

BETWEEN SCHOOL AND WORK, A VIRTUAL COMPAGNY

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Keywords: *Virtual firm, European students, technological watch, internet communication*

Abstract : *The ELFE project is a cooperative effort uniting the distance learning experience of universities and companies of five European countries (F, UK, S, G, Li). Creation of a prototype of virtual company on a internet web site in order to reinforce links between the material taught and its use in the business world and to initiate students to the use of latest communication technology to define and manage a project*

The Project ELFE

This project, called ELFE, is a cooperative effort uniting the experience of universities and companies in bridging the gap between universities and companies, from five European countries (Greece, France, Lithuania, Sweden, United Kingdom). This partnership meets the needs of the job market by addressing the rapidly evolving technology of computer systems in the work place. It infuses a new dimension in the relationship between traditional education at school and training in company.

The primary needs that the project identifies and addresses are :

- Making computer network literate individuals available for small and medium sized firms.
- Use of GroupWare programs to allow for work on projects, in common, through the network.
- Working knowledge of database and internet interface, company activity and operating habits of the five European partner countries

ELFE is built around the following key points :

- simulate the essential functions of a company to better prepare students for future work,

- give students key skills from cross section of a company needs (project management, communication and networking programs, human resources management, marketing...) to increase their employability and their ability to adapt to a changing workplace
- built a network between European university and companies around flexibility of the groups and work and learning from a distance
- use information/communication system technology to enlarge the process renewing the information database and by making it available to all the different actors ; students, teachers, trainers consultants.

The company ELFE is prepared by students, supervised by tutors, with market studies, financial reports and business plan. The documents and coursework produced are in English and are placed in the knowledge database on the website.

- After the students have finished their work, the consultants and the teachers will secure and consolidate the information destined for the knowledge database.

Results :

- Simulated the day functioning of a company and realities, in order to create closer links between the material taught and its use in the business world
- Initiate students to the use of internet, intra and extranets and latest communication technology to define and manage a project
- Teach the meaning and functions of the mentoring system and how to realize a project from a distance.