



Nouveaux outils pour nouvelles compétences en formation par le travail

“New tools for new skills in work-based learning”



Recommendations and guidelines

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Erasmus+

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INTRODUCTION



1. Introduction

The work-based training (WBL) approach requires trainers to develop specific skills. Beyond the social dimension linked to a vulnerable target audience and the technical and economic constraints linked to the work itself, the trainers need to establish diversified and effective pedagogical relationships with differing groups and individuals in order to facilitate their acquisition of skills and knowledge as well as developing behaviours and attitudes that are appropriate for the performance of their work.

As part of the previous “Experience for Training” project, the skills profile of WBL trainers was classified into seven key activities. For each of the key activities, specific skills were defined (and their importance rated from “optional” to “core”). The **“New Tools FOR New Skills in Work-Based Learning” (NT4S) project set itself the goal of extending the reflection on the innovating learning tools to be developed as part of the work-based learning approach.** The idea was to start from the work-based learning (WBL) technical trainer’s skills checklist in order to support the latter in developing it into relevant and consistent tools.

The project is based on the meeting of trainers with a view to collecting and sharing the teaching aids developed by each of the partners. These tools were fed into a database of shared teaching resources into which they delved to select three for testing in their own training context. Finally, they worked together on adapting them to end up with three common tools that could be used by each of the five partners in differing cultural, organisational and technical contexts.

The initiative had three aims :

- To improve the existing tools in order to make them correspond more closely to the needs identified,
- Create new tools that were adapted to the needs identified,
- Share the adapted tools on a web platform for transfer between the actors involved.

The trainers selected three tools in particular:

- ✓ EVALUATION (bel),
- ✓ FOOD ADVISOR (it), renamed STAGE ADVISOR or JOB ADVISOR
- ✓ ARGUMENTS AGAINST DISCRIMINATION (bel)

The trainers chose them based on three main assessment criteria that emerged from the experimentations: the interactivity of the tool, ease of use (re-appropriation) and the capacity to prepare learners for employment. The sharing and adaptation phase took place during a training meeting of the trainers involved in the project. The aim was for each of the trainers who had a command of one or more training tools identified as good practice to be able to concretely share the way it is used, to improve its transferability.

At the end of the project, the tools were tested and assessed. After TWO years of work, the consortium of partners presents its recommendations and guidelines here.

These recommendations rest on the fruit of a collective and collaborative labour by the partners taking part in the project; they were formulated by “Convergences Emploi Cergy”.

PROJECT PARTNERS



2. Project Partners

The project brought together six partners from five different countries.



www.aid-com.be

(Be)



www.aspire-i.com

(UK)



<https://www.convergences-emploi.fr/>

(Fr)



www.csc-en-ligne.be

(Be)



www.scformazione.org

(It)



www.spi.pt

(Pt)

ASSESSMENT OF THE PRODUCTIONS



3. Assessment of the Productions

3.1. Assessment protocol

In September 2019, a survey was circulated to the trainers involved in the project, so that they could give an assessment of each of the tools in a specific manner and contribute to formalising potential avenues for work not carried out as part of the NT4S project.

The structure of the questions the trainers were asked was as follows:

- Relevance of the tool
- Trainees/interns' impressions
- Effects on the structure of the training scheme/course/programme
- Possibilities for improvement

3.2. Typology of the training contexts

Although the trainers involved in the project work in the field of work-based learning, they operate in differentiated training contexts. While the target audience catered for has the common feature of being removed from the world of employment, they could be people on social security benefits, disabled, people in a highly precarious situation or young people who are outside of the education system (NEET). Some are interns in training, others are employees in integration sites or workshops with adapted contracts. The variety of training contexts and among the learners for which the teaching tools were selected, adapted and then tested is a highly enriching aspect of the project's approach.

It should also be noted that the great majority of the training centres involved has a primary goal of social and vocational inclusion, i.e. to support individuals on their path to being able to exercise their full citizenship, including finding employment. Since these are audiences facing exclusion, the training programmes are part of a logic of integration pathways, i.e. one of the stages in a series of steps or sequences, which have been chosen and planned over time according to individual abilities and their personal environment, in order to attain the goal of lasting quality employment at the end.

“ASSESSMENT” TOOLS



4. “Assessment” tools

The “Assessment” tool consists in a sheet detailing the activities and skills in order to gain an objective oversight of the learner’s progress over time. The tool (which was reworked as part of the project) evolved towards greater simplification. Today, it enables learners to self-assess and to compare this assessment with that of the supervising trainer.

