management system

Q2.12 Experiences of external courses (personal and enterprise).

None

Q2.13 Experiences of internal courses (personal and enterprise).

Planned according to company's needs and thus very useful

Q2.14 In what ways have you gained new skills and knowledge?

Work shadowing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Coaching	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
From more experienced colleagues	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Provision of manuals/handbooks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Internet general	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Business Link, Trade Association, Professional Body websites	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Trade Association meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional Body meetings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Social activities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
If Other, please specify	

Q2.15 What are your selection criteria for choosing training services (choose 2 most important)?

Accessibility	<input type="checkbox"/>
Time (for instance courses outside of working hours)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Costs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Content/Relevance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Something else	<input type="checkbox"/>
If Something else, please specify	

Q2.16 Computer familiarity

- Word processing ☐ **x**
- Spreadsheets ☐ **x**
- Databases ☐ **x**
- Presentations ☐ **x**
- Email ☐ **x**
- Internet ☐ **x**

Q2.17 Do you use computer to learn?

- Yes ☐ **x** Go to Q2.18
- No ☐ Go to Q2.19

Q2.18 If Yes, because

- It is the easiest way to find information ☐ **x**
- It is possible to have animated information (sound, video etc) ☐
- It is readily and easily accessible ☐ **x**
- I can learn individually, at my own speed ☐
- I can learn individually, at my own time ☐ **x**
- I can learn individually, where I wish ☐
- Richness of information ☐ **x**

Q2.19 If No, because

- I do not have computer ☐
- I am not familiar with the use of a computer ☐
- I do not have access to support ☐
- It is easier to ask someone ☐
- I do not have an internet connection ☐
- I prefer to learn face to face ☐
- I prefer to learn in a group ☐
- The investment is too large ☐

Q2.20 Do you use email/web at home?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.21 Do you use email/web at work?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.22 Does using a computer on-line to attend a course prohibit the others from using a computer on-line?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐ **x**
- If Yes, the reason would be?

Q2.23 Are you interested in learning on-line?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.24 What experience of eLearning have you had? (Your opinion about the eLearning courses)

Online courses arranged by school. Those have been pretty good in general

Q2.25 How useful was it to the enterprise?

- Very useful ☐
- Useful ☐
- Adequate ☐ **x**
- Not useful at all ☐
- No opinion ☐

Q2.26 Do you feel you received adequate support?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.27 What form did the support take?

- Face to face meetings with tutor ☒ **x**
- Face to face meetings with other learners ☐
- Telephone support from tutor ☐
- Email support from tutor ☒ **x**
- Chat room/bulletin boards to communicate with peers e-mentors/mentors ☐
- Technical help line ☐
- Other ☐
- If Other, please specify

Q2.28 What support do you think is necessary when doing an eLearning course?

- Face to face meetings with tutor ☒ **x**
- Face to face meetings with other learners ☐
- Telephone support from tutor ☐
- Email support from tutor ☒ **x**
- Chat room/bulletin boards to communicate with peers e-mentors/mentors ☐
- Technical help line ☐
- Other ☐
- If Other, please specify

Q2.29 What do you think are the biggest obstacles of eLearning in your company?

Lack of time

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

Appendix 8: Interview 7

QUESTIONNAIRE

This survey is strictly confidential and all replies will remain anonymous.

Details of the Enterprise

<p>Q1.1 Name of Enterprise</p> <p>XXXXXXXXXX</p> <p>Q1.2 Number of years trading</p> <p>Less than 12 months <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>1-2 years <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>2-5 years <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>More than 5 years <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Q1.3 Number of employees</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>2-5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>6-9 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>10-19 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>20-49 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Q1.4 Main types of outputs</p> <p>Service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Service and manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/></p>
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Could you describe the busy and slack periods of activity within the enterprise over the year

<p>Q1.5 Do you have busy and slack periods of activity in the enterprise over the year?</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Go to Q1.6</u></p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Go to Q1.8</u></p> <p>Q1.6 Seasonal busy periods</p> <p>Quarter 1 (Jan-Mar) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 2 (Apr-Jun) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 3 (July-Sept) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Q1.7 Seasonal slack periods</p> <p>Quarter 1 (Jan-Mar) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 2 (Apr-Jun) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 3 (July-Sept) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec) <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Q1.8 Shift work</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Q1.9 Daily busy and slack periods</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please specify</p> <p>Q1.10 Could you be available for learning and development in working hours?</p> <p>High availability <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Some availability <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Little availability <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No availability <input type="checkbox"/></p>
---	--

Q1.11 Could you be available for learning and development outside of working hours?

