



## CONCLUSIONS

### 2023 7TH INTERNATIONAL EDO CONFERENCE 2023

The 2023 VII International EDO Conference was held in the city of Barcelona on May 17–19, 2023 under the slogan "*Learning and collective intelligence in organizations after the pandemic*". The published program has been maintained in its entirety and accompanied by the publication delivered with all the full contributions. The different contributions were enriched by the informal spaces for coexistence and scientific debates that were fostered, making it possible to build relationships and set up work networks between professionals from different institutions and countries.

The 411 experts and specialists in the subject, mostly from all over Spain, Europe and Latin America (more than 100) actively participated in the four main conferences, the 15 symposiums, the 3 thematic conversations, the 10 workshops, the 7 roundtables, communications and the poster session, analyzing and debating the 127 contributions selected from among the 195 presented. There were also thousands of followers on different social networks and more than 400 continuous tweet views.

These conclusions are a general synthesis, validated by the members of the Scientific Committee, of the articulated and most recurrent ideas of the debates that took place during this Conference, which are ordered according to objectives and the established lines of work:

1. **With a general and intersectional nature**, conclusions from previous conferences are reiterated, highlighting:
  - a) Today's society continues to consider workers' knowledge and continuing education as strategic elements of organizations. The links become more and more evident and necessary, if we consider that people are a source of knowledge that when shared, can help to improve themselves and also that of organizations and society.
  - b) Organizations that focus on the needs of citizens, on their internal and external users and that achieve their active involvement, in addition to achieving organizational improvements and learning management, are a source of creativity, innovation and generate social value. The challenge for today's organizations is, and continues to be, the proper use and

management of people's knowledge, promoting informal learning, learning communities and networking.

- c) The modifications that the pandemic situation has imposed on organizations must be reviewed and analyzed, taking on the new ways of making them effective that have allowed us to respond to situations of high uncertainty that have occurred and will occur in the future. In this regard, the role of digital technologies in the management of organizations and in the development of hybrid organizations is highlighted, helping to create organizational learning ecosystems that integrate content, agents and resources in a functional way.

### Regarding the new sense of learning and training in organizations:

1. Complexity is one of the defining features of the world we inhabit. It invites us to see and think about the world in a different way. Organizations still deal with management models and tools that come from the industrial revolution and that must change in order to face highly changing environments, where the variability of information and knowledge requires large doses of learning. Knowing how to navigate complexity and uncertainty has become a key skill for people and organizations that must thrive within the unknown.
2. The conclusion of the 2020 Conference is maintained, which stated that “the theoretical development on innovation, change and organizational development is robust and its theoretical and epistemological foundations have a broad and demonstrated path; however, innovative, improvement and development practices are much rarer and have more modest results and, in most cases, are less formalized. A divorce between discourse and institutional practices is evident in this area”, while stressing the importance of conducting impact assessments on the various experiences that are increasingly being developed.
3. Moving in complex contexts is part of the current situation, which confronts us with the unknown and facilitates success if we have the humility to learn, the ability to anticipate and the agility to respond to challenges. There is no knowledge without the knower, nor ignorance without the ignorant. If we want to retain our status as connoisseurs, we must learn to face the temptations toward interpassivity that are conveyed through the digital.
4. The expansion of the digital and its social, personal and political implications is evident. In this regard, we must improve our competencies and knowledge of the digital and the importance of ethics as an intersectional axis of the social, institutional, professional and personal aspects that should be consistent at all levels. At the same time, and after decades of the appearance and expansion of the Internet, there is awareness of some of the less positive aspects of the digital revolution, such as the proliferation of false information; the erosion of privacy; the excessive concentration of wealth power and control; the increase in the digital divide between people and social groups; the uncontrollable development of artificial intelligence; the degradation of public discourse on social networks; and the increase in compulsive and addictive behavior regarding new technologies.
5. It is necessary to gradually strengthen new agreements on the role of institutions, human resources and training, which involves different layers of the systemic, institutional, professional and personal reality and where ethics appears as an intersectional axis of radical importance in the current context.

