

An alternative pathway for the professionalisation of adult educators through RPL

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Story of a blacksmith


AN INTRO

ADULT EDUCATOR

Adult educators are in a unique position, as they have acquired a speciality in the course of their studies, but often lack formal preparation and initial training to teach adults (Jarvis, 2004; Karm, 2007, Jõgi, Gross 2009).

There is no clear pattern. An educator's initial education, professional experience and career development are unique.

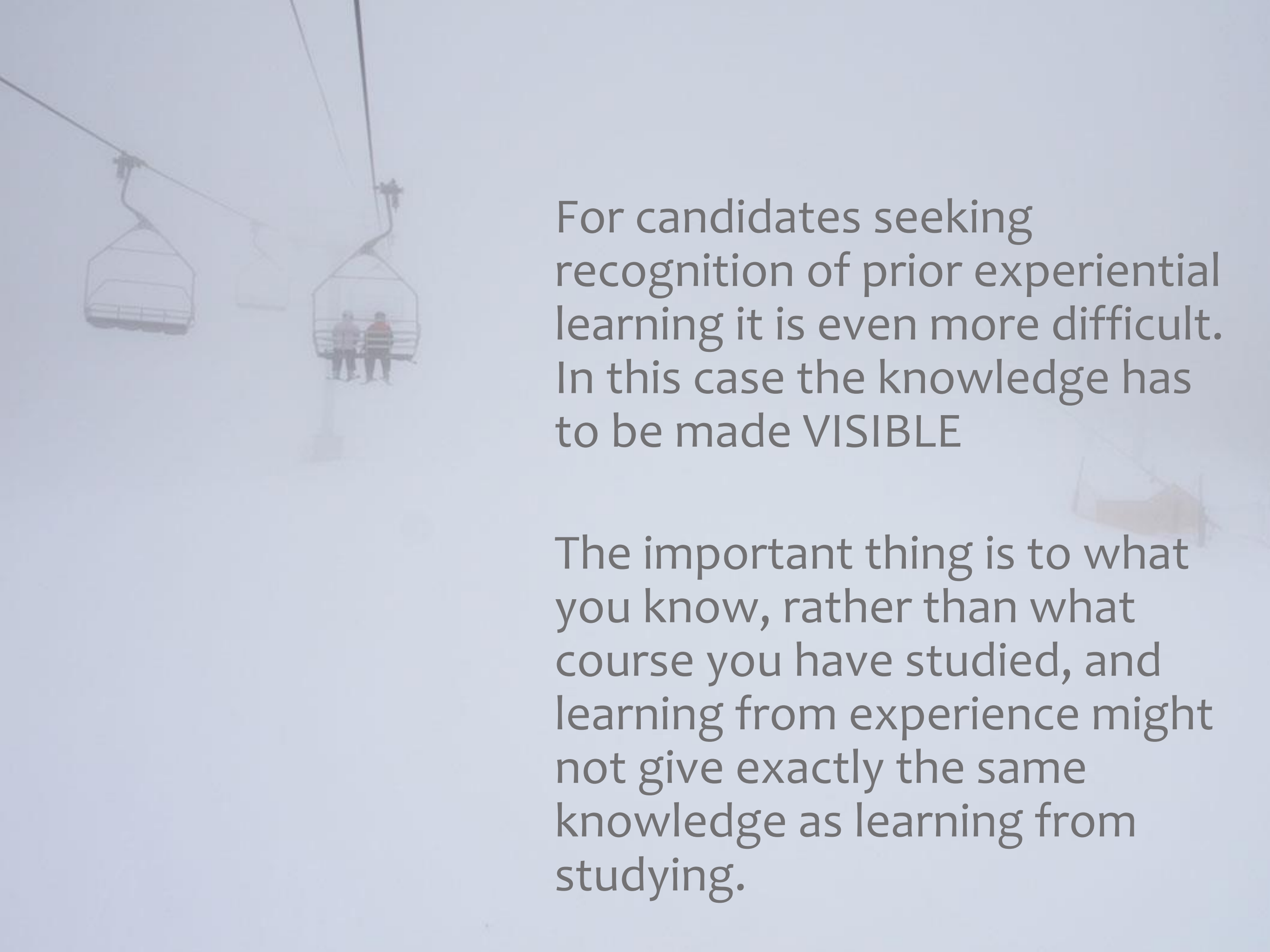
Becoming an adult educator is more a case of using possibilities and suppositions as we come across them than a conscious and planned process.