- High availability ☐
- Some availability ☒ **x**
- Little availability ☐
- No availability ☐

Q1.12 Is there a staff development plan within the business?

- Yes, linked to appraisals ☐
- Yes, not linked to appraisals ☒ **x**
- No ☐
- I do not know ☐

Q1.13 If skills gaps are identified are they linked in with business needs?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q1.14 Is there a budget for training?

- Yes ☐
- No ☒ **x**
- I do not know ☐
- None applicable ☐

General learning issues**Q2.1 Position in enterprise**

Worker

Q2.2 Are you

- Owner or manager ☐
- Employee ☒ **x**

Q2.3 Age of respondent

- Under 25 ☐
- 25-40 ☐
- 41-49 ☐
- 50-55 ☒ **x**
- 55 Plus ☐
- Prefer not to say ☐

Q2.4 Gender of respondent

- Male ☐
- Female ☒ **x**

Q2.5 Number of years in this enterprise

- Less than 1 year ☐
- 1-2 years ☐
- 2-5 years ☐
- Over 5 years ☒ **x**

Q2.6 Is communication within company on a daily basis largely

- By email ☒ **x**
- By phone ☐
- Face to face ☐
- A mix (define) ☐

Q2.7 Are there regular meetings of all employees together with the management?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.8 Is there a need to gain new skills or abilities to enable the enterprise to continue to be competitive?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.9 Is capacity building in terms of new skills or abilities needed by the owner-manager or almost everyone?

- Owner-manager ☐
- Almost everyone ☒ **x**

Q2.10 Do you think there is a training that would benefit you in your current job?

- Yes ☐
- No ☒ **x**

Q2.11 Could you outline what training you have received?

Customer service, marketing, sales

Q2.12 Experiences of external courses (personal and enterprise).

Trainings have been very good and extremely useful

Q2.13 Experiences of internal courses (personal and enterprise).

None

Q2.14 In what ways have you gained new skills and knowledge?

- | | |
|--|--|
| Work shadowing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Coaching | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| From more experienced colleagues | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X |
| Provision of manuals/handbooks | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X |
| Internet general | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Business Link, Trade Association, Professional Body websites | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X |
| Trade Association meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Professional Body meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Social activities | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If Other, please specify | |

Q2.15 What are your selection criteria for choosing training services (choose 2 most important)?

- | | |
|--|--|
| Accessibility | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Time (for instance courses outside of working hours) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X |
| Costs | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Content/Relevance | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X |
| Something else | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If Something else, please specify | |

Q2.16 Computer familiarity

- Word processing ☐ **x**
- Spreadsheets ☐ **x**
- Databases ☐ **x**
- Presentations ☐
- Email ☐ **x**
- Internet ☐ **x**

Q2.17 Do you use computer to learn?

- Yes ☐ **x** Go to Q2.18
- No ☐ Go to Q2.19

Q2.18 If Yes, because

- It is the easiest way to find information ☐ **x**
- It is possible to have animated information (sound, video etc) ☐ **x**
- It is readily and easily accessible ☐ **x**
- I can learn individually, at my own speed ☐
- I can learn individually, at my own time ☐
- I can learn individually, where I wish ☐ **x**
- Richness of information ☐ **x**

Q2.19 If No, because

- I do not have computer ☐
- I am not familiar with the use of a computer ☐
- I do not have access to support ☐
- It is easier to ask someone ☐
- I do not have an internet connection ☐
- I prefer to learn face to face ☐
- I prefer to learn in a group ☐
- The investment is too large ☐

Q2.20 Do you use email/web at home?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.21 Do you use email/web at work?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.22 Does using a computer on-line to attend a course prohibit the others from using a computer on-line?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

If Yes, the reason would be?

