Abstract

Recently, there has been growing interest in emotional intelligence (EI) and its contribution to effective leadership in organizations. This paper reports findings from a case study on an online learning program offering emotional skills training to supervisors and managers. The aim of this study was to examine participants’ experiences and perceptions of the learning program and platform, including how the learning platform was used, what supported and hindered the learning process, and the participants’ perceptions of the impact of the program on their emotional skills. The research data consisted of individual interviews (n=5), group discussions (n=10), and open-ended survey questions. The method of qualitative thematic analysis was applied for all data.

The opportunity for participants to do exercises at their own speed and to choose exercises that best fit their needs were mentioned as the main factors that supported the learning process. The main distraction was a lack of time. Also, some of the exercises were perceived of as pretentious and contrived, which had a negative impact on the participants’ motivation. Usability problems with the platform and a lack of interaction and support were also found to impede the training. Some of the emotional skills that the participants felt they had developed had to do with identifying and understanding feelings, interpersonal skills, and mindfulness. The findings indicate that an adequate amount of time and support, interaction among participants, and meaningful exercises play a key role in implementing a successful online learning program for emotional skills training.

Keywords: E-learning, workplace learning, emotional skills

1 INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence (EI) and the skills associated with it have recently been receiving more attention in the fields of leadership and human resource management. Organizations have been increasingly interested in the possibilities of developing the emotional skills of their employees. E-learning has been quite popular method in various workplace training programs, especially because of its time and budget efficiency, flexibility, and just-in-time availability [1], [2]. In addition, properly designed e-learning can also enhance workplace learning by supporting individual reflection and collaborative knowledge building, as well as by integrating theoretical knowledge with the practical experiences of the participants [3]. Despite these advantages, e-learning is not often used as a method for the EI training of employees. E-learning has, however, been used successfully in emotion-related interventions in the field of positive psychology, such as in developing psychological capital [4] and positive emotions and mindfulness [5]. This is encouraging for the development of emotional skills through e-learning, since emotional intelligence and positive psychology overlap in many ways [6]. In this paper, we examine the possibilities of using e-learning for emotional skills development by studying participants’ experiences with an emotional skills e-learning program. We report findings from a six-week program designed for developing the emotional skills of managers and supervisors.

1.1 Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence and its influence on human behavior have been discussed widely since the concept was first popularized by Mayer and Salovey in the early 1990s [7]. Mayer and Salovey’s [8] model defines EI as the ability to:

- Perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion
- Access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought
- Understand emotions and emotional knowledge
- Regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth

In short, individuals with high EI are able to process their own and other people’s emotions and use this information as a guide for their behavior [9].

Recent studies have indicated that EI is not just a fixed set of abilities that can be tested using an EI test. Instead, EI is highly dependent upon social context. This may offer an explanation for why individuals with perceived high EI can seem to have insufficient emotional skills in certain situations. [10] The observation about the significance of the context offers an interesting viewpoint on the meaning and development of EI in the workplace.

1.2 Emotional intelligence and leadership

The effect of emotions and emotional skills in the leadership process and on organizational behavior are relatively new concepts in the field of leadership studies [11]. However, the concept of EI and its implications for organizations has been quick to receive attention within the field of human resource management [12]. Previous studies linking EI and leadership indicate that the skills associated with EI play a role in successful leadership practices as well as in the success of work communities and organizations (e.g. [13], [14], [15], [16], [17]). Some studies (e.g. [18], [19], [20]) have also found a link between transformational leadership practices, such as idealized influence (charisma), individualized consideration, inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation [21], and the EI of the leader. Positive EI development has also been linked to increased health and well-being of leaders [22].

The EI of the leader may influence the leadership process in many ways. Leaders with high EI will be able to identify their positive and negative moods and emotions and take advantage of them. On the other hand, EI also helps individuals recognize if their positive moods and emotions might be causing them to be overly optimistic and unrealistic, or if their negative emotions are limiting their creativity and flexibility. The ability to understand and manage one’s own emotions can also lead to more constructive thinking, which may help leaders build and maintain cooperation and trust in the workplace. The ability to manage emotions can also facilitate effective decision-making by reducing the risk of emotion and mood-based errors in the decision-making process. Leaders may also greatly benefit from understanding their followers’ emotions and even from being able to anticipate their reactions. Even in difficult situations, leaders with high EI should be able to transmit enthusiasm and optimism to their subordinates without downplaying the seriousness of the problems at hand [17].