The more or less regular self-assessment helps attest to the learner’s progression and increase in skills over time. This tool enables the learner to better realise what they are learning and to identify the skills they are acquiring, as well as those that require further work.

4.1. Relevance of the tool

It comes as no surprise that one of the tools selected as part of the NT4S project is on the theme of assessment. Indeed, it is one of the necessary conditions for achieving the pedagogical goals in WBL. The previous “Experience for training” project had identified the skill “assessment” as one of the seven “key” skills that the WBL trainer needs to master. The reason for this is simple. In a classical learning setup, training is dispensed, then assessed. In WBL, training and assessment are two sides of the same pedagogical approach inasmuch as learning takes place in direct relation with the work situation. Both the acquisition of skills and their validation must be able to take place in a synchronous way.

The “Assessment” tool was trialled on with 40 young trainees and almost a hundred adults working in work-based learning or social integration enterprises. These were long-term unemployed adults removed from the labour market and with a low level of qualifications, disabled people, including minors. People in highly precarious situations, or young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). The interns also originated from training programmes in horticulture or were employees in a market gardening integration site.

According to the trainers, the “Assessment” tool is relevant, both to the training activity (100% of positive responses, of which 71% were “very relevant”). And for the production activity (85% of positive responses, of which 28% were “very relevant”).

The trainers confirm that they use it regularly in their training practices (85%) and that it meets the stated aims.

Both the substance (technical and transversal skills, comments) and the form (layout, pictograms) were reworked to arrive at a self-assessment sheet that could serve as supporting documents for interviews between the learners and trainers. In the end, the tool enables a rapid stock-take of the previous week or month to be carried out. The tool is seen as something the centre should make use of.

4.2. Trainees' impressions

The trainers consider the tool, to be particularly easy to use (71%), except for an audience that does not have a command of the country's language. It leads to positive interactions between the trainer and the learner (85%) and, to a lesser extent, between learners (57%). The tool also enables certain more sensitive subjects, such as relational behaviour and social or personal issues to be approached, and to calmly deal with certain problems. The tool requires some individual time, which has to be taken from training or production time.

It is fully effective on the condition that the supervision ratio of the learners is not too low. For the learners, the tool (approach) drew strong support (100% of positive responses, of which 57% were very positive) by opening a relatively relaxed space for dialogue. It seems close to the lived experience of training or production and contributes to the pedagogical and technical progression of the learners.

4.3. Effects on the structure of the training scheme

The trainers note that the "Assessment" tool has a significant effect on the practices for supervision of the learners (57% of significant or major effects), and on the tracking of the training programme (57% of significant or major effects). It significantly improves the trainers' knowledge of the learners (85% of significant effects), but its effect on the educational effectiveness and the outcomes of the training programme, whilst real, remains at this stage moderate and would probably require use over a longer period than the project's experimental phase.

4.4. Possibilities for improvement

In use, it creates the conditions for a privileged moment between learner and trainer. Nonetheless, it remains an individual assessment tool that requires being removed from the training and production process. The data collected over time have to be processed and analysed in the form of certificate of skills acquisition.

A possible lead for improvement would be to digitise the tool, linked to a database, in order to produce automated reports on intermediate and final progress. It would also appear that the simplification and use of pictograms have not entirely removed the difficulties in using the tool for people who do not have a command of the language the tool is in.

4.5. Transferability

The challenge and fundamental difficulty in work-based learning is to turn work situations into educational ones. The learner is also learning what s/he is putting into practice. This virtuous circle is only possible if the learning takes place in direct relation to the work situation. “The pedagogy of work-based learning thus considerably reduces the “transfer distance” by putting the learner in a situation where learning AND using the skills acquired happen simultaneously, with a direct link to real tasks”.

The issue of results is therefore a central one: work-based learning is, by definition, punctuated with moments of assessment. Firstly upstream, to position the learner in terms of the skills to be acquired, then at regular intervals to note progression, on the occasion of different moments of reflection (genuine self-assessment, which also has learning benefits) and then, finally, at the end of the learning journey to draw up a balance sheet.

In the “EFT” project, the exercise aimed at formalising a skills checklist for trainers very specifically identified four skills relating to the **assessment of the training course and of specific training activities**.