Only one computer

Q2.23 Are you interested in learning on-line?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.24 What experience of eLearning have you had? (Your opinion about the eLearning courses)

No experiences yet. Possibly not the best way to train people in this area of business

Q2.25 How useful was it to the enterprise?

- Very useful ☐
- Useful ☐
- Adequate ☐
- Not useful at all ☐
- No opinion ☐

Q2.26 Do you feel you received adequate support?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q2.27 What form did the support take?

- Face to face meetings with tutor ☐
- Face to face meetings with other learners ☐
- Telephone support from tutor ☐
- Email support from tutor ☐
- Chat room/bulletin boards to communicate with peers e-mentors/mentors ☐
- Technical help line ☐
- Other ☐
- If Other, please specify

Q2.28 What support do you think is necessary when doing an eLearning course?

- Face to face meetings with tutor ☒ **X**
- Face to face meetings with other learners ☒ **X**
- Telephone support from tutor ☐
- Email support from tutor ☐
- Chat room/bulletin boards to communicate with peers e-mentors/mentors ☐
- Technical help line ☐
- Other ☐
- If Other, please specify

Q2.29 What do you think are the biggest obstacles of eLearning in your company?

Difficult or perhaps even impossible to learn and teach online the skills that are needed

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

Appendix 9: Interview 8

QUESTIONNAIRE

This survey is strictly confidential and all replies will remain anonymous.

Details of the Enterprise

Q1.1 Name of Enterprise xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	Q1.3 Number of employees 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x 6-9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10-19 <input type="checkbox"/> 20-49 <input type="checkbox"/>
Q1.2 Number of years trading Less than 12 months <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 years <input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 years <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x More than 5 years <input type="checkbox"/>	Q1.4 Main types of outputs Service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x Manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/> Service and manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/>

Could you describe the busy and slack periods of activity within the enterprise over the year

Q1.5 Do you have busy and slack periods of activity in the enterprise over the year? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x <u>Go to Q1.6</u> No <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Go to Q1.8</u>	Q1.8 Shift work Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x
Q1.6 Seasonal busy periods Quarter 1 (Jan-Mar) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 2 (Apr-Jun) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 3 (July-Sept) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x	Q1.9 Daily busy and slack periods Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please specify Afternoons are busy
Q1.7 Seasonal slack periods Quarter 1 (Jan-Mar) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 2 (Apr-Jun) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x Quarter 3 (July-Sept) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec) <input type="checkbox"/>	Q1.10 Could you be available for learning and development in working hours? High availability <input type="checkbox"/> Some availability <input type="checkbox"/> Little availability <input type="checkbox"/> No availability <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x

Q1.11 Could you be available for learning and development outside of working hours?

- High availability ☐
- Some availability ☒ **x**
- Little availability ☐
- No availability ☐

Q1.12 Is there a staff development plan within the business?

- Yes, linked to appraisals ☐
- Yes, not linked to appraisals ☐
- No ☒ **x**
- I do not know ☐

Q1.13 If skills gaps are identified are they linked in with business needs?

- Yes ☐
- No ☒ **x**

Q1.14 Is there a budget for training?

- Yes ☐
- No ☒ **x**
- I do not know ☐
- None applicable ☐

General learning issues**Q2.1 Position in enterprise**

Owner

Q2.2 Are you

- Owner or manager ☒ **x**
- Employee ☐

Q2.3 Age of respondent

- Under 25 ☐
- 25-40 ☒ **x**
- 41-49 ☐
- 50-55 ☐
- 55 Plus ☐
- Prefer not to say ☐

Q2.4 Gender of respondent

- Male ☒ **x**
- Female ☐

Q2.5 Number of years in this enterprise

- Less than 1 year ☐
- 1-2 years ☐
- 2-5 years ☒ **x**
- Over 5 years ☐

Q2.6 Is communication within company on a daily basis largely

- By email ☐
- By phone ☐
- Face to face ☐
- A mix (define) ☒ **x**

Face to face and by phone

Q2.7 Are there regular meetings of all employees together with the management?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.8 Is there a need to gain new skills or abilities to enable the enterprise to continue to be competitive?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.9 Is capacity building in terms of new skills or abilities needed by the owner-manager or almost everyone?

