Professionalisation of Trainers for Work-Based Basic Skills

ProfiTRAIN

Self-Study Manual

Acquiring Competencies for Work-Based Basic Skills Training

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Edited by Rosemarie Klein
March 2020

Content

Introduction to the Self-Study Manual

Rosemarie Klein

Changing and increasing skills demands, coupled with economic, demographic and technological developments are making it more important than ever for Member States to have in place modern adult learning systems. All adults, regardless of their level of education or qualifications, need opportunities and incentives to continue learning throughout life, whether it be for maintaining their employability, for fuller participation in our digital society, or for personal fulfilment. (European Commission, 2018, p. 4).

Work-Based Basic Skills—Outreach Education and Training for Employees

In the PROFI-TRAIN project, we have developed an innovative professionalisation concept for training providers and training providing institutions to be well prepared in planning and realising programmes of Work-Based Basic Skills—WBBS. The concept is based on research and experience in several European countries. Basic skills have drawn wide public attention in the past 10 years at a political, national, federal and regional level. Basic skills training is in several European countries a strategy that ensures that in today's fast-changing world, all the workforce has the chance to update and develop skills for life, both at work and in everyday life. For this, continuing education and training are of very high importance and must reach those who cannot easily participate in training and education.

The PROFI-TRAIN Approach reaches out to companies and employees to help increase the participation of employees through Work-Based Basic Skills (WBBS) training. The WBBS training of employees takes place within the company in the workplace. For this to take place, professional, well-qualified trainers and flexible training providing organisations that are competent and well prepared to leave schoolrooms, are needed to motivate companies and employees and encourage training within the company.

WBBS Training Needs Professional Trainers

WBBS training takes place in the company as work-based learning. For most adult education teachers, trainers or guidance practitioners, it is quite a new challenge to

approach companies, develop work-based basic skills and realise training in the company. It is their task to improve the basic competencies of employees that come into focus due to changing requirements at work and in the workplaces. For this, they need to have the appropriate qualifications. The professionalisation of staff in adult education and the continuing participation in other fields of adult and vocational education and training are essential prerequisites for learning offers of high quality.

Purpose of the Manual and its Target Group

The PROFI-TRAIN professionalisation concept aims to broaden the knowledge about WBBS training. It deals with training in heterogeneous learning groups, individualised methods and suitable formats of training, and the evaluation of the learning process and outcome. However, it's also about being a door opener, reaching out, getting in contact with companies, and encouraging employers and employees to learn. The concept also focuses on identifying the changing requirements in companies and the special needs for competence development of employees in their workplaces. Last but not least, communication and dialogue with company representatives as WBBS project managers are needed, as WBBS takes place within the company.

This book is a self-study manual. It targets trainers, teachers, coaches and counsellors as well as project managers and other key persons in the providers' institution who play an important role in the WBBS programme, the organisation of which follows a process, and who want to know about WBBS training and/or want to offer WBBS training themselves. In this Manual, you will find modules about the main basic knowledge on and experiences with WBBS. The Manual will guide you through the process of planning, realising and evaluating WBBS in a company setting. Hence, the Manual urges one to "leave the education providing schools", and to use and organise learning settings in the workplace.

The main question asked in this Manual is:

> What do trainers, teachers, coaches, counsellors, project managers and other key persons want and need to understand, know and learn when it comes to providing WBBS training in the company/workplace?

How is the Manual Built Up?

You will find six modules in the PROFI-TRAIN Self-Study Manual. Each module consists of a short introduction to provide information on its topics. You will find knowledge-

based information that derives from experiences and good practice examples from different European countries, provided by the PROFI-TRAIN partners. At several points, you will be invited to reflect on what you have read. The image of an owl is a signal for you to stop and reflect. You will also find hints on checklists, methods and instruments that are placed at the end of the Manual. Additionally, we will also give you some reading references should you want to research an aspect further.

