

Minutes of the national INNOMET seminar in Sweden 2004- 09-30

By Mattias Larsson, KTH

Place: KTH, Brinellvägen 68, 100 44 Stockholm

Date: September 30 2004

Participants: The meeting gathered participants representing a wide selection of the Swedish industry, educational sector and support organisations including people related to:

- Swedish Metal Workers Union
- Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences
- Umeå University
- The Knowledge Foundation
- The Association of Swedish Engineering Industries
- Confederation of Swedish Enterprise
- Scania AB
- Engineering Institute
- CompetenceShift
- The Royal Institute of Technology

The agenda was as follows

08:45 – 09:00	Gathering and coffee
09:00 – 09:10	Introduction and presentation of the participants
09:10 – 09:45	Overall presentation of the INNOMET project and the INNOMET concept
09:45 – 10:30	Demonstration of the INNOMET application and time for individual testing of the system.
10:30 – 10:45	Coffee break
10:45 – 11:30	Common discussion concerning the INNOMET approach, and time for questions and feedback

09:10 – 09:45 Overall presentation of the INNOMET project and the INNOMET concept

Following the introduction of each participant Prof. Torsten Kjellberg, coordinator of the INNOMET project in Sweden, presented the INNOMET concept in general, achieved results and conclusions so far.

09:45 – 10:30 Demonstration of the INNOMET application and time for individual testing of the system.

After the introductory presentation of the INNOMET project Mr Mattias Larsson, researcher and responsible for much of the INNOMET work in Sweden, gave a thorough presentation and live demo of the IPS, its main features and core functionality.

The presentation followed an example scenario “requirement based course development” given (cf. Figure 1 below) using the IPS and its main tool.

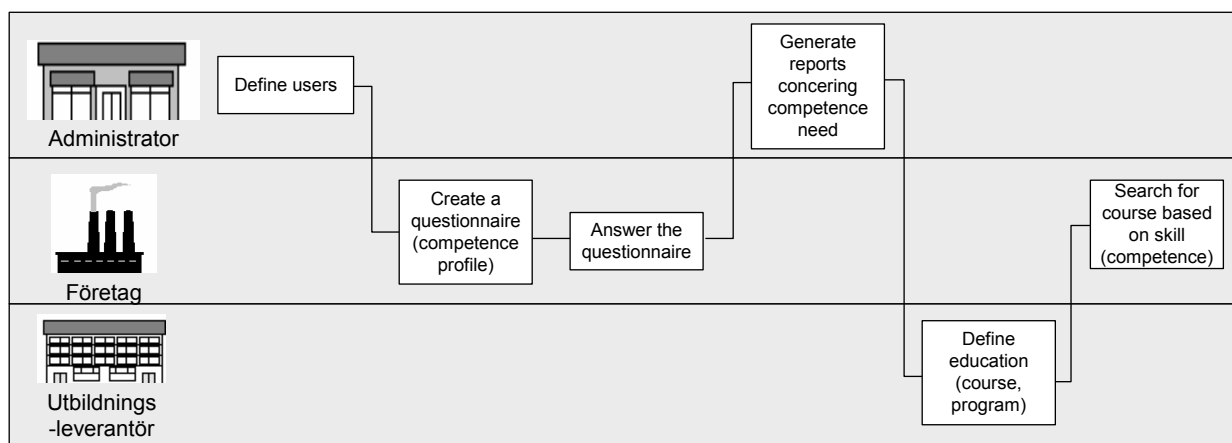


Figure 1: Example scenario

During the presentation a number of clarifying questions were raised.

10:45 – 11:30 Common discussion concerning the INNOMET approach, and time for questions and feedback

Following the opening presentations it was time for questions and feedback from each participant. During this round table discussion each participant was asked whether they agree on the INNOMET concept and if the IPS could be a useful tool given their needs. This triggered a lively discussion not only about INNOMET but also about competence management and the integration between enterprises (demand) and educational institutions (supplier) in general.

- Mr Tommy Ullberg from the Swedish Metal Workers Union was very positive in his feedback and thought that the INNOMET project really addressed an important matter. He also wanted to collaborate and participate in any future development of INNOMET in Sweden.

Mr Ullberg addressed an important issue related to the utilization of tools like the INNOMET Prototype Solution. According to him the IPS could never work as a standalone application decoupled from the competence development process within a company. And hence, before starting to work with the IPS in any company the first thing to do is to specify how to utilize the system. He suggested that one should use the IPS during the regular competence development conversation with the employees and sit down together, in a group or on an individual level, and fill in the IPS questionnaire. By doing so, he reasoned, one could assure that the IPS was really going to be utilized.

- Docent Ann Kjellberg (CompanyShift) with a very long experience of this type of issues continued on the same topic as Mr Ullberg.

According to Docent Kjellberg the IPS could be used as a part of the competence work the company. She sketched on a competence cycle (cf. figure 2 below) starting with the business plan – vision – strategy work of the company which should precede any other work. Given this analyze it is possible to determine the vision and strategies related to competence issues, identifying the competence gaps, arranging personnel discussion and finally fill the competence gap.



Figure 2: The competence cycle (Ann Kjellberg, CompetenceShift)

During Docent Kjellbergs discussion it was also suggested that maybe small and medium sized companies need a mentor in order to be able to work more professionally on these matters.

- Mr Stellan Hallin, head of and responsible for competence development at Scania AB was also very positive in his feedback following the presentations. He wanted to keep in contact also after the project ends.
- Mr Sverker Johansson from Umeå University was more interested in the educational part of the IPS and was glad to be invited to the seminar which addressed some of the topics he was working on at the moment. That is, how to modularize courses and structure the course descriptions in a more formal way (allowing systems like the IPS to be built).

Mr Johansson asked for some broker functions in the system allowing the system itself to make suggestions for you in a more automatic way. Mr Larsson added that this could be a very interesting thing to do in future development of the system.

- Mrs Anne Algers and Mr Niklas Billström from SLU were very interested in the system because they are involved in another competence project (competence inventory) financed by the Swedish Knowledge foundation and have many questions concerning the functionality of the system, how the INNOMET concept tackled their questions etc. They will continue their market survey identifying different systems on the market with somewhat similar functionality to the IPS.

Mr Billström also wanted some broker functions or “frontdesk” as Mrs Algers added but for a slightly different purpose than the one Mr Johansson addressed (more on the competence development part that Mr Ullberg and Mrs Kjellberg spoke about). This raised a discussion whether this wouldn't be to interfere too much with peoples work and Mr Larsson added that for a system to be successful and utilized it must be very narrow in its scope and built only for one purpose. There are already systems on the market which are much more advanced for competence management support issues such as SAP and the IPS should not interfere with them. Hence, the IPS should tackle the problem of communication between enterprises (demand) and educational institutions (delivery) with organisations such as certifying authorities assuring quality, which everyone agreed on.

Following the final section of the meeting Mr Kjellberg and Mr Larsson thanked everyone for their feedback and that they could participate in the meeting.