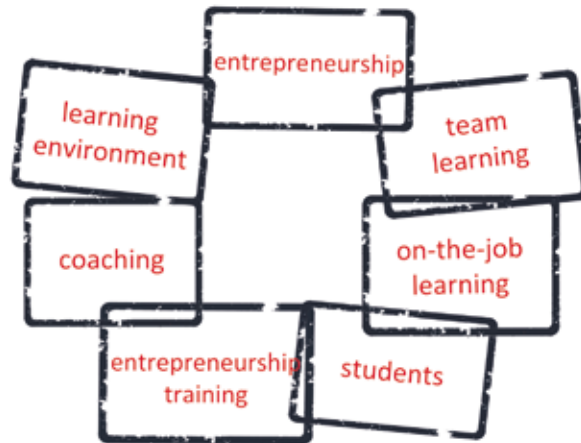




Most professional and vocational programmes include a period of on-the-job learning. TOY (Entrepreneurial On-the-job Learning) is one way of completing it. Ordinarily, students do their on-the-job learning at an employer's workplace, but in this model they complete this aspect of their studies in a cooperative society, where they develop their entrepreneurial skills.

In the TOY model, entrepreneurship is learnt by doing. The TOY programme nurtures the students' entrepreneurial attitudes and prepares them for running a business in their own fields. The most valuable experiences they obtain from learning with their peers in a TOY team.

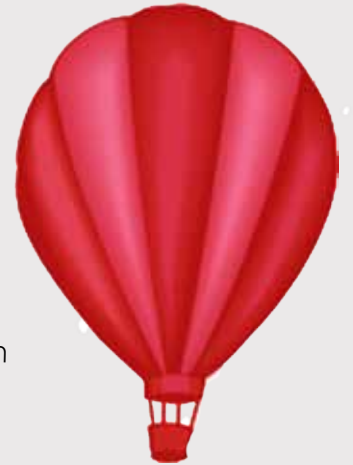
### Elements of the TOY model:

