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Facilitating interdisciplinary work : using quality assessment to create common ground

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Abstract

Newcomers often underestimate the challenges of interdisciplinary work and, as a rule, do not spend sufficient time to allow them to overcome differences and create common ground, which in turn leads to frustration, unresolved conflicts, and, in the worst case scenario, discontinued work. The key to successful collaboration is to facilitate the creation of a climate that will stimulate awareness of such challenges. Differing perceptions of quality and credibility among disciplines are major obstacles to successful collaboration. Some of these differences are incommensurably rooted in different epistemologies while other differences are more a question of culture. In the present paper, a framework is proposed which is designed to initiate a process necessary for success. First, the framework is designed to stimulate discussions about quality and credibility, and second it is designed to help separate epistemological differences from differences in culture. The framework takes its point of departure in five questions that deliberately include terms, such as 'sufficiently?', 'coherently?', and 'reliable?', which are unproblematic in a group with shared norms but become increasingly ambiguous as diversity increases. Experience suggest that pondering these questions, alone or in a group,

09.3.2025

stimulates reflection, leads to increased awareness of one's own perspective, and facilitates dialogue, collaboration, and creation of common ground. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Öberg, Gunilla,

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