Activité clé 2: Participer à l'évaluation des actions de formation et des activités spécifiques de formation		
Compétences	Niveau d'importance	Remarques
1. Evaluer les exercices de formation, (idéalement en situation de travail)	Cœur de métier	
2. Participer, avec les acteurs concernés, à l'évaluation de l'action de formation dans toutes ses dimensions ⁴	Cœur de métier	
3. Implémenter un processus d'assurance qualité et d'évaluation	Optionnel	
4. Faciliter l'amélioration continue de la formation en fonction des avis/commentaires/critiques personnellement et en collaboration avec les collègues	Cœur de métier	

It is noteworthy that in five different national contexts of work-based learning, where each of the partners already had their own assessment tools, that further needs for assessment tools should again be expressed. We should put this expectation the trainers have down to the intrinsic properties of work-based learning on the one hand, and the characteristics of the target audience on the other.

We believe it is also interesting that, in the phase of adaptation for each national context, we see that the “Assessment” tool has not undergone any great modification by the trainers: only the pictograms relating to the sector of activity and the layout were adapted in a very marked pursuit of simplification.

In terms of transferability, the “Assessment” tool meets several criteria:

- ✓ It answers a “structural” requirement of the work-based learning model,
- ✓ It is a skill that the trainer in work-based learning absolutely must command,
- ✓ It is easy to take ownership of after slight modification/adaptation,
- ✓ It has the learners’ confidence, especially those that are in asocial integration situation,
- ✓ It only takes up a small amount of training time and doesn’t excessively interfere with the constraints of supervising production.

4.6. Conclusion

The project partners’ teaching teams put a heavy investment into the “Assessment” tool, and we can see a genuine re-appropriation in its final version, as well as its actual integration into the educational process.

Very clearly, this appropriation shows the need for tools to objectively track the learners’ progression, notably in the areas of technical and transversal skills, that can be adapted to the specific constraints of work-based learning.

Its relative success is such that it has come to be used to complete or replace those previously used in the partner organisations. Work-based learning enterprises are faced with a structural tension, that of training a target group that is facing social challenges, whilst still meeting the imperatives of production (deadlines, volume, quality, technical aspect of the production process). The “Assessment” tool provides some answers to the need to link the way the training process is carried out to the need to personalise training courses.

“STAGE ADVISOR” TOOLS



5. “Stage advisor” tools

The aim of a work placement is the (re)discovery of the world of work, putting knowledge into practice and thus acquire further vocational experience. The specificity of a work placement in work-based learning is that it constitutes an “**extra**” work situation that complements or concludes the various previous learning experiences, which also took place in a production environment. It is clearly not superfluous, since it helps the learners to confront their learning to what is prescribed or expected in the workplace. The main difficulty of work placements is to make the experience educational in such a way that it is more than just being faced with a particular case (the host business) and highlighting the gap between what is prescribed and the reality.

“Job advisor” is a tool that helps involve the host business in the learning process, and lead the tutor to think about the transmission of learning content and get involved in the act of training. The density and quality of the network of partner businesses that the training centre are the main factors that will foster the businesses’ involvement in the training endeavour. The training centre should therefore have a strategy for attracting partner businesses and keeping them on board.

The “Stage advisor” tool enables the learners to share information and essential remarks about the hosting workplace and the conditions to be found there. The tool also helps with better tracking of the placements: prepare and research before, conclusions and feedback at the end, with reflection on the practices while it is ongoing. Finally, it sets the conditions for establishing a form of solidarity between different cohorts of interns who will work in turn to waymark the arrival on a placement and prepare the learners for their encounter with the world of work, to dismantle the preconceptions or stereotypes they might harbour through participation in a concrete productive activity.

5.1. Relevance of the tool

The “Stage advisor” tool corresponds to “key activity 6” in the WBL trainers’ skills checklist developed as part of the “Experience for training” project. The title is “support the trainee throughout their vocational insertion journey”.

This activity details five skills, of which three are considered as at the “core” of the trainers’ job. The ability to take part in the process of putting the learner on a work placement was deemed to be an important skill, but not a core one.

Activité clé 6: Accompagner le stagiaire dans son parcours d'insertion socioprofessionnel		
Compétences	Niveau d'importance	Remarques
1. Œuvrer, en collaboration avec une équipe, à favoriser l'intégration sociale et professionnelle des stagiaires (par exemple par l'orientation, le mentorat, l'enseignement de compétences techniques, etc.)	Cœur de métier	
2. Evaluer le stagiaire et, le cas échéant, tenir à jour les dossiers des apprenants (ou transmettre aux collègues les informations utiles au suivi du stagiaire)	Cœur de métier	
3. Participer au processus de la mise en stage en entreprise	important	
4. Assurer à tous les stagiaires des pratiques de formation favorisant l'émancipation sociale, individuelle et collective	Cœur de métier	
5. Apporter un soutien à la recherche d'emploi du stagiaire	important	

The “Stage advisor” tool was trialled with a smaller group of learners than the “Assessment” tool. The fact is, that not all the partners systematically used work placements in businesses. As for the “Job advisor tool”, the employment outcomes at the end of a training programme are multi-sector, making the tool less relevant, given the low probability of two trainees following each other into the same company.

