

*Silent knowledge  
could be gained from  
an experienced person,  
or learnt by experi-  
mentation on  
your own.*

## **SILENT KNOWLEDGE**



**IMPLEMENT IT!**



**iQVet**

**D2.3**

*It should be captured before it is lost - due  
to retirement - avoiding skills gaps.*



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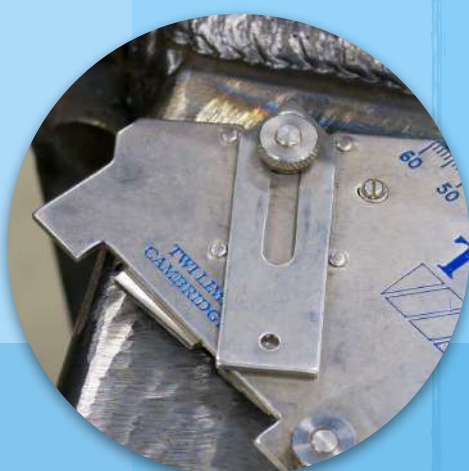
Implementing silent knowledge into Vocational Education and Training (VET) will significantly enhance the learning experience by incorporating the unwritten, experience-based insights that are often missed in formal education. There are several practical approaches that may be used to integrate silent knowledge into VET programs:

## Apply work-based learning practices

Work-based learning is an educational approach that blends classroom instruction with real-world work experience. This method helps individuals acquire the knowledge, skills, and competence required to enter or advance in a career. Examples of this strategy include "earn-and-learn" models like apprenticeships and on-the-job training, where individuals earn experiences while developing skills and gaining practical, hands-on experience.

In a market where the demand for certain occupations surpasses the supply of qualified candidates, work-based learning provides an effective solution. Individuals acquire the skills and knowledge needed to secure employment and progress in their careers, while employers benefit from a well-trained and capable workforce.

Direct involvement from employers or community members is crucial in work-based learning to ensure deep student engagement. These opportunities are designed to actively engage and motivate students, enhancing their overall learning experience.



### Methods

- Apply practical, hands-on learning experiences: Encourage students to immerse themselves in real work environments where they can actively participate in practical tasks. This exposure helps them grasp unspoken rules and intuitive practices that are challenging to convey in a classroom setting.
- Create simulations of real-world scenarios: Develop simulations and practical exercises that replicate real-world challenges. This approach exposes learners to unpredictable situations, allowing them to apply formal knowledge while acquiring silent knowledge through trial and error.

## Promote peer learning and exchange of knowledge and skills.

When students engage in learning through interaction with one another, it fosters one of the most effective and impactful learning methodologies available. In peer-to-peer learning, students learn from each other in a collaborative environment. Individuals with similar levels of knowledge or experience work together to reach a shared goal.

Collaborative learning helps close the gap between online and in-person education. Beyond connecting students and engaging them in remote training, peer-to-peer learning breaks down information barriers, improves course completion rates, and reduces training costs. It also offers unique advantages to learners, such as enhancing oral communication, self-management, and leadership skills. Here are some additional compelling benefits:

Peer-to-peer learning fosters independent, higher-level thinking and empowers students to take ownership of their learning. Critical thinking skills are developed as students ask questions, challenge assumptions, analyze information, and engage in discussion, debate, and evaluation—both through their own reasoning and by interacting with others. This approach helps students move beyond simply recalling information, enabling them to apply, analyze, synthesize, evaluate, and create based on deeper understanding.

Peer-to-peer learning fosters active participation and engagement, helping learners stay motivated and focused on their studies. Engaged students tend to achieve better learning outcomes, including greater academic success, enhanced social-emotional well-being, and stronger connections with both their lecturers and peers.

Students engaged in peer-to-peer learning collaboratively and independently reach meaningful conclusions without relying solely on their instructors. This approach enhances their learning, deepens their understanding of the material, improves retention, and equips them to apply knowledge in real-life situations.

Peer-to-peer learning allows learners to build meaningful relationships and connections with their peers, fostering both personal and professional growth. In this collaborative environment, students support one another and cultivate trust, boosting morale and creating a strong sense of community.

Peer-to-peer learning helps learners build confidence in their abilities and knowledge by providing a non-judgmental environment to showcase their understanding to their peers. By dividing classes into smaller groups, peer learning reduces social anxiety and encourages more active participation in discussions.