1.3 Developing emotional skills in the workplace

The perceived effect of EI on leadership has sparked an interest in finding out if and how EI can be developed in workplace settings (e.g. [23], [24]). Studies have been conducted on training programs and other kinds of interventions designed for EI development (e.g. [25], [26], [27]). However, the effectiveness of these kinds of interventions has been debated [27]. Some studies have found that participants develop greater levels of EI with respect to their employees, while others have not detected any changes at all. Slaski and Cartwright [22] did a quantitative study on an EI training program for retail chain managers and found a significant increase in the EI of the participants and no changes in the scores of the control group. Clarke [12] carried out a qualitative study on EI learning at the workplace in hospice settings and discovered that certain emotional abilities, such as the ability to manage emotions and the ability to use emotions to facilitate thinking and decision-making, can be developed through workplace learning mechanisms. Muyia and Kacirek [25] did a quantitative study on the development of participants’ EI in a leadership development program; they found no significant change in EI of the participants.

Studies have also indicated that conventional, classroom-style training programs do not provide the most effective learning experience for emotional skills development (e.g. [27], [28]). While classroom learning can increase participants’ understandings of their emotions, workplace learning seems to be a more successful method for acquiring a deeper knowledge of emotional skills [12], [27], [28]. This is probably because of the contextual nature of these abilities. For example, organizational and job demands at the workplace might influence emotional skills significantly [27]. Workplaces can have varying norms regarding how emotions should be displayed at work, and these norms are usually absorbed through participation in the social structures of the workplace [12].

Workplace learning provides participants with the opportunity to practice emotional skills in their particular work settings together with other members of their organization. Consequently, Walter et al.
[28] have concluded that EI training should include real, on-the-job learning opportunities, such as team-based learning. Emotional skills may best be learned through interaction with colleagues and other members of the organization. This would provide an opportunity to learn through an ongoing dialogue with others and through reflecting upon the experiences gained on the job. Emotional skills can be practiced by doing real-life work tasks, and the necessary skills can also be learned informally in various situations. [12] Practice in authentic work situations also provides individuals with feedback on the outcomes and consequences of their use and management of emotions [27]. While this feedback might be quite informal in nature, those who participate in emotional skills development interventions can also greatly benefit from more structured and formal feedback. Walter et al. [28] state that in the training programs, participants should be able to practice emotional skills in their daily tasks and receive meaningful and constructive feedback frequently.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE LEARNING PROGRAM

Constructivist learning ideas were used as a background when developing the learning program. Our aim was to design a learning program that encouraged collaboration and interaction and that took into account the social context of the workplace. Previous studies (e.g. [29], [30], [31]) have indicated that constructivism provides a fruitful background and instructional strategies for e-learning, and especially for adult learning.

The subject matter of the program and the content of the learning platform are loosely based on Mayer and Salovey's [8] ability-based model of emotional intelligence (EI) but not altogether tied to it. For that reason, we refrain from using the term “emotional intelligence” when referring to the learning program, and instead use the term “emotional skills.” In fact, it has been noted that in EI learning and development, it might be more fruitful to focus on particular emotional abilities instead of the whole construct of EI [12]. This is the approach we have taken in this study. Additionally, by using the term “emotional skills,” we also want to emphasize our view that emotional abilities are not set traits; they can be learned and developed through training and practice.

While some of the assignments were designed strictly for the EI development of the participants, the learning platform also included exercises with more of an indirect approach. For example, some exercises rooted in the field of positive psychology, such as the assignments on psychological capital, were included in the program. The concept of psychological capital describes an individual’s positive attributes, which are connected to the organizational behavior and performance of the employees [32]. Psychological capital consists of four dimensions: Optimism, hope, resilience and self-efficacy [33]. The exercises based on positive psychology were assessed to fit well with the emotional skills training program, since there is a large amount of overlap in the concepts of positive psychology and emotional intelligence [6]. In fact, Bar-On [6] has argued that emotional intelligence is an integral part of positive psychology.