Within our project, the audiences that were concerned with the “Stage advisor” tool were minors, unemployed people on placement in a horticulture business, disabled people, including minors, and young people under the age of 26 who were outside the education system (NEET).

According to the trainers, unlike the “Assessment” tool, “Stage advisor” is more relevant to the production activity (57% of positive responses, of which 42% were ‘very relevant’) than for the training activity (42% of positive responses). This response is consistent with the specialised nature of the tool. It is used at a given moment in time, in the preparation phase for a work placement.

For the trainers, the tool enables the learner to be well prepared for their work placement. In this sense, the tool does meet its aims (85% of positive responses, of which 71% ‘very’) and meets the needs of socially disadvantaged audiences. By preparing for the placement, by finding out some elements transmitted by their peers, by contributing to updating the information relating to the company and the job, it is a potentially powerful tool to facilitate a first insertion into a real employment situation within a business.

5.2. Trainees' impressions

While the tool is not seen as complex, ease of use is not one of its primary characteristics: 28% consider it “a bit” easy to use, 42% “quite easy” and only 28% “very easy”. This assessment should be qualified by the fact that, except for one of the partners who already used “Stage advisor”, the others were deploying for the first time a tool that requires time, and the effects of which are only partially visible to the first cohort. Neither the learners nor the trainers can rest on any precedent as a tangible example. As for enabling positive interactions between trainers and learners, the tool met with a positive response (71%). On the other hand, at this stage of the project, it has done little (28%) or nothing (28%) to foster exchanges between the learners.

The tool (approach) inspires average confidence (28% “some” 28% “a lot”) and contributes to the learners' technical progression (85% of positive responses, of which 42% “very”). When the “Stage advisor” tool was initially rolled out, it mainly served as a “trade” survey, which is clearly useful for fostering the learners' autonomy. For the tool's full potential to be revealed, there will need to be at least a second or third cohort required for the cumulative effect of experiences in placements to have its full effect.

5.3. Effects on the structure of the training scheme

The trainers noted that the “Stage advisor tool had a significant effect on the practices for supporting the learners (57% notable or major effects), and on the tracking of the training programme (57% notable or major effects).

The tool significantly improves the trainers' knowledge of the trainees (85% of notable effects), but its effect on educational effectiveness, whilst real, will require confirmation over time (growth over time of the ‘database’ of host businesses).

5.4. Possibilities for improvement

One prospect for the evolution of the tool is for it to become the support for the phase of entering employment, enabling former learners to share with their successors information and essential comments about the companies that recruit in the area, such as the working conditions (rotas, type of contact, benefits...) and their practices for integrating new employees.

The tool is likely to have three simultaneous effects:

- Firstly, for the learners, its purpose is easily understood, it fosters their autonomy and lays the basis for an 'esprit de corps' by exercising a *de facto* solidarity between different cohorts of interns or candidates for employment. It contributes to knowledge of the trade and the target companies and economic sectors.
- For the training organisation, the "Stage advisor tool complements its action plan aimed at involving local economic actors in the integration effort. By bringing the worlds of business and work-based training closer together, the tool provides a significant response to the need to link the training course to the closer to the requirements of production. The "Stage advisor tool also plays a part in the complex mission that goes beyond a simple introduction documented by a "trade survey". It requires good preparation by the learners and a detailed knowledge of potential employers' requirements, at least locally.
- For a business, "Stage advisor" provides a resource to meet its labour requirements. It can interact with the WBL organisation to develop the checklist of expected skills. It is aimed at any type of business regardless of size, but it will mainly attract the interest of those that care about their social impact and want to contribute in a to the economic development of their area in a sustainable way.

Finally, while the aim of simplification was a central one, the proper appropriation of the "Stage advisor" tool is contingent on having a certain level of command of the language it is written in.

5.5. Transferability

Work-based learning is a relevant response to the need for effective training. It is a three-stage "process", with real preparation upstream, a training programme as close as possible to operational concerns, and support provided throughout the latter.