### Methods:

- Facilitate knowledge exchange: Arrange group activities and discussions that allow students to share their experiences and insights. Peer learning sessions enable students to articulate and exchange the silent knowledge they've acquired through their own experiences.
- Apply storytelling: Instructors and experienced workers employ storytelling to demonstrate how they addressed specific situations that went beyond formal training. This method unveils the thought processes and intuitive judgments that constitute silent knowledge.

*Kids learn how to tie their shoelaces and to ride their bicycles, through a social co-play that is effectively applying training organized with hands-on support from a master in combination with an «apprenticeship» like training system solution.*

## Capture, record and document silent knowledge

Knowledge capture transforms silent knowledge into explicit information, converting what is originally held in an individual's mind into a clear, accessible format for the organization. However, to capture silent knowledge is challenging, and even when it is captured, there's no assurance that it will be effectively utilized. The capture process can be valuable for creating a repository of reusable content. Even so, storing certain information in easily accessible repositories still holds significant value.

An example is using a white paper capture process to gather tips, rules of thumb, insights, or valuable pieces of knowledge. These can be organized by subject type, allowing individuals to subscribe to and read white papers based on their interests. When someone solves a specific problem or develops a concept that might benefit others, a streamlined process for publishing their knowledge can facilitate sharing and reuse. Another example of a capture process is maintaining a project repository where information about every undertaken project is stored. This enables organization members to search the database for relevant knowledge from previous projects that can be applied to new ones.

Nevertheless, without an established process, individuals with valuable ideas might be repeatedly approached by others seeking their experience and expertise.

### Methods:

- Gather insights from experienced professionals: Encourage experienced professionals to contribute to the curriculum by documenting their best practices and the nuanced knowledge they apply in their roles. These insights can then be incorporated into learning materials, videos, or case studies.
- Establish knowledge repositories: Create digital repositories or platforms where learners and professionals will contribute to and access silent knowledge. These repositories may include logs, videos, or written examples demonstrating how experienced workers address problems or adapt to challenges.



## Incorporate mentorship and apprenticeships



A mentor is a guide who assists students in finding the right direction and developing solutions to career challenges. By drawing on their own similar experiences, mentors build empathy with the student and gain a deeper understanding of their concerns. Mentors offer valuable guidance, assist new employees in acclimating to the workplace, and provide information, advice, and support regarding the learning and training aspects of the apprenticeship. They collaborate with both the apprentice and the employer to address and resolve issues promptly, ensuring that challenges do not jeopardize the apprenticeship.

Mentoring is especially crucial for apprentices, who are often young individuals entering the workplace for the first time. It facilitates better communication and support between the employer and the apprentice, often giving apprentices a valuable "voice." The mentor relationship offers extra support, guidance, and pastoral care separate from the apprentice's direct line management. This mentoring role is key in motivating apprentices to stay committed to their training and overcome challenges. Employers considering hiring apprentices should account for providing training and time off for mentors within the company.

### Methods:

- Match learners with experienced professionals: Develop mentorship programs that pair learners with experienced professionals, allowing them to transfer silent knowledge through hands-on interaction, observation, and real-time feedback in practical work environments.
  - Inclusion of silent knowledge into apprenticeships: Create apprenticeship programs that emphasize learning by doing, enabling students to absorb silent knowledge through hands-on practice and observing experts in the field. These apprenticeships offer learners valuable insights into nuances like tool handling, decision-making, and refined techniques that are typically gained through experience.



## Start applying reflective training and learning processes and practices

Through reflective training practices, educators can gain insights from their previous teaching experiences. Explore the advantages of this approach and how it can significantly enhance your creativity, lesson planning, and student-teacher relationships. Reflective practice training involves examining one's actions to engage in ongoing learning. For educators, this means reviewing lessons to determine their effectiveness and identifying areas for improvement. This process ultimately helps ensure that all students are learning as effectively as possible.

Reflective training practices helps educators gain a clearer understanding of their personal strengths and weaknesses. By setting goals and evaluating lesson outcomes, educators can discover new ways to adjust their teaching methods, refine routines, and enhance strategies for effectively addressing their students' needs.



*To proactively capture silent expert knowledge before their staff retires and it is too late, is still a huge challenge for manufacturing companies. They should do more to protect their own organization!*

Reflective training practices and innovation are closely linked. By reviewing your teaching methods and evaluating how students engage with lessons, you can discover new and creative approaches to overcoming challenges. Consider integrating more play, extending learning opportunities outside the classroom, or providing hands-on experiences to enhance student engagement.