- Owner-manager ☐
- Almost everyone ☒ **x**

Q2.10 Do you think there is a training that would benefit you in your current job?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.11 Could you outline what training you have received?

Product trainings

Q2.12 Experiences of external courses (personal and enterprise).

Trainings have been good and useful

Q2.13 Experiences of internal courses (personal and enterprise).

None

Q2.14 In what ways have you gained new skills and knowledge?

- Work shadowing ☐
- Coaching ☐
- From more experienced colleagues ☐
- Provision of manuals/handbooks ☐
- Internet general ☒ **X**
- Business Link, Trade Association, Professional Body websites ☐
- Trade Association meetings ☐
- Professional Body meetings ☐
- Social activities ☐
- Other ☒ **X**
- If Other, please specify

Magazines and articles related to business

Q2.15 What are your selection criteria for choosing training services (choose 2 most important)?

- Accessibility ☐
- Time (for instance courses outside of working hours) ☒ **X**
- Costs ☐
- Content/Relevance ☒ **X**
- Something else ☐
- If Something else, please specify

Q2.16 Computer familiarity

- Word processing ☐ **x**
- Spreadsheets ☐ **x**
- Databases ☐ **x**
- Presentations ☐ **x**
- Email ☐ **x**
- Internet ☐ **x**

Q2.17 Do you use computer to learn?

- Yes ☐ **x** Go to Q2.18
- No ☐ Go to Q2.19

Q2.18 If Yes, because

- It is the easiest way to find information ☐ **x**
- It is possible to have animated information (sound, video etc) ☐
- It is readily and easily accessible ☐
- I can learn individually, at my own speed ☐
- I can learn individually, at my own time ☐
- I can learn individually, where I wish ☐
- Richness of information ☐

Q2.19 If No, because

- I do not have computer ☐
- I am not familiar with the use of a computer ☐
- I do not have access to support ☐
- It is easier to ask someone ☐
- I do not have an internet connection ☐
- I prefer to learn face to face ☐
- I prefer to learn in a group ☐
- The investment is too large ☐

Q2.20 Do you use email/web at home?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.21 Do you use email/web at work?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.22 Does using a computer on-line to attend a course prohibit the others from using a computer on-line?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐ **x**
- If Yes, the reason would be?

Q2.23 Are you interested in learning on-line?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.24 What experience of eLearning have you had? (Your opinion about the eLearning courses)

No experiences so far. Positive attitude towards eLearning

Q2.25 How useful was it to the enterprise?

- Very useful ☐
- Useful ☐
- Adequate ☐
- Not useful at all ☐
- No opinion ☐

Q2.26 Do you feel you received adequate support?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q2.27 What form did the support take?

- Face to face meetings with tutor ☐
- Face to face meetings with other learners ☐
- Telephone support from tutor ☐
- Email support from tutor ☐
- Chat room/bulletin boards to communicate with peers e-mentors/mentors ☐
- Technical help line ☐
- Other ☐
- If Other, please specify

Q2.28 What support do you think is necessary when doing an eLearning course?

- Face to face meetings with tutor ☐
- Face to face meetings with other learners ☐
- Telephone support from tutor ☒ **x**
- Email support from tutor ☒ **x**
- Chat room/bulletin boards to communicate with peers e-mentors/mentors ☐
- Technical help line ☐
- Other ☐
- If Other, please specify

Q2.29 What do you think are the biggest obstacles of eLearning in your company?

Not sure, if there are suitable eLearning courses. No one has offered useful eLearning courses.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

Appendix 10: Interview 9

QUESTIONNAIRE

This survey is strictly confidential and all replies will remain anonymous.