In the case of the "NT4S" projects, **the partners are supporting target audiences that are undergoing a social integration process, meaning that they have social. As well as vocational** issues, thus requiring multiple responses.

These audiences are commonly described by how removed from employment they are. The end goal is to bring the participants back into economic and social life. This is fundamental inasmuch as the training actions are a transitional and promotional space that boosts social and vocational skills, as well as fostering the creation of social linkages.

The trainers' choice of the "Stage advisor" tool reflects the need for complementary solutions that can help improve, facilitate and optimise the "real-life work situation" component of the training programme represented by a work placement.

"Stage advisor" also provides trainers with information about the dynamics of the local labour market, of the changing skills requirements and the customers' indirect expectations. From this point of view, the surveys carried out by the interns feed into key activity n°5 of the "experience for training checklist "contributing to the production activity".

It should be noted that the need for tools on this aspect of training was strongly felt in all five of the national contexts of WBL. The need felt by the trainers is linked to the intrinsic nature of the pedagogy of work-based learning on the one hand, and on the characteristics of the audiences of the project partners' training centres.

We believe that it is also interesting to note that, in the phase of adaptation for each national context, we see that the "Stage advisor" tool was not significantly modified by the trainers in Belgium, Italy or Portugal: the Italian trainers changed the icons, and the trainers from AID Tubize changed the order of some of the elements and the size of some of the textboxes.

In terms of transferability, the stage advisor tool provides a positive response on several criteria:

- It allows the business to be better involved in the learning process,
- It completes the trainers' toolkit in one of the "key" segments of the training pathway,
- It answers the need for a tool in a skill that the trainers need to master,
- It doesn't take up much training time, and doesn't intrude excessively on the constraints of supervising production.

5.6. Conclusion

The “Stage advisor” tool put forward by the Italian partner, reworked as part of the NT4S project, is seen as a “very” relevant tool by the trainers who were already using it, and it received significant support from the other project partners, with the exception of the French partner, which doesn’t use work placements as part of its training pathway.

Among the centres that used the tool, the satisfaction rate was particularly high (71% of trainers consider the tool corresponds “very” closely to the aims set out).

The tool enables preparation for work placements to be done under good conditions. However, for the learners, the usefulness is not fully clear during the initial phase of introducing the tool. The effects will only be felt progressively, as new cohorts of trainees feed into the database and contribute to updating it and making the information on host businesses more detailed.

“Stage advisor” (broadened into a future “Job advisor” tool) creates synergies between the actors in the field of training and local businesses. It provides the possibility to promote local businesses by making their commitments more visible. It also encourages businesses to gradually commit to a broader corporate social responsibility (CSR) agenda.

“ARGUMENTS AGAINST DISCRIMINATION”



6. “Argumenta Against Discrimination”

Combatting discrimination is a Europe-wide issue. Currently, the laws of the countries in which the partners in the NT4S project operate recognise several criteria for discrimination. Thus, to treat someone less favourably based on their ethnic origins, gender, age, disability, opinions... is forbidden by law and international conventions that European union countries adhere to.

In the “Experience for training” project, the checklist of expected skills (key activity 6 “supporting the trainees” throughout their pathway to social and vocational integration”) lists the trainers’ capacity to ensure that all trainees benefit from training practices that foster individual and collective social empowerment.

The “Anti-discrimination” tool is the third one to be reworked as part of the NT4S project. It is an awareness-raising tool originally developed by the CSC and consists in a document set out as a charter that aims to raise the forms discrimination can take, name them, recognise them and deal with them within the framework of training.

The choice to work on the anti-discrimination document reflects the fact that trainers are confronted with these issues in their day-to-day activities with very different audiences., some of which are of immigrant background. It also rests on the need to approach this subject with the learners in order to equip them with relevant strategies for dealing with it. In this sense, it is a skill that needs to be acquired.

6.1. Relevance of the tool

The “anti-discrimination” document was trialled in all project partner training centres. The target audiences are made up of long term unemployed removed from the labour market and with low levels of qualifications, disabled people, including minors, people in highly precarious conditions and young people under the age of 26 who are outside of education (NEET). The trainees also come from horticulture training programmes or are employees in work reintegration enterprises in the field of market gardening.

The tool is in the form of a charter to be used as an aid in approaching issues of discrimination and how to respond to them. It is aimed equally at learners, training centre staff and teaching staff. The target of the message is deliberately diverse, so as to maximise its effects on the whole of the training collective.

