



2016 EDO International Congress

"Situating and connecting learning: implications for work"

SUMMARY:

Preceded by a working session and roundtable with 35 directors on *"Knowledge and generational change in the public administration"* and the VII International Grupo EDO Conference focused on *"Working in and with social networks in educational organisations"* which included more than 30 researchers; the IV 2016 EDO International Congress was held in Barcelona on the 11th, 12th and 13th of May under the title *"Situating and connecting learning: implications for work"*.

More than 335 experts and specialists in the field, mainly from Spain and Latin America, actively participated in person and in 5 central conferences and 12 symposia with more than 60 contributions and 9 communication tables with 62 projects; the poster session had 8 presentations and 6 workshops; the 140 selected contributions from more than 196 submitted were discussed and analysed. In addition, there were more than 80 followers who participated in the conference through webinars and the Congress's Twitter feed ([#ciedo](#)).

The most significant and relevant conclusions of the Congress's objectives from the analysis conducted of situated and connected learning's current and future status; promoting learning in the workplace; informal learning; collective knowledge management and new learning methods were that:

1. Today's society still considers knowledge and employee and citizen continuous training to be strategic elements for organisations. The bonds that exist are becoming more evident and necessary, if we consider that people are knowledge sources to be shared to help improve and develop people, organisations and society.
2. Placing ourselves in the knowledge society poses significant challenges, such as those regarding access, dissemination and management of that shared knowledge, but also other equally or more important challenges such as individual and collective rights over knowledge or those regarding ethics and values regarding their selection and use.
3. An active position in this new scenario, faced with these challenges requires us to review the role of learning. In fact, the learning society, the methodologies it uses and how it responds to challenges, has been the main focus of analysis in this Congress.



4. Learning environments are diverse. Learning can take place in educational institutions, but also in spaces of leisure, the workplace or through social networks. Promoting and fostering the learning society requires thinking and acting in virtual environments that facilitate interaction and collaborative work.

5. Emphasising learning within this new framework is consistent with interest in situated learning - its relevance to the context in which learning occurs and the activities that encourage this learning to happen - and in connected learning - its relevance to shared processes that allow a social construction of knowledge.

6. Linking situated and connected learning concepts bring the workplace and learning centres together, which should enable the necessary changes and the transformation of organisations through people. On one hand, it seeks to promote a reflective work change process, which continuously analyses what should be done, the effects that will occur from that and how to improve on them and; on the other, to align professional development objectives with organisational development goals, facilitating both organisational learning and professional development from the workplace.

7. The centre of change is, therefore, experience and how it contributes to personal and institutional improvement. Learning in this context is no longer a privilege reserved for educational and training institutions, it is becoming something that happens continuously while people interpret what they experience and build knowledge from those experiences.

8. More complex and dynamic realities demand greater collaborative efforts, which can incorporate and distribute personal knowledge, institutional knowledge and social knowledge, and in turn promote new knowledge as well as its proper management. It facilitates the process: it results in a clear delineation of objectives, flexible structures, strengthens the role of those involved, involves managers, uses reflective practices, promotes new ways of understanding research and knowledge and the sustainability of the proposals.

9. Communities of Professional Practice (CoP) have been identified as a proven proposal for the creation and management of collective knowledge in all kinds of organisations. Its development is conditioned by the strategies and instruments that facilitate their implementation, foci that require more basic and applied research; we also consider that empowering professionals and the direct use of their internal knowledge ensures sustainability and efficiency of the approach.

10. Various proposals have emphasised two key issues related to the current development of CoP. On one hand, we want to prioritise redefining the role of facilitators, differentiating between managers and group coordinators and between moderators and managers of knowledge. On the other, assess the functionality of the



tools and, particularly, the importance of exchanging self-evaluation proposals linked to improvement.

11. Establish a template for applying multiple experiences to new learning methodologies in the workplace. Examples like CoP, project learning, action learning and coding good practices, among others, are no longer anecdotal and have become standard modalities that are promoted by certain organisations. Assuming these new proposals and the inevitable development of other proposals - under the name of collective knowledge management - should not be applied only to update language used for limited processes such as data management, information management or communication.

12. In parallel, the possibilities and prospects of personal learning devices are broadened, while the participant's role during training is reassessed, they can now be potential agents of action, and demand that their involvement be placed in a context of meaningful and situated learning, more motivation and suitable didactic interaction processes.

13. Certain internal and external factors facilitate or hinder learning in the workplace: In this regard, a collaborative culture, leadership, collaborative work and/or the existence of a flexible structure are emphasised. The assumption of error, no solutions to problems and competent incompetence are obstacles to change. The importance of policies and practices that enable support and sustainability of the change processes are also highlighted.

14. The difficulties of driving improvement in professional practice through shared reflection are therefore, and mainly, cultural and not only technical; thus the change processes should be considered progressive and evolving over time in relation to the persons involved.

15. Informal learning development increases exponentially, despite the systems and related methodologies doing so to a lesser extent. Recognising and certifying other non-traditional ways to access knowledge cannot ignore the need for evaluation, innovation and investigation. Complementarity of models, strategies and tools between formal, non-formal and informal education can also be envisioned in a single programme that is varied in content and continuous.

16. Organisations develop new forms of work that are located on the network, which becomes an essential tool for the exchange of information, knowledge and experiences. A less anecdotal knowledge that is more integrated and with a clear personal and institutional logic should be simultaneously driven.



17. The new method to manage organisational knowledge now establishes institutional strategies that maximise the culture of data collection and management, support promoting learning and are used in the decision making processes. The validity of this new approach is thus subject to the application of direct and indirect evaluation processes that take into account their educational and transformative logic.

These current conclusions, that reiterate certain diagnostic elements and proposals from the 2014 EDO Congress, will be enriched with the Congress attendees' participation and the contributions they provide when they complete the Congress survey; following the processing period these contributions will be distributed among organisation entities for dissemination to society and relevant organisations.

The Congress's Scientific Committee

Barcelona, May 13th, 2016.