### Regarding the management of talent and collective intelligence in organizations:

6. The new situation demands the promotion of communities of professional practice, a work based on challenges and by projects and a transformation in the conception of leadership. Giving an answer that is more in line with current realities on these issues requires asking about the purpose to which we want to apply talent, and reviewing the role of public employees and other professionals. Furthermore, it must specify development plans focused on sectoral policies and competencies as intersectional axes, moving from courses to learning and development. The specificity of the public function should never ignore the codes referring to the purpose of its activity, the endeavor, humility and fraternity.
7. Collective intelligence is a design challenge. And the organizational redesign is one of the great pending subjects in the Administration and in other organizations. We have to start from the future, considering the past and the present to delimit ideals, tendencies and resistances and to be able to specify where we want to be and, also, where we do not want to be. And in order to open a space for dynamic models such as that of collective intelligence, it is necessary to de-bureaucratize, simplify and take advantage of the distributed initiative for spontaneity and emerging effects to shine through. Because another collective intelligence is possible in public management.
8. Verifying to what extent progress is being made on the path of organizational learning is a need that cannot be adequately satisfied solely on the basis of intuitions and assumptions. It is essential to use appropriate diagnostic sources, techniques and instruments that provide more complete and reliable information in relation to the processes of creation, organization, distribution and application of knowledge.

### On social and collaborative learning in collective knowledge management:

9. As already highlighted in the conclusions of the 2020 EDO Conference, the added value of learning that takes place in social contexts is underscored. This learning cannot be understood as only cognition, but also as emotion (involvement of the whole person). Social learning spaces must take care of differences, participate in uncertainty and pay attention to exchange processes, with the interaction of these factors being what allows unlearning and relearning, facilitating the creation of new knowledge.
10. Social and collaborative learning also includes a critical and selective knowledge process, avoiding digital Diogenes and including a greater commitment to co-creating new knowledge and respecting the contribution that imagination and intuition can make to it as sources of knowledge.
11. Learning and relearning in post-pandemic organizations requires a more active role for workers in the creation of knowledge that includes greater integration of initiatives from the system, institutions and professionals, as well as their training and actions that are based more on scientific evidence.

### On the methodologies and strategies for new knowledge management and the promotion of the culture of learning:

12. Promoting the culture of collective and institutional learning is linked to training processes and institutional functioning. On the one hand, the continuous training of workers acquires relevant importance, especially in the case of public administration, and must link the processes

of initial training with access, retention and leaving, ordered according to topography of professional career. On the other hand, the institutions and the system that supports them must be capable of adapting the frameworks and protecting and promoting development that reinforces the professional identity and institutional interests over personal ones.

13. Different contributions have allowed us to know how to add value to technological tools and how they can improve the efficiency of teams in terms of communication, reworking and management of collective knowledge. Furthermore there is the importance of working on social and professional challenges, service learning, case studies and real situations, active methodologies that promote innovation, lessons learned and other approaches that enrich the training environment, generate satisfaction and try to ensure, maintain and increase optimal processes.

### Regarding the management of formal and informal learning in organizations:

14. The efforts made within the framework of public administrations and other organizations have been, up to now, greater than the results obtained. We can identify barriers to innovation, and many of the initiatives are framed within fragmented proposals, without a clear relationship with existing needs or demands, without much roots in the context and without support for their institutionalization.
15. Action policies must be evaluated for their effects and not only for their intentions. Considering the results, in this context, the processes that facilitated or did not facilitate their achievement cannot be ignored. In particular, it is important to assess the confluence of learning environments for the different educational actors, the importance of interdisciplinary approaches, making it clear that learning is promoted through collective and diversified actions and experiences.
16. There is a contradiction between the apparent disconnection or lack of concrete interest in many of the training activities that are organized and the growing strategic added value of training policy and the understanding of its importance. This debate around old problems may not find a solution and continues to pose the challenge of ensuring that learning is not an urgent and tactical solution, as well as that of having a direct applicability and impact on the workplace and organizations. In fact, some participants remark that the strategic value of training is essentially an organizational issue and not just one pertaining to human resources, in a turbulent context that impacts the loss of knowledge.
17. The challenge continues to be transforming formal training institutions into spaces for permanent learning, with a variety of approaches, multiple scenarios and the possibility of customizing educational tracks. Likewise, managing remote teams requires (un)learning forms of management typical of face-to-face modalities and (un)learning new leadership styles.