The indecision in terms of the target does, however, raise some questions among the trainers, who are those to whom the effort to explain is addressed in the NT4S project. They consider that it doesn't really have a place in the carrying out of production activities (85% of "not at all" or "not very" relevant responses).

It seems to be more appropriate for introduction outside of production activities (57% of "quite" and 14% of "very" relevant responses). Indeed, by definition, time outside of production enables some distance to be placed between the "real" and theory, for example. It is therefore easier to approach complex, if not painful, situations of daily life (including at work) in a theoretical or depersonalised way. The tool is more targeted at the citizenship and personal dimensions of the trainees than it is at their vocational sphere as such. In the written submission to the survey, one of the trainers reported that *"avoiding the issue is often the operating rule in terms of the subjects dealt with"*. This explains why it is little (42%) or not used (42%) by the trainers.

The complexity of the tool is not an issue, but it is not closely enough linked to the learning objectives and only makes an indirect contribution to knowledge and knowhow. In truth, the tool is aimed at raising awareness among management trainers and learners as a whole. Within the framework of the experiment however, this protocol could not be adhered to, which led to the trainers having some problems appropriating the tool.

6.2. Trainees' impressions

The subject of discrimination can be dealt with by a strategy of avoidance or approached indirectly, since it involves a possible confrontation with either the training institution or with the trainees, which could, in some cases, affect the group's cohesion or the smooth running of the training course. The tool is considered "not at all" (14%) or "not very" (27%) close to the lived experience in training or production. Nonetheless, exchanges on the subject are a teaching aid that is rich in reflexiveness to allow the learners to debate and put into perspective their values of tolerance, citizenship and equality with others, but also on a personal level.

There is, however, an exception to this assessment. The French partner responded very positively to the questions about the relevance of the tool, and reports very favourable impressions on the part of the trainers and learners. This appreciation is linked to the significant modifications they made to the tool by transposing it into digital form via the Kahoot platform. In the form of a game, the learners *"engage, learn and help each other, and appear more comfortable with the themes being discussed"*.

6.3. Effects on the structure of the training scheme

As for the tool's effects on the structure, they mainly appear to be minor, except in terms of the learners' knowledge, which it significantly improves (42% of "very" responses) during the exchanges. This observation should be considered in the light of the fact that, to achieve its goals, the initiative needs to be first and foremost introduced and led by the management of the centres, who should make it a priority assorted with an action plan.

The "Arguments against discrimination" enables the training organisations to better know and assert the rights of the learners once they enter into employment. For this reason, the importance of dealing with different discriminatory situations (and the way to rationally prepare from them and respond legally) is well understood, since the objective is to return people in precarious situations into employment.

The exchanges on discrimination and how to combat it also constitute a training tool that is rich in reflexiveness on teaching organisation and practices. In order to produce its full effects, it would probably be worth formalising a specific training module with attendant learning activities.

6.4. Possibilities for improvement

The tool is aimed at encouraging the actors in the field of social integration, including WBL, to review their practices and put in place a plan of action. It is mainly addressed to centre managers, who must lead the initiative. It lays the basis for putting in place a plan or strategy for raising the awareness of learners on the theme of combatting discrimination.

The French trainers combined the "Arguments against discrimination" tool with the Kahoot platform. This is an online tool for learning technical skills, consisting of interactive videos and questionnaires that can be chosen or created on very specific themes. It is based on the principle of interactivity, which helps engage the trainees, and helps verify understanding. The "arguments against discrimination" were thus able to be used in the form of a game, which seems to have grabbed the trainees' attention.

We could therefore conclude that in a future stage of the project, it would be necessary to **develop innovating teaching practices on the theme of discrimination for WBL** trainers.

6.5. Transferability

The partners in the NT4S project provide support to audiences that are in a social integration process, and who are at risk of being socially marginalised. We saw earlier that, for this audience, training courses are part of an integration programme- i.e. they are one of a series of stages leading to the final objective of their return to quality sustainable employment, but also to full exercising citizenship.

The issue of diversity, inclusion and non-discrimination is in fact central to the training. The awareness-raising tool developed in the project thus provides recommendations for improving the daily experience of all learners during their training course. As such, it constitutes a basis for setting up an awareness-raising plan on the theme of discrimination in WBL enterprises. It does so at five levels:

- Employer: a number of legal provisions and obligations are to be applied.
- Production: issues of discrimination sometimes raise their head in a work situation. How to foster equality of opportunity in activities that are strongly perceived as masculine or feminine.
- Training: the practices on a work site can reveal racist segregationist or xenophobic behaviour between employees. Reflecting on these problems can help group cohesion.
- Social and vocational support: the same applies in support of rights to services and training.
- Local development and partnerships: as a factor for social cohesion, the integration into training of people with different cultures and faiths, or apparently far removed from the world of employment, contributes to the recognition and acceptance of “the other”.