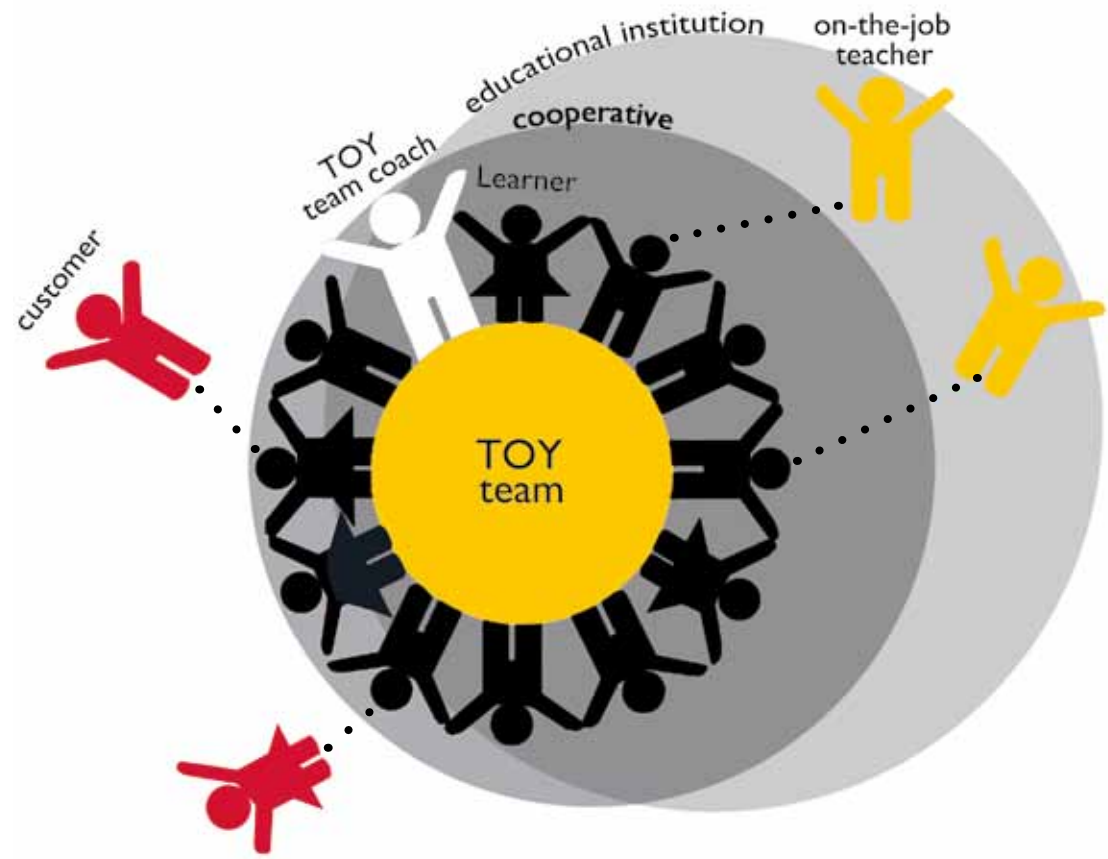


All of these elements are needed for the TOY model to succeed. Each of them is described further in this brochure through the experiences and stories of various educational institutions.

### VALUES

- Learning together
- Freedom and responsibility for one's own learning
- Learning by doing
- Individual growth of courage
- Integration of entrepreneurship and profession-specific learning





- 1.**  
A TOY team is composed of learners who learn together and from each other.
- 2.**  
A TOY coach supports and spurs on the team in its entrepreneurship training during the on-the-job learning period.
- 3.**  
There is a direct connection between the customer and the learner. The customer is the most important teacher.
- 4.**  
The on-the-job teacher is in charge of ensuring professional learning takes place, just as in other job learning processes.
- 5.**  
The cooperative functions as the location and environment for the on-the-job learning and allows for real billing.



ENTREPRENEURIAL ON-THE-JOB LEARNING

In the TOY model, the learners develop their entrepreneurship skills during the on-the-job learning period. They acquire customers for whom they complete assignments and to whom they answer directly as regards the work. Working together, they have the courage to take on larger projects.

Abilities developed by the learners during the TOY period:



The dog got her panties.

AINOO design was born on a TOY programme

Oona Hedenius, who studies at Tavastia, created AINOO design during her TOY studies. As part of running the company she created product collections, started a blog to sell them, and placed her products for sale at gift and interior design shops.

The TOY programme was related to Oona's studies to be an interior seamstress. She completed a competence-based Vocational Qualification in Textiles and Clothing, during which she designed and made products such as curtains. The largest job was a theatre curtain made as a team effort with a fellow student.

"I was also creating my own collection out of furnishing fabrics and products, and making interior and textile designs. I made a collection of dog clothes, including diaper panties and cooling shirts."

After graduating as an interior seamstress, Oona went on to take a Further Qualification in Interior Design, where she will also use the TOY model for on-the-job learning.

For Oona the most important aspect of TOY was the opportunity to join a cooperative, because it made it possible to run a business with actual monetary transactions.

"The TOY programme gave me good experience of the business world. I became even more convinced of wanting to work independently once I finish my studies," she says.





## TEAM LEARNING

The TOY entrepreneurship training brings learners together into teams, in which they share thoughts and experiences through dialogue. In the team, the learners consciously seek assistance from each other to learn new things. A team works well when each member bears responsibility and contributes to the shared learning process. Team learning generates entrepreneurship most effectively when the learners work together on practical projects.



## Loimaa believes in multidisciplinary teams

Two pilot TOY teams have so far operated at Loimaa Vocational and Adult College. Their experiences indicate that it is beneficial to use multidisciplinary teams. When the TOY team includes learners from diverse fields, they bring up different viewpoints and opinions.

*"In their feedback, our TOY team members have praised the model for being an extremely encouraging and inspiring way to learn about entrepreneurship. They have also complimented the team for carrying them through the training," says team coach Tarja Moisio-Rannikko.*

*The very first team had students from hairdressing, media, textiles and clothing working together to solve some of the challenges of entrepreneurship. There was a good age range, from 17 to 50 years of age.*

*"The older students brought experience and perspective to the team. The younger team members, conversely, had no inhibitions, and encouraged us older people rethink things," says coach Satu Railo.*

*The graphic design field, for example, has already seen how TOY can open new job opportunities. One student is making a comic for an American client, and another found employment at Loimaan Lehti newspaper. They identified their core competences during the programme and were able to commercialise them.*

*For the TOY entrepreneurship training the students join the cooperative society Kukapa.*

*"We challenge the students to be entrepreneurial and to employ themselves. They don't all have to end up running a business, but they must have that entrepreneurial perspective in order to find employment in the future."*

*The TOY model is being rolled out from Loimaa to the other units of the Municipal Education and Training Consortium in Southwestern Finland – the Lieto Vocational and Adult College and Novida in Uusikaupunki.*

*New team coaches are partnered with ones who have already piloted the TOY model. Together they organise the information sessions and train the teams.*

# ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The TOY programme offers an opportunity to try out entrepreneurship in practice. It allows students to test and develop their own products and services. It gives them time to consider what they can do, what they want to do and what they might make money from. Students can also probe the market and competitive scenario in their fields and figure out how to price their products. Trying to run a business without any customers is just a game; customers make the learning genuine. TOY encourages students to make their competence known and to seize opportunities. It develops their ability to market their competence, their social skills and their networking. In the TOY model, the learners join cooperative societies set up in their colleges. Working in these turns their ideas into reality and experience.