### On corporate networks for the promotion of a culture of learning and collective intelligence in organizations:

18. What was stated in the conclusions of the 2018 and 2020 conferences is ratified: "Social networks facilitate and promote participation and de-hierarchicalization, but their maximum utility occurs when they go beyond their conception as a space for relationships and information exchange to become a favourable context for the creation and management of collective

knowledge. Its use by organizations promotes open innovation, suggested and fed by users. Thanks to forums, knowledge banks, best practices and other alternatives, the socialization of existing knowledge is facilitated while new proposals are generated”.

19. Key factors are considered for this new collective knowledge management to work, in addition to what was already mentioned in the 2020 meeting:
- a) Original quality of content.
  - b) Content curation.
  - c) Shared climate and culture with traits of empathy, empowerment of initiative, passion and generosity.
  - d) Moral and material recognition of authorship.
  - e) Public and open dissemination.
  - f) Promotion of reuse.

Also, controlling negatives such as: ignorance, fear, work overloads or the negative effect of some hierarchical superiors.

#### Regarding the role of managers in these new scenarios:

20. Despite the existing development of models and strategies for the creation and management of collective knowledge, there is a perception that a more effective governance, management and leadership model is still lacking so that the experiences are more sustainable over time. Its importance is still considered fundamental, as long as they act as managers of change, including a positive attitude towards it, strategic vision, effective leadership and permanent review processes on the actions and results achieved.
21. It is important to reinforce as well and in this context of uncertainty, socio-emotional competencies, promoting models that respect the implicit factors of conduct such as attitudes, emotions or behaviors and the consideration of aspects such as happiness and personal and professional well-being.

#### And on other more general issues:

22. The new knowledge management incorporates the management of artificial intelligence and, specifically, the ethical considerations linked to its design and development. Algorithms are not always well designed or well used, and have negative consequences, which must be interpreted as errors in intelligent systems. Although there is often an insistence on ensuring ethical principles in the use of AI, it is obvious that, in reality, ethics correspond to the people and organizations that design and implement AI systems. In this sense, it is necessary to consider and review the Artificial Intelligence–Human Intelligence relationship (from which it derives).
23. Promoting and driving new responses to present and future challenges cannot and should not ignore the intrinsic relationships that exist between evaluation, research and innovation, aimed at solving social challenges and with the participation of all the actors involved.
24. Shared agendas are a methodology for working more effectively on the social, economic, and environmental challenges of the 21st century, which are complex, persistent, and adaptive. These are challenges that need to be addressed with systemic approaches and collective action.
25. Some questions repeated as slogans have been: "More complex societies demand new challenges and require new knowledge"; "The more training, the more capacity and less resistance to change and improvement"; "You have to learn in a different way"; "Learning permanently is a

way of life"; "If you want to progress, do it by sharing"; "Training and improvement must be shared to guarantee personal, institutional and social progress", "Evaluate and innovate in 360"; "Advancing implies constant unlearning and learning".

Finally, it must be stressed again that the new realities require a collaborative institutional and professional process between the social, productive and academic sectors, of which the present EDO2023 Conference is solid proof.

The present conclusions will be made known through the website and will be disseminated among the authorities, specialists, stakeholders and society in general.

### The Scientific Committee of the Conference

Barcelona, May 19th, 2023