6.6. Conclusion

WBL enterprises seek to promote the learners' equality of opportunity in access to training and employment. Their objectives are to ensure all learners benefit from training practices that promote collective and individual social empowerment. The fight against discrimination is at the core of their missions. The trainers from the NT4S project partners are not always sufficiently equipped to approach the issue in an appropriate manner. Yet, the trial of the “Arguments against discrimination” highlights the importance of addressing this theme with the learners, with the help of appropriate tools. It is a tool that is rich in reflexivity to develop the social autonomy and integration of the target audiences on their pathway to integration.

RECOMMENDATIONS



7. Recommendations for work-based learning for audiences on integration pathways

It is now time to draw out the recommendations inspired by the "NT4S" project in order to further the reflection on the different modalities for organising work-based learning, the conditions for success, the food for thought provided by the project, the questions and issues raised to enable this original model to spread.

The project consisted in selecting, producing and improving simple tools that are accessible and appropriable by the trainers "on the go", while simultaneously testing their value by confronting them *in situ* with real-life situations. This continuous assessment exercise integrated into the conduct of the project represents a very different model from usual impact assessments.

The assessment was thus embedded into, and continuous and consubstantial with the project approach.

It was spread out among all partners and "tooled" through the provision of common resources in a perspective of professionalisation and exchange of practices. This approach proved to be a virtuous one in several respects, and would probably deserve to be analysed in due course in terms of the advantages it brings, with a view to feeding the reflections on the modalities for conducting innovating public action.

7.1. WBL: a formalised and demanding pedagogical approach

Work-based learning (WBL) can be considered as a specific approach that differs from similar approaches such as "work-related learning" or "workplace learning/apprenticeships".

7.1.1. Strengthening the pedagogical organisation

WBL is specifically defined as intentional training using a real working environment for learning. In all cases, the training in a work situation is organised around two distinct but linked sequences that are repeated as many times as necessary to produce the intended learnings:

- Being placed in a work situation that is prepared, organised and constructed for learning purposes.
- A training sequence, related to the productive activity, moderated by a trainer/technical supervisor.

The purpose of work-based learning is to "put training into the work", rather than considering the work situation as a means of "applying" what has been covered in training.

WBL in WBL enterprises is therefore not a return to informal apprenticeships, which simply involved being put on the job: one or several vocational learning goals are expressly targeted, and the situations to achieve this are identified and arranged in the course.

There are therefore work situations, and time for supported reflection on the activity. These times for reflection are not informal exchanges, they need to be tooled with two types of supporting aids:

- “Activity-recording aids”: diary, video recordings, oral reconstruction by the learner, or tools yet to be invented...
- “Supporting tools that provide references that are external to the activity”, which state what is prescribed: “what should be done”. This could be instructions, task checklists, standards...

The issue of results is crucial: the stakeholder trainers’ choice of the “Assessment” tool is therefore evidence of this.

We noted previously that it was symptomatic that within the five different national contexts, and while each of the partners already had their own assessment tools, that further needs for such tools were again expressed. The reason for this is simple. In a classical learning scenario, training is given to then be assessed. In WBL, training and assessment are the two sides of the same coin inasmuch as learning occurs directly in a working situation. The acquisition of skills and their validation must occur at the same time.

The “NT4S” partner teaching teams invested much in the “Assessment” tool, and we see that they have really taken ownership of its final form, as well as its effective integration into the teaching process. Very clearly, this appropriation demonstrates the need for tools that enable objective tracking of the learners’ progress, notably in the areas of technical and transversal skills, that can be adapted to the specific constraints of work-based learning.

Nonetheless, the various recommendations relating to the rollout of the Work-based Learning model insist on a necessary reflection time on the activity for the learner, and on the need for this reflection to be accompanied by a third party who is not the trainer.

These recommendations mean that the economic model for WBL enterprises working in the field of integration for audiences furthest removed from employment needs to be consolidated.

The quest for effectiveness in training requires:

- To be able to put time aside and have the human resources to design the programme and support the trainee.
- The choice of work situations that enable progressive learning.
- Careful conduct of the reflective phases. These are the ones that lead to competence.
- That the assessments are not left to the trainer alone.