Details of the Enterprise

<p>Q1.1 Name of Enterprise</p> <p>XXXXXXXXXX</p> <p>Q1.2 Number of years trading</p> <p>Less than 12 months <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>1-2 years <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>2-5 years <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>More than 5 years <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Q1.3 Number of employees</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>2-5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>6-9 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>10-19 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>20-49 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Q1.4 Main types of outputs</p> <p>Service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Service and manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/></p>
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Could you describe the busy and slack periods of activity within the enterprise over the year

<p>Q1.5 Do you have busy and slack periods of activity in the enterprise over the year?</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Go to Q1.6</u></p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Go to Q1.8</u></p> <p>Q1.6 Seasonal busy periods</p> <p>Quarter 1 (Jan-Mar) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 2 (Apr-Jun) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 3 (July-Sept) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Q1.7 Seasonal slack periods</p> <p>Quarter 1 (Jan-Mar) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 2 (Apr-Jun) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 3 (July-Sept) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec) <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Q1.8 Shift work</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Q1.9 Daily busy and slack periods</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please specify</p> <p>Q1.10 Could you be available for learning and development in working hours?</p> <p>High availability <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Some availability <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Little availability <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No availability <input type="checkbox"/></p>
---	--

Q1.11 Could you be available for learning and development outside of working hours?

- High availability ☐
- Some availability ☒ **x**
- Little availability ☐
- No availability ☐

Q1.12 Is there a staff development plan within the business?

- Yes, linked to appraisals ☐
- Yes, not linked to appraisals ☐
- No ☒ **x**
- I do not know ☐

Q1.13 If skills gaps are identified are they linked in with business needs?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q1.14 Is there a budget for training?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐
- I do not know ☐
- None applicable ☐

General learning issues**Q2.1 Position in enterprise**

Planner

Q2.2 Are you

- Owner or manager ☒ **x**
- Employee ☐

Q2.3 Age of respondent

- Under 25 ☐
- 25-40 ☒ **x**
- 41-49 ☐
- 50-55 ☐
- 55 Plus ☐
- Prefer not to say ☐

Q2.4 Gender of respondent

- Male ☐
- Female ☒ **x**

Q2.5 Number of years in this enterprise

- Less than 1 year ☐
- 1-2 years ☐
- 2-5 years ☐
- Over 5 years ☒ **x**

Q2.6 Is communication within company on a daily basis largely

- By email ☐
- By phone ☐
- Face to face ☒ **x**
- A mix (define) ☐

Q2.7 Are there regular meetings of all employees together with the management?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.8 Is there a need to gain new skills or abilities to enable the enterprise to continue to be competitive?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.9 Is capacity building in terms of new skills or abilities needed by the owner-manager or almost everyone?

- Owner-manager ☐
- Almost everyone ☒ **x**

Q2.10 Do you think there is a training that would benefit you in your current job?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.11 Could you outline what training you have received?

Communication, PR-courses

Q2.12 Experiences of external courses (personal and enterprise).

Challenging to find training that fits the current needs. The trainings are often too general and theoretical. Sometimes courses are too long; requires lot of commitment. Practical courses that focus on problem based learning are important.

Q2.13 Experiences of internal courses (personal and enterprise).

Small company; often professionalism and experiences are shared in everyday conversations.

Q2.14 In what ways have you gained new skills and knowledge?

Work shadowing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
From more experienced colleagues	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Provision of manuals/handbooks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Internet general	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Business Link, Trade Association, Professional Body websites	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trade Association meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional Body meetings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Social activities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
If Other, please specify	

Q2.15 What are your selection criteria for choosing training services (choose 2 most important)?

Accessibility	<input type="checkbox"/>
Time (for instance courses outside of working hours)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Costs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Content/Relevance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Something else	<input type="checkbox"/>
If Something else, please specify	

Q2.16 Computer familiarity

- Word processing ☐ **x**
- Spreadsheets ☐ **x**
- Databases ☐ **x**
- Presentations ☐ **x**
- Email ☐ **x**
- Internet ☐ **x**

Q2.17 Do you use computer to learn?