## Ostrobothnia treasures its cooperative

The Pappilantie unit of Vocational Education Centre Sedu in Ilmajoki now offers a completely different level of entrepreneurship studies than before. Coming to the college in the morning, students start carrying out customer work as entrepreneurs, and learn while doing it. Teachers provide background support and ensure that the curriculum and necessary evaluations are fulfilled.

All furniture restoration work commissioned by customers is given directly to the cooperative society established within the college, and the students complete the work under its auspices. They receive jobs from the customers, agree the schedules and look after the whole process, including billing.

"In just one year the cooperative has become such an essential part of our ordinary entrepreneurial operations that we cannot imagine giving it up," explains team coach Jorma Sahlberg in relation to the significance of the cooperative for Culture studies at Sedu.

Pohjanmaa Artisans Cooperative is already well known in the region, and its members are starting to receive orders directly. The venture also organically generates team entrepreneurship when several students contribute their competence to a single job.

The cooperative operates all year round, allowing students to study and earn money during the summer vacation period.

"Those who come just to conduct their own business operations in summer do pay rent to the college to cover costs. Those working within the TOY programme don't have to pay," says Aleksi Riikonen, President of the cooperative society.



TOY ENTREPRENEURSHIP COACHING

During the on-the-job learning period, the TOY team get together for joint entrepreneurship training sessions. The one-day sessions are themed and make use of tools and methods that support team learning. The content of the sessions is determined based on the issues that the learners bring to the table. With the training sessions taking place during the on-the-job learning period, the sessions can cover questions that have come up in the students' customer projects through themes related to the entrepreneurship topic. Alternating between practical work and joint deliberation deepens learning and understanding.

THEMES OF THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING:

- Team learning and its objectives
- Customer-oriented thinking and networking
- Productisation
- Self-management and friend leadership
- Creativity and marketing
- Identifying product selections and customer relationships
- Outlining a business idea and growing to be an entrepreneur

• • • • • The TOY model was developed at the Ikaalinen College of Crafts and Design (IKATA). The college comprises the cooperative society Taidosto, which has been implementing the model since 2008. IKATA also manages the HOPE project, which provided the funding for piloting and developing the model. • • • • •

In the TOY team, students can share ideas and receive support in their development as entrepreneurs. At the same time their courage and enthusiasm grow. The starting point for the training is that no one will be left alone with their ideas when developing their business. This is why participation in the joint training days is compulsory.

"It is important to be in touch with the others and to make one's competence known. Even when we all have a lot to do and although time is money, studies must always include brainwork," says team coach Terhi Leppä from IKATA.

Tara Niemiö, who is studying graphic design at IKATA, considers the training days extremely important and also really fun. Exchanging opinions and experiences is the best kind of learning.

"The sparring we do here is great, we lead each other onwards. The others ask perceptive questions and immediately understand what the problem is for each person. Terhi is a super team coach, who knows how to leave room for discussion."

Another bonus is that the multidisciplinary teams bring completely different people together. The TOY model continues operating through the training days.

"The team includes many students who have a clear plan and a lot of experience. I find myself being influenced by them and thinking more about my own actions, too."





## TEAM COACHING

Each TOY team has its own team coach or pair of team coaches, who broaden the students' perspectives and encourage them to take steps towards their dreams. The team coaches are vocational teachers well versed in team learning and in coaching team-based entrepreneurship. They challenge and spur on the learners to experiment boldly. They do not provide ready-made answers, but ask questions to fuel the students' own thoughts. They encourage students to seek information and apply it in practice.

It is important for the team coach to "read" the team and the individual learners to respond correctly to their learning needs and to decide how to apply the team learning methods. The entrepreneurship training sessions are not lectures, even though they contain theory related to the topic.



*Euro signs in their eyes.*

## Supporting the students' growth as entrepreneurs

"If you attend the TOY entrepreneurship training, you can find employment for the summer through the cooperative," said TOY team coach Päivi Lehto to encourage students at the Tyrvää College of Crafts and Design to join the college's third TOY team.