You will see that the development of WBBS training differs quite a bit from the familiar didactic-methodical course planning or from working with a clear, closed curriculum. WBBS training follows the concept of situated learning. You will get to know how to approach companies, encourage the employees' participation and identify changes in the workplace and the employees' needs and interests for learning. Moreover, you will find approaches to and experiences with the didactic aspects and requirements of WBBS training in the workplace. Last but not least, you will read about the benefits of learning and of the need to integrate the learning transfer in the didactic concept.

The Self-Study Manual is structured according to the PROFI-TRAIN Process Model (see figure). The modules that follow the one on basic WBBS knowledge deal with one of the process phases, including the aspects of learning and guiding principles.

The process phases are not meant to be a strict schedule to follow. They need to be understood as a flexible system. Depending on the development of dialogue in a company, the mentioned steps can be more or less intensive, and sequences may differ. Also, the functions and responsibilities of the activities that take place during the process phases may either be shared between different experts or be overtaken by one expert person.

Innovative Approach to Professionalisation

Our approach to the professionalisation of WBBS involves the development of a continuing education concept for those actors who play an important role in the WBBS process. For instance, the trainers, the door openers, the expert who does the needs analysis and those who accompany the process management are prominent actors. The PROFI-TRAIN project partnership has carefully considered how it intends to build up this Self-Learning Manual in terms of its structure and content. What is innovative from our point of view will be briefly explained and will hopefully make you—our users —curious.

This handbook is innovative in that it attempts to follow the process phases of WBBS, as shown in the following figure. Due to this ideal-typical line of action, we have combined experiences and knowledge on WBBS with the theoretical knowledge and
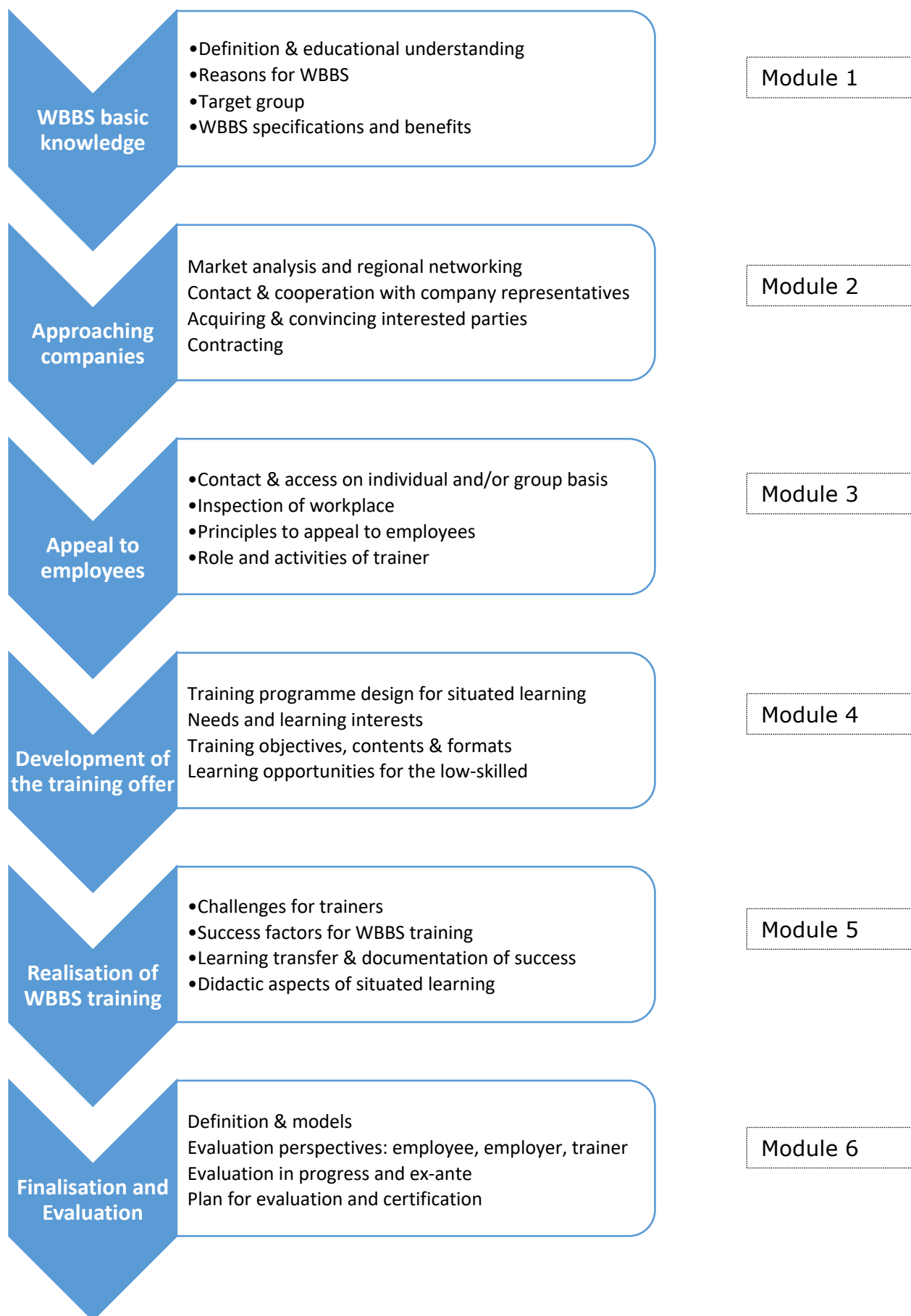
principles of adult education. Our intention is to implement the adult education principle of subsequent learning consistently.