The platform also included exercises on the social capital of the work community. Social capital in the workplace can be described as the social features that strengthen the work community by promoting trust, interaction and networking in the workplace. It can be divided into two categories: Vertical and horizontal social capital. Vertical social capital refers to respectful and trusting relationships between superiors and employees, while horizontal social capital includes trust and reciprocity between coworkers. [34] Exercises on social capital introduced a meaningful element to emotional skills training in the form of group exercises and made it possible to take into account the context of the work community.

Exercises on mindfulness were also included in the training program. According to Kabatt-Zin [35], "Mindfulness has to do with particular qualities of attention and awareness that can be cultivated and developed through meditation. An operational working definition of mindfulness is: the awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment." Besides other positive impacts on the practitioners, mindfulness can also offer an effective tool for emotional skills development [36].

The online learning program took place in the spring of 2012 and lasted for six weeks. At the beginning of the program, the participants were offered two face-to-face sessions with the instructors. The aim of the sessions was to help the participants get started with the program and instruct them on how to use the learning platform. Attending these sessions was optional.

The participants were offered 39 exercises on the learning platform. These included both individual and group assignments. The exercises were divided into four categories:
In this paper, we cover two of the open-ended questions (such as the Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test [37] and an EI 360° evaluation [38] that were taken with psychologists before the program).

- Video exercises (based on previously filmed footage of the participants in conversation with their superiors).
- Weekly exercises (smaller assignments designed for both the self-development of the leader as well as development of the work community).
- Permanent exercises (assignments that were repeated throughout the program, such as daily mindfulness exercises).

Though recommendations were made regarding the order in which the exercises could be completed, the participants did not have to follow these recommendations. Participants also did not have to complete all of the assignments; they could choose the ones that interested them the most. In addition to the assignments, the platform also included extra learning material, such as articles and videos.

3 METHODOLOGY AND DATA

In this paper, we aim to examine participants’ experiences with and perceptions of the learning program and platform, including how the learning platform was used, what activities supported and advanced the learning process, and what problems and barriers the participants faced, as well as the participants’ perceptions of the impact of the program on their emotional skills.

The online learning program took place as part of a larger study on emotional skills development for managers and supervisors. Eight companies and 46 managers and supervisors participated in the study. The participating companies represented various fields, for example engineering, the food industry, maintenance, and social work. All of the 46 managers and supervisor had the opportunity to participate in the learning program in general and with the learning platform as a training tool.

After the e-learning program, a survey of the program was e-mailed to all of the participants, including those who did not do any exercises. Twenty-one participants completed the survey. The survey included both multiple-choice and open-ended questions. In this paper, we cover two of the open-ended questions on the survey. The participants were asked to describe in their own words their experiences with the e-learning program in general and with the learning platform as a training tool.

Five of the participants who did the exercises on the platform were interviewed about their experiences with the program and the platform. Each interview lasted 40–80 minutes. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. All of the participants were invited to a seminar in which the researchers shared the preliminary results of the study. Two such seminars were held, one in Helsinki and the other in Tampere. In the seminars, the researchers facilitated a group discussion in which the participants shared their experiences with the learning program and discussed ideas and made suggestions for how to improve the program and the platform. Two of the researchers took notes during the discussion. Altogether, ten participants took part in the group discussion, four in Tampere and six in Helsinki.

In short, the empirical data of this paper consisted of open-ended survey questions (n=21), individual in-depth interviews (n=5), and facilitated group discussions (n=10). The method of qualitative thematic analysis was applied to all of the above-mentioned research data.

4 RESULTS

The results presented here are preliminary and largely based on the interviews with the participants. The data from the open-ended questions and the group discussions are used to complement the interview data. Short excerpts from the interviews are provided in the text to further illustrate the experiences of the participants. The excerpts have been translated from Finnish into English.

4.1 How was the learning platform used?

The participants had varying expectations and plans for the program. Some participants had volunteered to participate in the program, while others had just been told to participate by their superiors. For the most part, the participants did not have any specific goals for the program; they mostly just participated out of general interest and curiosity. However, some participants also
suggested that they were interested in learning to read people, in developing their interpersonal skills, and in improving the atmosphere in the workplace.

The participants’ employers had not allotted any time for the training, so the participants were forced to plan their own learning schedule. Some participants managed to plan and book time for the exercises on their work calendars, while others used their limited spare time between tasks to do the exercises. However, due to time constraints, the participants completed most of the exercises in their free time at home. Some participants viewed the training program more as a project that should be shared with subordinates, while others mostly just chose the exercises they could do on their own.

