# Learning Diary

An important part of learning is writing down the findings, experiences, ideas, and other thoughts during the course in a so-called learning diary. A learning diary thus supports your continuous evaluation and personal growth and it helps you to recognize your strengths and weaknesses during learning. You can repeat those successful moments that have been written down in "good days". It also encourages you to try again or to avoid the mistakes of your "bad days". Learning is more systematic when you follow your progress by using a learning diary.

There are many other positive things in a learning diary. It supports self-evaluation and self-reflection. It gives information about the progress of the studies and hopefully encourages and motivates you. It also helps to clarify abstract things and theories. In a learning diary you can evaluate systematically, what you have or have not learned, and what you should learn and study more. The way of learning is connected to learning skills. With a learning diary, you can see your way of learning as a process. Through thinking about the way you study - and what other ways you could use as well - and writing down your results, you will have a chance to evaluate and implement your learning.

You can instantly write down your thoughts and feelings during the lessons. You should make notes at least once a week. The stories can be long, but it is also enough if you write down just a couple of your thoughts. You only need to spend 10-30 minutes on the diary every week.

Remember: you write for yourself, not for the teacher! The teacher reads your learning diary for two basic reasons: firstly, the teacher needs to know what your goals for the course are, what previous experiences you have, what problems you encounter, how you solve them; and finally, how well you meet your personal goals. This information helps the teacher to adapt the course according to your needs.

You should also write down suggestions on how to improve the course. The teacher does not want to make the same mistakes again . If the learning diary is evaluated, the evaluation focuses on whether you have expressed deep thoughts, original ideas of your own, and good arguments for the comments.

You can use this Word document as a template and freely remove or change anything here. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the teacher.

## At the beginning

### My personal goal and interest towards the topic

Write down your personal goal in this course - what are you really willing to learn? Please tell also which grade you would like to achieve, how much you are willing to work during the course, and how interested in the topic you are.

### My personal background and previous knowledge

What do you know about the topic previously? You can draw a mind-map or just explain what you think the most important issues related to the topic are, and how those issues relate to each other. Define the basic terms in your own words and compare them to those expressed during the course.

### My own challenge / project work

Start thinking about the problem you want to solve during the course. Write here both the description of the problem and the alternative solutions.

Discuss with your classmates if there is anybody who wants to solve the same problem. Form a group, change your contact information, and agree upon the times that suit all group members.

## [For every lesson, write the name of the lesson (title) and the date]

Write in your own words what the contents, the most important issues, and the goals of the day's lesson were. What would you like to learn more? What things were confusing or what did you not understand? Did you get any new ideas? What did you actually learn? Can you apply it to your own project work?

You do not have to attend a lesson if you think you already know the issue. In case you have previous experiences about the day's topic, write them here.

## Final comments

At the end of the course, evaluate how well you achieved your goals. Summarise the main problems and tell how you solved them. Tell also how you would improve your learning next time. Please give an honest grade and good arguments for why you deserve it. Finally, mention at least three things that would help the teacher to improve the course and/or teaching next time.

With constructive regards,

Jouni

P.S. Change the properties of this document from the File menu. Save this document with a name, which identifies the course and yourself, e.g. TTOW0110\_Huotari.doc. In order to get feedback and to help me understand your needs and background, show an early version of this diary at the beginning of the course. Please return this diary at the end of the course.