

Benefits of Adapt project for the companies

Managing director Lauri Heikkilä's presentation
in the Adapt Connect Go - seminar in Kokkola 2.12.1999

My name is Lauri Heikkilä and I am giving the opinions of the project on behalf of participating companies. I am also a chairman of the project's steering group. Adapt-project "SME's electronic ability - key factor for profitability in the textile and clothing branch" has been a training project. There have been participating 17 companies in which the amount of personnel varies 1 to 25 persons. About 40 persons from the have participated different courses and there have been also other participants in seminars and training sessions.

(Presentation of the companies.)

The main aim of the project is to develop training and services based on new information technology.

The purpose of the project is an electronic service centre, in which training and other services of development are given. To achieve this aim the personnel of the enterprises are supported to study and to use the newest software in the field. The training is based on the needs of the companies involved. (At the moment seventeen enterprises) E.g. a person who makes patterns is able to choose CAD/CAM courses for pattern making or a person who is responsible for marketing is able to take an Internet course, where they plan and make a web site for the company etc. The courses are arranged as modules from which a person can pick those one is interested in and one think are beneficial for one's work.

Besides training the project is developing means of co-operation between the companies and Central Ostrobothnia Polytechnic and Kokkola Vocational Institute. During the project the companies have got acquainted with the environment of the educational organisations as well as the premises and the staff. The threshold is lower now than before for a company to contact and ask for services and vice versa. The students of the Polytechnic have carried out product design and product development projects for part of the companies participating in the Adapt project. The companies have also given to the students works of development as their bachelor's thesis.

What the project has given to the companies?

- + good IT- training for the needs of the companies
- + it has clearly increased the level of IT knowledge
- + it has been profitable for the companies to participate but one has to be active otherwise there will not be result
- + training has been flexible – rerun of the courses so that the enterprise could choose the suitable time to participate
- + collaboration between schools (Vocational Institute and Central Ostrobothnia Polytechnic) has increased remarkably
- + collaboration between entrepreneurs has increased considerably
- + networking; companies – schools and companies – companies
- + without the project many small company hasn't been able to acquire the training
- + the most of the companies has now their own e-mail and www-pages
- + electronic data bank of material suppliers
- + electronic data bank of Textile and Clothing companies in Central Ostrobothnia

What the project has not given to the companies?

+ the project has not increased the internationalisation of the companies how they need – e.g. co-operation with marketing with transnational partners. This is the area what is very important for every company.

But I must confess that the training has been so intensive that there has not been time to go into transnationalisation.

What will happen after the project ends?

1. Now the Adapt-project has increased the interest in IT technology and capability to use it in work among the companies – it would be good to continue co-operation between schools and enterprises with another project. The first thing which came in to my mind is the electronic servicentre, electronic commerce, updating and developing the web pages, transnationalisation etc.
2. To make a allusion to this Adapt-project and its good practises- could it be possible to arrange same kind of project to the other companies which didn't participate this. There is a hundred more companies without Adapt.

I want to thank you all who were involved with implementation of the project. Special thanks to trainers and Tarja Slotte and to the organisational background and to the members of steering group.