The participants did not do all of the exercises and did not strictly follow the suggested order for the assignments. Instead, they chose exercises that best fit with their particular situation and schedule. They usually skipped or made slight modifications to the exercises that did not suit them. The participants also did not always turn in the exercises they had done; sometimes they forgot to report them to the learning platform, or they started the assignments but never finished them. The participants also reported that they often thought about and processed the exercises in their heads even though they did not complete the actual assignment on the platform.

4.2 What supported the learning process?

The factors that the participants viewed as best supporting and advancing their learning process can be divided into three categories: Flexibility in the schedule and exercises, feedback, and motivation. These three categories are covered in more detail below.

4.2.1 Flexibility in the schedule and exercises

Participants mentioned flexibility in the schedule and exercises as the main factor supporting the learning process. The participants liked the fact that they were able to plan their own training schedule and do the exercises anywhere with a computer and Internet access. They noted that it would have been much more difficult to take time to attend classes or other face-to-face learning sessions than it was to do the exercises on the learning platform. The participants also appreciated the flexibility of the exercises; they could choose assignments that best fit their needs, their particular situation, and their work community, and they could skip the exercises that did not meet these criteria. They also found the variety of exercises to be useful; in that way, the participants could always choose an assignment that best fit their particular situation: “When you started to choose between the different exercises, it was actually pretty fun. Because then, if you had very little time, you could do an exercise that you had an answer for straight away. Or, if you had more time, you could choose an exercise that took more time.” Sometimes the participants also slightly modified the exercises to better fit their situation. For example, one of the interviewees had taken an exercise that was supposed to be done at a staff meeting and had done the exercise through e-mail correspondence instead, because he and his subordinates were mostly working at different sites. The participants also liked the fact that they could complete the exercises in any particular order and were not constrained by the recommended order of the assignments.

4.2.2 Feedback

The participants perceived the feedback that they received as an important part of the learning process and found it to be very useful. They noted that it was important for them to know that someone was reading the assignments they had written; as a result, they did not feel like they were training on their own, even though there was no face-to-face contact with the instructors. The participants liked the fact that they received feedback quite soon after they had turned in their assignments and that the feedback was positive and supportive. They appreciated the instructors’ views and felt that the feedback gave them direction and guided them in their learning: “That you get […] someone else’s view on whether or not you are going in the right direction, or if you should try something else [was important].” The participants felt that the feedback eased their feelings of uncertainty and doubt during the learning program and supported their self-development.

4.2.3 Motivation

The participants viewed their own interest and motivation level as an essential part of the learning process. If the participants did not feel the need to develop and were not interested in the subject matter of the program, then it was difficult for them to become motivated to complete the exercises. However, the participants who described themselves as interested and motivated felt that they learned and developed many skills as a result of the program. They also noted that they got a lot more out of
the program when they put serious effort into it: “This is the kind of thing that you only get as much from as you are willing to invest in it. That’s how it goes.” The participants felt that the more motivated and interested they were in the subject matter, the more they were willing to invest time and effort in the learning process.

4.3 What hindered the learning process?

The main problem the participants faced during the program was a lack of time. They also found the exercises demanding and burdensome, and some of the exercises were unsuitable for their workplace or their persona. Usability problems with the platform, as well as a lack of interaction and support, were also found to hinder the learning process.

4.3.1 Lack of time

The participants mentioned a lack of time as the number one problem with the learning program. The participants found it very difficult, sometimes even impossible, to take time out of their busy work schedule to do the exercises; it was common for the participants to do exercises in their free time. Many found this to be annoying, especially since the exercises were intended to be completed at the workplace. The participants’ employers had not allotted any time for the training, so the scheduling part was left up to the participants. However, being managers and supervisors, many of them were mostly in charge of their own schedules and stated that having an allotted amount of time would not have made any difference: “It wouldn’t have mattered even if my boss had allotted time for me, it wouldn’t have made any difference, because I make my own schedule. But the workload, there’s just so much to do.” Some of the participants reported that the timing of the learning program had been unfortunate in that it had coincided with other urgent matters at the workplace. Some, on the other hand, felt that their work was always so busy that it would be a struggle to ever find enough time for the training.

