Semester project for SIN/SSC/DS Bachelor/Master students

Reverse mentoring: converting expert knowledge to everyday practice

Martin Rajman
Martin.Rajman@epfl.ch

Project description:

The goal of this Master/Bachelor level semester project is to carry out a concrete reverse mentoring experiment during which the EPFL student (the “mentor student”) will be paired with an elderly (typically retired) professional (the “mentee”) selected by the partnering not-for-profit Connaissance 3 University (also known as “l’Université des seniors”) to provide the latter with a personalized training on a set of technological skills related to the ongoing digital transformation of Swiss society. Typical skills that may be considered are the ability to efficiently use, in different types of everyday professional situations, widespread digital technologies, such as Social Networks or other kinds of internet-based services (Doodle, Skype, MailChimp, Google Drive and related applications), and their connections with important concepts, such as data security, privacy preservation, or password management.

Concretely, the project will consist of three phases:

- **A preparatory phase** during which the mentor (student) will produce a survey aiming at identifying a “catalog of services”, i.e. a set of potentially interesting digital services, with, for each of them, one or several use case scenario(s) illustrating the relevance of the associated digital skills for better exploiting the assets of the ongoing digital transformation of our society; this phase should result in a report and a presentation to be validated by the two project supervisors (the EPFL supervisor and the Connaissance 3 supervisor) and then used as a basis for the subsequent mentoring phase;

- **A mentoring phase** during which the mentor (student) will concretely interact with the mentee in the form of several, face-to-face or remote meetings (typically from 3 to 6 meetings of 1h30 each). The objective of these meetings is that the mentor and the mentee collaboratively specify the concrete goals, content and timeline of the targeted mentoring, and then to carry out the mentoring experiment in the form of a bilateral exchange, where the mentor (student) providing her/his technical competence and the mentee her/his experience of the professional world;

- **An analysis phase** during which the mentor (student) will synthesize the main learnings resulting from the mentoring experiment; the main objective of this last phase is to exploit the lessons learned “in the field” to complement the “catalog of services” produced during the preparatory phase with a set of practical guidelines on how to successfully set up future, typically larger-scale, reverse mentoring experiments.

Proposed for: 1 Bachelor/Master student in Computer science, Communication systems or Data Science

**Connaissance 3 University**: Created in a perspective of continuous training after retirement, Connaissance 3 is the University of the Third Age (UTA) of the canton Vaud. It offers quality training accessible to everyone, and helps its participants to give meaning to their retirement years by enabling them to forge links with others and remaining informed and responsible citizens. Connaissance 3 relies on a volunteer force of about a hundred senior citizens who are active in the implementation of the
University's program (conferences, courses, cultural visits). Made by and for senior citizens, open to all, regardless of age or qualification, it is promoting social cohesion and intergenerational exchange.

For more information, see: www.connaissance3.ch.