The REAL project toolkit will enable adult educators who do not hold professional level qualifications to level their experiential and accredited learning against their national qualifications framework.

Recognition of Prior Learning

- The purpose of RPL is to make visible the entire scope of knowledge and experience held by an individual, irrespective of the context where the learning originally took place.
- Prior experiential learning can be acquired formally, non-formally or informally.
- RPL represents a move to accept that learning is not dependent upon any particular formal setting, and to acknowledge it as being of VALUE in its own right.



For candidates seeking recognition of prior experiential learning it is even more difficult. In this case the knowledge has to be made **VISIBLE**

The important thing is to what you know, rather than what course you have studied, and learning from experience might not give exactly the same knowledge as learning from studying.

AIM OF RPL

- **Social justice**
 - Individual opportunities, widening access to education
- **Economic development and labor market**
 - Using existing competencies more effectively
- **Social change**
 - Making the competence of the population visible

(Andersson 2003)

RPL ADAPTED TO THE SYSTEM

- Focuses on the demands of the educational system or the labor market
- Individuals competencies are measured and assessed according to the prescribed criteria that determine which specific competence and knowledge are useful
- Knowledge and competencies are regarded as products or goods
- the individuals whose competence satisfies formal demands are the only group that can take advantage of this kind of RPL

- The power of recognizing knowledge rests with the institutions.
- In order for learning to be recognized by the formal institutions it must be presented according to norms and regulations laid down by the institution.
- RPL could become a powerful tool of **control** and **exclusion** as applicant has to learn RPL discourse rather than RPL being something that recognizes what they already know.

RPL CHANGING THE SYSTEM

- All knowledge is valuable in itself and therefore the individual's knowledge and competence could be accepted, even if the formal merits are lacking
- Untraditional groups enter the system as a result of RPL. These groups gain access to the system not just because their competence meets the demands of the system but because the system recognizes the individuals' experience and competence on their own merits
- The individuals enter the system with their knowledge, experiences and perspectives, they are able to bring about changes in the system from inside.

REAL toolkit will empower the adult educator and make a change to the power relationships which currently favour the receiving institution and tend to work against both the applicant and the whole ethos of RPL.

The process of RPL needs to be a learning process that enables the adult educator to become aware of his/her competencies and reflect upon them.

An adult educator is in charge of the process and of the outcome!

- 1. Personal Details
- 2. SCQF Characteristics
- 3. Problem Solving
- 4. Mentor Details
- 5. Results

Characteristics

- Characteristic 1: Knowledge and Understanding **X**
- Characteristic 2: Practice: Applied Knowledge, Skills and Understanding **X**
- Characteristic 3: Generic Cognitive Skills **X**
- Characteristic 4: Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills **X**
- Characteristic 5: Autonomy, Accountability and Working With Others **X**