- Yes ☐ **x** Go to Q2.18
- No ☐ Go to Q2.19

Q2.18 If Yes, because

- It is the easiest way to find information ☐ **x**
- It is possible to have animated information (sound, video etc) ☐
- It is readily and easily accessible ☐ **x**
- I can learn individually, at my own speed ☐ **x**
- I can learn individually, at my own time ☐
- I can learn individually, where I wish ☐
- Richness of information ☐ **x**

Q2.19 If No, because

- I do not have computer ☐
- I am not familiar with the use of a computer ☐
- I do not have access to support ☐
- It is easier to ask someone ☐
- I do not have an internet connection ☐
- I prefer to learn face to face ☐
- I prefer to learn in a group ☐
- The investment is too large ☐

Q2.20 Do you use email/web at home?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.21 Do you use email/web at work?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.22 Does using a computer on-line to attend a course prohibit the others from using a computer on-line?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐ **x**
- If Yes, the reason would be?

Q2.23 Are you interested in learning on-line?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.24 What experience of eLearning have you had? (Your opinion about the eLearning courses)

I have attended one eLearning course on WebCT.

eLearning is a good way to widen learning possibilities for working people. It may not be suitable for all subjects.

Q2.25 How useful was it to the enterprise?

- Very useful ☐
- Useful ☐
- Adequate ☐
- Not useful at all ☐ **x**
- No opinion ☐

Q2.26 Do you feel you received adequate support?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.27 What form did the support take?

- Face to face meetings with tutor ☒ **X**
- Face to face meetings with other learners ☒ **X**
- Telephone support from tutor ☐
- Email support from tutor ☐
- Chat room/bulletin boards to communicate with peers e-mentors/mentors ☒ **X**
- Technical help line ☐
- Other ☐
- If Other, please specify

Q2.28 What support do you think is necessary when doing an eLearning course?

- Face to face meetings with tutor ☒ **X**
- Face to face meetings with other learners ☐
- Telephone support from tutor ☐
- Email support from tutor ☒ **X**
- Chat room/bulletin boards to communicate with peers e-mentors/mentors ☒ **X**
- Technical help line ☒ **X**
- Other ☐
- If Other, please specify

Q2.29 What do you think are the biggest obstacles of eLearning in your company?

No one has offered eLearning course that would be interesting enough and topical. Haven't seen any interesting brochures or other marketing material concerning eLearning courses.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

Appendix 11: Interview 10

QUESTIONNAIRE

This survey is strictly confidential and all replies will remain anonymous.

Details of the Enterprise

<p>Q1.1 Name of Enterprise</p> <p>XXXXXXXXXXXXXX</p>	<p>Q1.3 Number of employees</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>2-5 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>6-9 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X</p> <p>10-19 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>20-49 <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Q1.2 Number of years trading</p> <p>Less than 12 months <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>1-2 years <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>2-5 years <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>More than 5 years <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X</p>	<p>Q1.4 Main types of outputs</p> <p>Service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X</p> <p>Manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Service and manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/></p>

Could you describe the busy and slack periods of activity within the enterprise over the year

<p>Q1.5 Do you have busy and slack periods of activity in the enterprise over the year?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Go to Q1.6</u></p> <p>No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X <u>Go to Q1.8</u></p>	<p>Q1.8 Shift work</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X</p>
<p>Q1.6 Seasonal busy periods</p> <p>Quarter 1 (Jan-Mar) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 2 (Apr-Jun) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 3 (July-Sept) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec) <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Q1.9 Daily busy and slack periods</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X</p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please specify</p> <p>Afternoons are often busy</p>
<p>Q1.7 Seasonal slack periods</p> <p>Quarter 1 (Jan-Mar) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 2 (Apr-Jun) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 3 (July-Sept) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec) <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Q1.10 Could you be available for learning and development in working hours?</p> <p>High availability <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Some availability <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X</p> <p>Little availability <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No availability <input type="checkbox"/></p>

Q1.11 Could you be available for learning and development outside of working hours?

- High availability ☐
- Some availability ☒ **x**
- Little availability ☐
- No availability ☐

Q1.12 Is there a staff development plan within the business?

- Yes, linked to appraisals ☐
- Yes, not linked to appraisals ☐
- No ☒ **x**
- I do not know ☐

Q1.13 If skills gaps are identified are they linked in with business needs?

- Yes ☐
- No ☒ **x**

Q1.14 Is there a budget for training?