Effectively solving problems and addressing challenges is crucial in the classroom. Reflective teaching practices allows educators to take the time to identify solutions for the issues they encounter. For example, a teacher can draw on their own previous experiences or those shared by colleagues to find new ways to motivate students who struggle with learning. By leveraging knowledge and past experiences, educators can become more resourceful and confident when tackling new challenges



### Methods:

- Promote reflection processes: Encourage learners to reflect on their experiences during training and work placements. Regular reflection helps them identify and internalize the silent knowledge they are acquiring.
- Utilize experience logs: Request students to keep logs that document moments of insight, unexpected challenges, and the adjustments they made in response. These logs will assist them in tracking and articulating their development of a growing silent knowledge.



## Prepare and train instructors to highlight and emphasize silent knowledge

Provide instructors with a clear understanding of what silent knowledge is and why it is valuable. Use examples to illustrate how it differs from explicit knowledge. Integrate learning sessions into training programs that focus on recognizing and conveying silent knowledge. This should include practical exercises that demonstrate how to share personal experiences and intuitive insights. Train instructors to use storytelling techniques to share personal experiences and lessons learned.



This method helps make silent knowledge more accessible and relatable to learners. Furthermore, encourage instructors to engage in reflective practices to identify and articulate their own silent knowledge. This can be achieved through regular self-assessment and sharing sessions. Last, but not least, create opportunities for instructors to learn from each other. Peer observations and collaborative discussions can help them recognize and incorporate tacit knowledge into their teaching methods.

Implementation of mentorship programs lets experienced instructors guide newer ones in recognizing and teaching silent knowledge. This hands-on support helps in transferring valuable insights and techniques. They could be extended by equipping instructors with case studies and real-life examples that highlight the application of silent knowledge in various scenarios. This helps them see how to integrate it into their teaching practices.



Further support is achieved by promoting a culture of ongoing professional development where instructors regularly update their skills and knowledge. This can include workshops, seminars, and courses focused on tacit knowledge. The sharing of knowledge could be done by creating platforms for instructors to share their silent knowledge with their peers. This could be through internal forums, workshops, or knowledge repositories.

Finally, continuously assess the effectiveness of training programs in highlighting silent knowledge by gathering feedback from instructors and learners to make necessary adjustments and improvements.

### **Methods:**

- Instructor training and developments of skills: Prepare and train VET instructors to identify and include the silent knowledge they have acquired through their own experiences. Encourage them to emphasize unwritten rules, shortcuts, and practical tips in their teaching, demonstrating how learners can apply this knowledge in real-world situations.
- Integrate formal and informal learning processes: Encourage instructors to combine formal lessons with informal learning opportunities. This might involve discussing practical applications of tasks, explaining decision-making processes in the field, or demonstrating how procedures are adapted to specific contexts and training formats.



## Include and embed case studies with real-world examples

Case studies can be invaluable for driving conversions, but extracting their full potential is not always straightforward. What elements make a case study compelling and effective in guiding prospects through the conversion funnel?

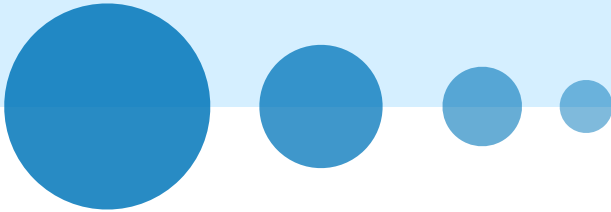
Ensure the examples you choose are closely related to the case study's topic, and go beyond simply stating the results; describe the steps taken by the business to achieve those outcomes.



A case study is a document, or sometimes a video, that illustrates how a customer used a product or process to solve a problem. It serves as real-world evidence of product's effectiveness and the results they will deliver. Case studies provide a dynamic, real-world demonstration of a product, process or service's effectiveness, serving as the pinnacle of social proof. Although customer reviews are also influential in informing students, they don't carry the same impact as detailed case studies. This is because case studies allow you to craft a narrative that showcases how your product, process or service addressed a real-life problem, supported by concrete data. Since case studies use real-world examples rather than abstract concepts, they are highly relatable to the new students.

## Methods:

- Investigate case studies: Integrate real-world case studies into the curriculum that showcase how experienced professionals use silent knowledge to address challenges. Encourage students to analyze these examples and discuss the implicit factors that contributed to success.
- Demonstrate real-world problem solving: Invite industry professionals to present real-life problem-solving examples, showcasing how silent knowledge shapes their decision-making and actions in the workplace.