In coaching TOY students, Päivi makes use of the Team Academy methods she learnt in the HOPE training.

"We start concretely by drawing the rocket model for generating team entrepreneurship developed by Team Academy founder Johannes Partanen, and then we see how growth into entrepreneurs might take place through it. The most important thing is to develop both intrapreneurship and extrapreneurship," Päivi approaches the topic of leadership for example, by encouraging students to consider concrete examples of how to get oneself going when it feels difficult to get started.

Päivi's approach is not teaching but coaching, which can initially be confusing for students. Eventually her monologue turns into dialogue with the students.

The content of the training sessions is largely dependent on what the students need at each time. When specific team members have something on their minds, the team works together to figure out the best approach.

Päivi markets TOY to the students as a programme that will help their individual development while also being rather fun. Even though it is entrepreneurship education, it is not about memorising different company formats.

Students learn the things that affect them closely enough. When they work as entrepreneurs in the cooperative, they begin to look forward to billing, having euro signs in their eyes. That encourages them to look actively for the information they need. Some come up to me asking me to demonstrate something they've read in their economics textbook."





# PERSONAL MASTERY

The TOY entrepreneurship training provides challenges for the students' thinking and attitudes. During the coaching they look for directions their actions might take and begin to build their professional identities. They receive practical experience through genuine projects for customers. This gives them courage and the nerve to work in their own fields, obtaining more customers and building networks.



# Big steps towards entrepreneurship

Tuija Niinistö, who is studying for a Vocational Qualification in Crafts and Design specialising in Textiles at Sataedu in Nakkila, envisions herself working as an independent craftsperson. The TOY training has made this vision even clearer and taken Tuija many steps closer to its fulfilment.

"Through the TOY programme I joined the Satapro Cooperative Society and obtained the auxiliary company name Castle & Case. Within it I can now conduct business operations." TOY has given Tuija time to focus on design and product development. Now she is brimming with ideas.

Tuija's products are made of printed linen. She already has two collections, Crab and Lily, which include many kinds of products, from serviettes and table runners to tablecloths and curtains. She is now developing a maritime collection. In addition these linen products she makes items from recycled materials. Her friends already know to keep hold of old neckties, recycled glass jars and cat and dog food tins for her.

"I have this idea for reusing cans and jars. It's going to be great!" Tuija says, with a smile. The jars will be combined with willow, a material she first came into contact with during the TOY programme. The end products can be used for example to plant a hyacinth, and this idea inspired her to be in touch with a flower farm.

"One of the best things about TOY has been networking. Geographically, my workshop forms a triangle together with a willow farm and a flower farm. When the willow farm holds a weaving course, the students visit the flower farm. In future they could also visit my workshop. And each entrepreneur supports the other's products."

The TOY programme has facilitated many of the stepping stones on Tuija's path towards entrepreneurship. For example, it allowed her to find suitable woven product labels and to have business cards made.

"The support from the team is also wonderful. In such a small team you have close contacts and we have the courage to evaluate each other's work and actions honestly. Another great thing was being able to rent a workspace and equipment from the college."



## LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

A TOY team needs its own home base. A pleasant learning environment makes the joint training days enjoyable and this encourages team members to meet at other times, too. The physical and mental learning environment has much more significance than people generally think. When students enter a classroom they feel as if they were coming to school. A well-functioning team workspace, on the other hand, inspires them to work together and conduct dialogue.



## An inspiring environment nurtures team learning

The TOY team at Jyväskylä Institute of Adult Education meets at the Seppä Business Shop, where JA-YE entrepreneurs also work running a beauty and hairdressing salon. Students of the Vocational Qualification in Business Information Technology are there, carrying out their on-the-job learning.

The colourful and inspiring space encourages learners from various fields to exchange ideas and do things together. Team coach Satu Mursula is busy working with the students and cannot hide her satisfaction.

“This is exactly what we were aiming for. The space was created to nurture shared activity – team learning and team entrepreneurship.”

The Business Forge, built as an annex to the Jyväskylä Institute of Adult Education in spring 2011, also provides excellent headquarters for the Taitola Cooperative Society, which was established at around the same time. Working in the same space as other people gives wings to ideas and generates development schemes. Having coaching boosts this process further.

“Shared doing is important. Cooperatives will be a trendy form of doing business in the future, although many are still wary of it now. We should have the courage to trust young people and give them responsibility,” Satu says.