4.3.2 Demands and burden of the exercises

The participants found the sheer number of exercises somewhat overwhelming. Even though the participants had been told that they were by no means required to complete all of the assignments, they even found that reading through and choosing certain exercises was exhausting in some cases. The participants stated that there were just too many exercises for the six week period. Many of the exercises reportedly took too much time, either because the assignment was extensive or because the assignment and the instructions were difficult to understand: “It took me more time to understand the exercise instructions than it took to complete the exercises.” Some of the participants also felt that the subject matter was so new to them that it took a lot of time to grasp it. Sometimes the participants found this discouraging.

4.3.3 Unsuitable exercises

The participants found some of the exercises too far removed either from their own or their work community’s way of doing things. While they acknowledged that one of the integral parts of the learning program was to try new ways of doing things in the workplace, they also strongly stated that the new ways of doing things should not conflict too much with the customs of the workplace or their usual behavior. If the exercises substantially contradicted the customary actions of the workplace or the behavior of the participant, they were perceived as being fake and contrived. The participants also expected the work community to have a negative reaction to anything they might view as pretentious: “There was a lot of stuff that […] won’t work in this kind of a community. These are experienced men that have been through a lot, so everything has to be authentic. If there’s even a hint of falsity, it will turn against you.” The participants felt that they had to respect the culture of the workplace and their own persona by not introducing practices that seemed too contrived or forced.

4.3.4 Usability problems with the platform

The participants faced some technical issues while using the learning platform. Some of the participants reported that they had not been able to view the videos on the platform and that this had prevented them from completing the video assignments. For some participants, the learning platform had signed them out during their session, which had delayed their training. In addition to technical problems, some of the participants also noted that they had had difficulties locating all of the assignments and extra material: “At first, I had problems finding stuff on the platform because everything had been arranged in such a weird manner.” In these cases, finding the right material took extra time and caused frustration.
4.3.5 Lack of interaction and support

The participants found the lack of interaction and support to be one of the downsides of online learning. At times, the participants felt too alone with the exercises, even though they were told to contact the instructors via e-mail whenever they wanted or needed to: “Sometimes, when I didn't know what was expected from me, I felt too alone.” Sometimes, they did not view e-mail as a sufficient means for obtaining instructions and support. In fact, the participants wished there would have been a couple of face-to-face sessions with the instructors and the other participants; in that way, they could have received guidance from the instructors and had the opportunity to share their thoughts and experiences with the other participants. They felt that this would have supported the learning process and motivated them more than just the feedback provided to them online.

4.4 What did the participants learn?

The participants perceived they had learned new skills during the program and had also further developed some of their existing skills. After the program, the participants felt they were more apt at identifying and understanding emotions and had gained better interpersonal skills. Some of the participants also noted that the exercises had taught them mindfulness and optimism.

4.4.1 Identifying and understanding emotions

The training program had influenced the participants to the extent that they reported paying more attention now to emotions in their everyday lives. The participants reported that they now observe and identify both their own emotions and those of others with greater sensitivity than before. Some participants also reported that they have discussed their own and others’ emotions more than before and that they have found that others react positively to this. Some of the participants reported feeling that this development has influenced their leadership practices; they said that their usual approach to leadership had mostly just been to manage things and not so much to lead people. This had often caused them to ignore emotions in the workplace. After the training program, they stated that they will pay more attention to emotions in different work situations, such as in decision-making processes: “You easily forget to think about how people emotionally react to some decisions. For example, if you’re making a decision and someone objects, you likely just ignore the emotion, you just force the decision through, and that’s it. You don’t think of the consequences.” The participants had also realized that they do not have to ignore their own and others’ emotions; instead, the emotions could be put to good use in the workplace.

4.4.2 Interpersonal skills

The participants noticed that the training program had had a positive effect on their interpersonal skills. They mentioned that they had tried to get to know their subordinates better during and after the program. They tried to show more interest by taking more time to talk to everyone and ask them how they are doing: “Of course, stuff like asking everyone how they are doing. I've always done it to some extent, but now I remember to ask even those whose doings I'm not that interested in.” The participants also reported that they now provide their subordinates with more feedback and try to be more encouraging and supportive as supervisors. Some found that their skills at solving difficult problems in the workplace had also developed during the program: “There have been difficult situations. And in those instances, I’ve noticed clearly that I’m capable of saying to people that I see that they’re feeling really hurt […]. And it defuses the situation much quicker when you say it out loud.” The participants reported feeling more confident in these situations and capable of solving problems by talking to people and taking their emotions into account.