**Promote and request Lifelong Learning and adaptability.**



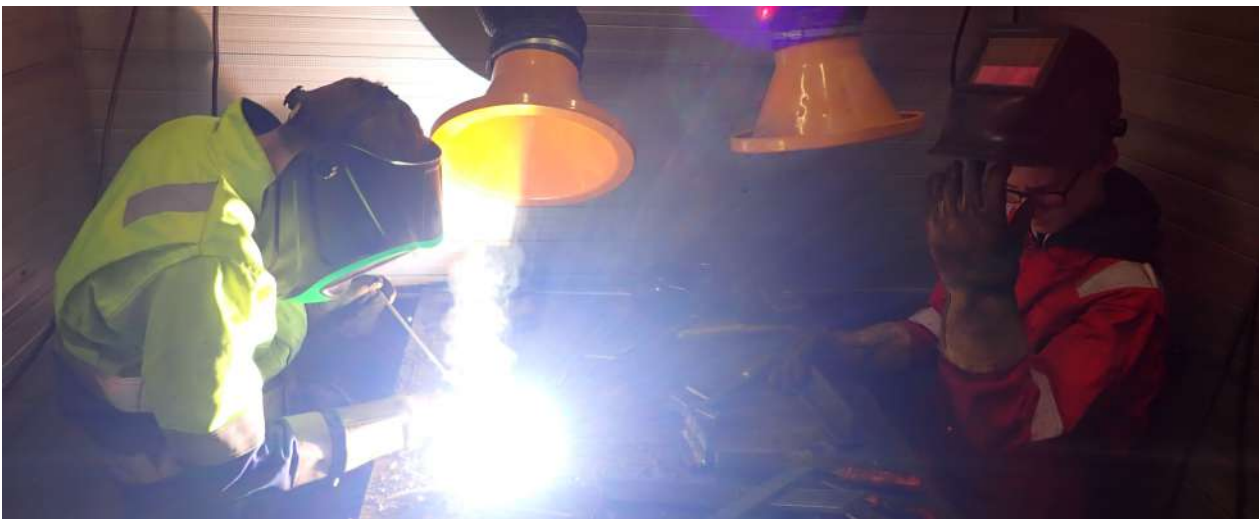
The modern workplace is defined by continual change, including technological advancements, shifting market demands, and evolving industry trends. In this dynamic environment, adaptability becomes a crucial asset. Adaptability means having the capacity to adjust and respond effectively to changes, challenges, and new contexts. Adaptability goes beyond merely accepting change; it involves being proactive, flexible, and resilient in the face of new situations or unexpected obstacles. It requires embracing innovation, navigating ambiguity, and managing uncertainty with confidence.

Lifelong learning is a key component of adaptability. It involves the ongoing pursuit of knowledge, skills, and competencies throughout one's life, extending beyond formal education. Lifelong learning supports both personal and professional growth, transcending the confines of a specific job or career. This concept goes beyond traditional education systems, such as attending school or university. Lifelong learning emphasizes the importance of acquiring knowledge and skills continuously, well beyond the classroom setting.

Lifelong learning is a mindset that recognizes the rapid pace of change and the necessity to stay current in a constantly evolving world. It empowers individuals to maintain relevant skills, deepen their expertise, and remain adaptable amid shifting job requirements and technological advancements.

Furthermore, lifelong learning extends beyond professional growth to encompass personal development as well. It enables individuals to pursue their passions, explore new interests, and expand their horizons. By continuously acquiring knowledge, skills and competences, students can lead more fulfilling lives and make meaningful contributions to society.

Thus, lifelong learning is a crucial driver of professional growth. By embracing learning opportunities, individual students can broaden their knowledge, acquire new skills, and stay ahead in their field. It boosts problem-solving abilities, critical thinking, and creativity—traits that are highly sought in the workplace.



### **Methods:**

- Highlight the importance of applying continuous learning activities: Encourage students to understand that gaining silent knowledge is a continuous process that develops with experience. It will foster a mindset of lifelong learning and adaptability throughout their careers.
- Adjust training to include and reflect industry changes: Ensure VET programs remain in sync with the latest industry developments and practices. As industries evolve, so does the silent knowledge, necessitating regular updates to training content and methods.

Incorporating silent knowledge into VET programs provides learners with a richer, more practical understanding of their future roles. This approach better prepares them to navigate real-world challenges, make intuitive decisions, and thrive in complex, dynamic environments.