Heidi Sinervä, who is studying Textiles, reckons the TOY team is like a workplace community, in which each colleague can ponder issues related to his or her own business and products.

“This is exactly what I’ve been yearning for when I’ve worked by myself. We have a great team spirit here, which allows us to discuss things openly and consider entrepreneurship from various angles.”





### Keikkailu book supports students in Salo

TOY entrepreneurship training at the Salo Region Vocational College makes use of the book **Keikkailu** ("Gigging"), whose themes support the growth of students' entrepreneurial identities.

Temping can clarify students' visions, help them share their ideas, promote their networking, demonstrate team learning and allow them to try out running a business – that is, it has everything in common with the TOY programme.

"The book helps you to organise your thoughts and find your own paths, because it has clear, ready-made questions," says Interior Textiles student Suvi Vainio.

The book provides tools for use as a basis at TOY coaching sessions.

"For example, we approach product development through the book's 'Five Whys' tool [originally from **The Toyota Way** by Jeffrey K. Liker]. It directs students to answer why they do things, why they act in certain ways and not others, and so on," says TOY coach Marja-Liisa Hirvonen.

There is also a network identification tool in which learners draw a mind map of their networks. They start by identifying the competence that exists in their families and close friends to see what kinds of help they can receive from their own networks. They also seek customer contacts for their first jobs within these networks, as they will lower the threshold for sales work.

At the Salo Region Vocational College, TOY forms part of a more extensive entrepreneurship training programme. Of the ten-credit programme, seven credits are completed in the TOY module. The training includes one four-hour meeting each week.







## TOY forms part of entrepreneurship model at PIRKO

Students at the Pirkanmaa Educational Consortium (PIRKO) can choose from diverse paths to take in their journey towards entrepreneurship. One of the new models is TOY, which allows for growth of entrepreneurship in a team.

"In the TOY model, students network outside of the college and get their foot in the door of employment," explains one of the developers of the model, Soili Ykspetäjä.

The first experiences of TOY at PIRKO came from the Lempäälä unit, and as they were so positive the model is being rolled out to Virrat.

An excellent example at Lempäälä was set by Carpentry student Anne Turtinen, who used the TOY programme to expand her expertise into metals and textiles. At the same time she further refined her business idea and soon established a company producing products out of recycled materials.

"Broader and broader competence is needed these days to cope in the labour market. Anne's example shows that TOY can be a great answer to this need," Soili says.

The learners at the Virrat unit will join a cooperative society during the spring of their first year of studies, in order to complete a certain number of customer projects and to obtain basic experience.

TOY entrepreneurship training is being planned as a follow-on from this. TOY is attractive because it allows students to plan and obtain their own customer projects, which can be as ambitious and exciting as they want, and will bring them professional expertise as well as income.





## How TOY team coaching started at Evo

The Evo forestry training unit in Hämeenlinna is an apt example of the revolution in entrepreneurship learning can grow from a small shoot into a vine of enthusiasm that reaches to all aspects of teaching and all corners of the education unit.

The idea of creating a new kind of learning environment had long been brewing at Evo. The Evo Forest Cooperative was established in March 2011. That same spring, it collaborated with Team Academy Adult Education to start the Liekki training programme, which will enhance utilisation of the cooperative and help tune teachers into the new kind of entrepreneurship training.

At the same time the programme's first two teachers, Eveliina Ikonen and Terhi Muuttola, went off to take the eighteen-month HOPE Team Mastery coaching programme. It included a visit to the Team Academy in Jyväskylä, which greatly impressed them.

The next step at Evo was to organise the Kipinä ("Spark") event, whose aim was to involve students in accelerating changes, planning the teaching and taking the reins in learning.

A TOY team will start at Evo as a natural continuation of these developments. Students can choose the TOY coaching as one of their optional vocational courses.

The question now being considered at Evo is whether it is enough to be able to complete some studies within the cooperative, or whether it should allow for all studies.







## Institutions currently using and developing the TOY model:



Hämeenlinna Region Municipal Education and Training Consortium



Municipal Education and Training Consortium in Southwestern Finland



Seinäjoki Joint Municipal Authority for Education



West Pirkanmaa Consortium of Education



Sastamala Municipal Education and Training Consortium



Satakunta Educational Federation



Jyväskylä Educational Consortium



Salo Region Education Federation of Municipalities



Pirkanmaa Educational Consortium



Häme Vocational Institute



Tiimiakatemia Learning Network



*You are welcome to join our network!*