4.4.3 Mindfulness

Some of the participants found the daily mindfulness exercises especially useful and enjoyable. They noticed that it was beneficial to take a moment out of their busy schedule to do an exercise. The participants favored short exercises that only took a few minutes to do and were therefore easier to fit into their work schedule. They felt that even the few minutes taken out of their day made them calmer, more concentrated, and more organized, and gave them a certain sense of clarity: “I was able to calm down and wasn’t that overwrought anymore. I was able to concentrate better.” The participants that found mindfulness exercises beneficial had plans to keep on doing them. Some of them had even bought CD’s to help them with their exercises and were planning to attend courses or retreats in the near future.
4.4.4 Optimism

During the training program, some of the participants had noticed an explicit development in their optimism. Some of the exercises had caused them to re-evaluate their own attitudes and adjust them accordingly: “What I’ve developed through this [program] is optimism. Because I am […] pretty pessimistic, I always think of the worst-case scenario, and it rarely comes true. So during this [program], I’ve noticed that optimism; it’s a pretty good fuel!” The participants had also paid more attention to the collective attitude of their work community. They had noticed that, for example, problems and failures were discussed more often than positive matters such as success: “I’ve learned that you should actively bring up and ask about positive things. I’ve noticed that we often just talk about the negative stuff, what has gone wrong, and do not even think about the positive.” Some of the participants perceived that it was their duty as supervisors to try to improve the atmosphere and inject a sense of optimism into the workplace; they now aim to actively bring up positive matters in their work community.

5 CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this paper was to examine participants’ experiences with an emotional skills e-learning program. The participants were for the most part satisfied with both the subject matter and the format of the learning program. They viewed the subject matter as interesting and useful and found that the online learning provided a flexible way of participating in the learning program. The participants found that the learning program had provided them with new perspectives and skills and had also helped them to develop some of their existing competencies. However, there were also significant distractions in the learning program, with the main problem being a lack of time. The participants often felt that they could not commit themselves to the learning program as much as they would have liked because there simply was no time. The participants’ employers had not allotted any time for the learning process, which made it even more difficult for them to participate in the program.

While the participants felt that online learning was flexible and easily accessible, it also had its downsides, most notably the lack of interaction. The participants often felt they that were too alone and that just being able to contact the instructors via e-mail was not enough of a support mechanism. The participants wished for couple of face-to-face learning sessions in addition to the online learning; they felt that the face-to-face interaction would have supported their learning experience and increased their motivation. In fact, the participants felt that face-to-face interaction with the instructors and other participants was so important that they did not see any way in which it could be replaced online.

The context of the workplace seemed to have a major effect on how the exercises were perceived; if the assignments conflicted too much with the culture of the workplace, the participants often viewed them as being pretentious and contrived and chose to skip them. Likewise, if the exercises contradicted the participants’ usual demeanor, the participants often felt like they were faking their emotions and this made them uneasy. The participants concluded that it is important to distinguish between the exercises that they can apply in their work community and those that are too far removed to even bother with. This is in line with Clarke’s [27] observations on the organizational demands and norms affecting emotional skills and emotional displays in the workplace.

While this research only covered a single case of an emotional skills e-learning program, and while the research data covered in this paper was rather limited in volume, the experiences presented here have, however, raised issues that need to be addressed when developing and implementing e-learning programs for emotional skills learning. The main issues to address include providing an adequate amount of time and support; employers should commit to the training of their employees by allotting more time for the exercises and learning program. Online learning should not be a lonely endeavor; rather, interacting with and receiving support from instructors and the other participants could greatly benefit the learning process. It is also good to keep in mind that emotional skills may be best learned on the job; while an online learning platform can offer a flexible tool for training, the exercises may be most effective when designed so that they can be applied in real work situations with the actual work community. It is also important to take into account the contexts of different workplaces and to remember that one assignment does not necessarily fit all participants. Lastly, the usability and user-friendliness of the learning platform should be tested; all of the learning material on the platform should be easily accessible and easy for the participants to understand.
REFERENCES