- Yes ☐
- No ☒ **x**
- I do not know ☐
- None applicable ☐

General learning issues**Q2.1 Position in enterprise**

Customer service manager

Q2.2 Are you

- Owner or manager ☐
- Employee ☒ **x**

Q2.3 Age of respondent

- Under 25 ☐
- 25-40 ☒ **x**
- 41-49 ☐
- 50-55 ☐
- 55 Plus ☐
- Prefer not to say ☐

Q2.4 Gender of respondent

- Male ☒ **x**
- Female ☐

Q2.5 Number of years in this enterprise

- Less than 1 year ☐
- 1-2 years ☐
- 2-5 years ☒ **x**
- Over 5 years ☐

Q2.6 Is communication within company on a daily basis largely

- By email ☐
- By phone ☐
- Face to face ☒ **x**
- A mix (define) ☐

Q2.7 Are there regular meetings of all employees together with the management?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.8 Is there a need to gain new skills or abilities to enable the enterprise to continue to be competitive?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.9 Is capacity building in terms of new skills or abilities needed by the owner-manager or almost everyone?

- Owner-manager ☐
- Almost everyone ☒ **x**

Q2.10 Do you think there is a training that would benefit you in your current job?

- Yes ☒ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.11 Could you outline what training you have received?

Electric business

Q2.12 Experiences of external courses (personal and enterprise).

Useful

Q2.13 Experiences of internal courses (personal and enterprise).

None

Q2.14 In what ways have you gained new skills and knowledge?

Work shadowing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
From more experienced colleagues	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Provision of manuals/handbooks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Internet general	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Business Link, Trade Association, Professional Body websites	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trade Association meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional Body meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social activities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
If Other, please specify	

Q2.15 What are your selection criteria for choosing training services (choose 2 most important)?

Accessibility	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Time (for instance courses outside of working hours)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Costs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Content/Relevance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
Something else	<input type="checkbox"/>
If Something else, please specify	

Q2.16 Computer familiarity

- Word processing ☐ **x**
- Spreadsheets ☐ **x**
- Databases ☐ **x**
- Presentations ☐ **x**
- Email ☐ **x**
- Internet ☐ **x**

Q2.17 Do you use computer to learn?

- Yes ☐ **x** Go to Q2.18
- No ☐ Go to Q2.19

Q2.18 If Yes, because

- It is the easiest way to find information ☐ **x**
- It is possible to have animated information (sound, video etc) ☐
- It is readily and easily accessible ☐ **x**
- I can learn individually, at my own speed ☐
- I can learn individually, at my own time ☐ **x**
- I can learn individually, where I wish ☐ **x**
- Richness of information ☐ **x**

Q2.19 If No, because

- I do not have computer ☐
- I am not familiar with the use of a computer ☐
- I do not have access to support ☐
- It is easier to ask someone ☐
- I do not have an internet connection ☐
- I prefer to learn face to face ☐
- I prefer to learn in a group ☐
- The investment is too large ☐

Q2.20 Do you use email/web at home?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.21 Do you use email/web at work?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.22 Does using a computer on-line to attend a course prohibit the others from using a computer on-line?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐ **x**
- If Yes, the reason would be?

Q2.23 Are you interested in learning on-line?

- Yes ☐ **x**
- No ☐

Q2.24 What experience of eLearning have you had? (Your opinion about the eLearning courses)

Moodle -learning environment.

Courses have been good and well planned

Q2.25 How useful was it to the enterprise?

- Very useful ☐ **x**
- Useful ☐
- Adequate ☐
- Not useful at all ☐
- No opinion ☐

Q2.26 Do you feel you received adequate support?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐ **x**

Q2.27 What form did the support take?

- Face to face meetings with tutor ☒ **x**
- Face to face meetings with other learners ☐
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- Technical help line ☐
- Other ☐
- If Other, please specify

Q2.28 What support do you think is necessary when doing an eLearning course?

- Face to face meetings with tutor ☒ **x**
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- Email support from tutor ☒ **x**
- Chat room/bulletin boards to communicate with peers e-mentors/mentors ☐
- Technical help line ☐
- Other ☐
- If Other, please specify

Q2.29 What do you think are the biggest obstacles of eLearning in your company?

Currently no need for training. Money.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