7.1.2. Reinforcing the trainers' skills

As noted in the “Experience for training” project, the work of a WBL enterprise is based on three levels of objectives: social, educational and economic”. Just like those working in the training centre, the WBL trainer has to act at his/her level to develop skills linked to these three objectives.

It is therefore necessary to simultaneously be:

- *a teacher responsible for the transmission and assessment of knowledge, skills, knowhow and behaviour;*
- *a teacher responsible for creating relational conditions that favour smooth conduct of the training courses;*
- *a professional in a technical trade, with full command of all the skills and who follows evolutions in the sector;*
- *a producer of quality goods and/or services who also carries out some commercial activities;*
- *a first-line point of contact between the learner and social services;*
- *a point of contact for helping the learner into external placements and/or employment;*
- *a colleague that collaborates and communicates in an effective and positive manner with all the departments and workers in the training centre;*
- *an employee who reflects the organisation's social mission in their daily practices with the latter's departments and other colleagues.*

The scope and complexity of the missions required of WBL trainers are considerable, especially as they have to be carried out with audiences that are facing serious difficulties.

Training in a work situation also further requires the trainer to be able to step back from the imperatives of production to identify the training potential of given situations, since not all work situations have learning potential ...

It therefore seems timely to consolidate Key activity n°1: to “Lead and direct training activities” of the skills checklist formalised as part of the: “Experience for training” project.

It appears to us that it is crucial to “sanctuarise” a time upstream for prior preparation that enables the prior formalisation of activities that help identify the skills targeted in the training course and the related work-based situations that enable learning to take place. It is a matter of dealing with the issue of a lack of clear, concrete learning goals that are defined in such a way as to be observable and measurable in a work situation.

Another priority that we have identified is to ensure that the trainers, who are often seasoned professionals “in the real world”, are constantly kept up to date on the target skills and techniques. We noted that the trainers’ choice of the “Stage advisor” tool partly reveals their need for further solutions that can improve, facilitate and optimise the workplace placement component of the training programme that constitutes a **real life confrontation with the practical exercise of the craft.**

7.2. Towards a European model for WBL?

These recommendations are addressed to both the actors in the field of training, as well as the administrative and political decision-makers, in the various regions and countries represented within the project consortium.

For us, both the ethos and the tools provided by the “Work-based learning enterprise” project” appear relevant for bringing marginalised audiences back into employment. The teaching methods of WBL are especially appropriate for this target group. It also appears to us that it is essential to promote the idea of a European model of WBL that strikes the right balance so that WBL is not locked into too restrictive a definition, while still providing reliable mechanisms for those in charge of implementing it.

The economic model of WBL enterprises also needs to be characterised in a clearer and more detailed way, in terms of time committed, cost and funding. This characterisation of the economic model for European WBL enterprises, which will inevitably vary according to national contexts, is needed in order to move forward in implementing WBL, and for triggering adhesion and appropriation of the model in all European countries.

Finally, it would be productive to delve deeper into the issue of the effects of WBL, in view of the skills produced (in particular according to a survey carried out among beneficiaries) and the results in terms to a return to quality employment of employees coming from WBL enterprises. This should be done while at the same time attempting to also to specify these effects according to the different productive and vocational configurations.

CONCLUSIONS



8. Prospects and final thoughts

Beyond promoting a European model for WBL on the one hand, and the outcome of the “NT4S” project which has provided us with an extremely rich and inspiring empirical materials on the other, this project has also helped confirm our belief that WBL will take a significant and lasting place in training practices only if the work to support, professionalise and equip those working in the field continues.

From this point of view, several potential avenues of work can be put forward. It is a matter of dissemination and communication, and bringing the essential elements drawn from WBL experimentation in terms of project engineering and factors for success to a large audience made up of those who are aware of the issues relating to social inclusion.

Echoing the expectations of the partners and trainers involved in “NT4S”, it will also be about (co)producing a series of technical resources and operational tools to the actors in the field, to help them take ownership of this new mode of training. The “NT4S” project has laid the basis for a database of teaching tools for WBL trainers.

These “methodological guides” will, for instance, suggest arguments for convincing actors in the field of training to put in place a WBL pedagogy or to sequence the main questions/stages of project engineering in a way that distinguishes between the central elements and the recommendations that are more contingent and adjusted for different national contexts.

As a corollary to the question of the channels for dissemination and diffusion, this also raises that of the range of the players (and institutional entities) that should be mobilised for this campaign on an EU-wide scale.