Characteristic 1: Knowledge and Understanding

Conferences

I prepare and deliver papers at national conferences

Evidence to support claim

Hours per annum spent on these activities

Length of time in this role

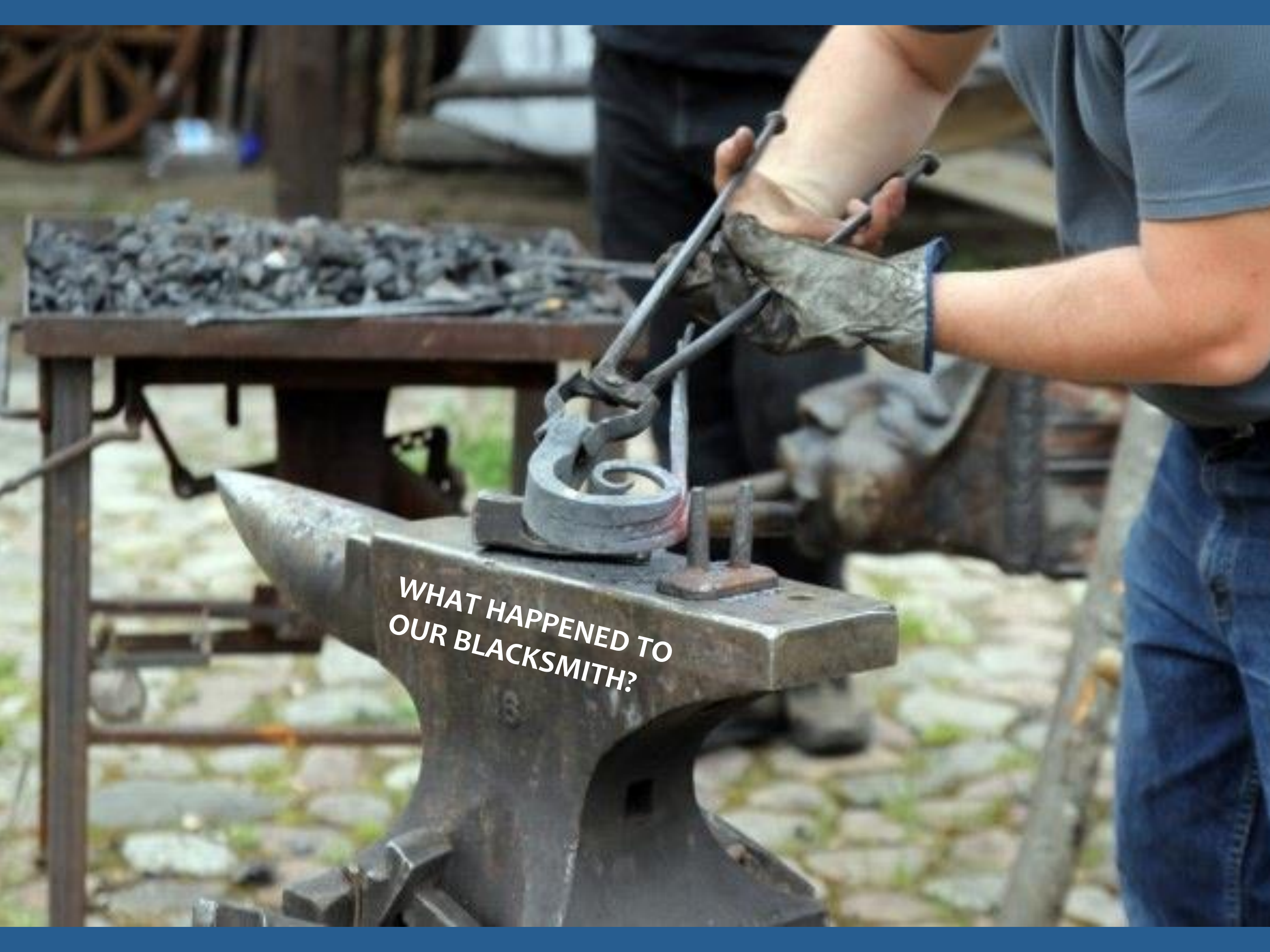
Delivering Learning/Teaching

I develop and deliver adult learning programmes and

Reflective Exercise

As part of this exercise please choose part of your practice from this section, and through critical reflection, highlight an area of this practice that you could enhance and detail how you would do this. (Min of 200 /max of 500 words)





**WHAT HAPPENED TO
OUR BLACKSMITH?**