In addition, more emphasis is placed on the professional identity of WBBS trainers, because we are at the crucial point where we want to realise a demanding task for professional trainers, this being the situational teaching of employees at a changing workplace.

> *A trainer in WBBS training is a professional who trains and teaches employees in companies/work environments where special attention is given to the transfer of acquired knowledge into work situations. Their main responsibility is to ensure this learning transfer. The other functions (door opener, project manager, etc.) are in support of this role.*

Our approach is also innovative in that it outlines the challenges of the actions of each respective actor in the process phases. In each case, we focus on the trainers. We have also highlighted the challenges of WBBS training, while also explaining how it raises one's chances of getting involved in new experiences in adult education in various places.

Our handbook is now being tested, and we are very keen on receiving feedback.

WBBS basic knowledge

- Definition & educational understanding
- Reasons for WBBS
- Target group
- WBBS specifications and benefits

Module 1

Approaching companies

Market analysis and regional networking
Contact & cooperation with company representatives
Acquiring & convincing interested parties
Contracting

Module 2

Appeal to employees

- Contact & access on individual and/or group basis
- Inspection of workplace
- Principles to appeal to employees
- Role and activities of trainer

Module 3

Development of the training offer

Training programme design for situated learning
Needs and learning interests
Training objectives, contents & formats
Learning opportunities for the low-skilled

Module 4

Realisation of WBBS training

- Challenges for trainers
- Success factors for WBBS training
- Learning transfer & documentation of success
- Didactic aspects of situated learning

Module 5

Finalisation and Evaluation

Definition & models
Evaluation perspectives: employee, employer, trainer
Evaluation in progress and ex-ante
Plan for evaluation and certification

Module 6

Module 1 | Basic Knowledge of Work-Based Basic Skills

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Content

Introduction

Work-Based Basic Skills (WBBS) training is a learning offer for employees, which mostly takes place in the workplace. Basic education for adults as well as learning at work is not a new issue in itself. However, politicians, researchers and practitioners have been looking in these issues more intensively during the last decade. Moreover, there are many questions that need to be answered, although, in many European countries, there are many instances of basic skills training for adults, in-company training and work-based learning. So, WBBS is still a relatively new field of activity in adult education. It also includes vocational and further training in later life. When something is relatively new, it makes sense to introduce and explain it.

After having studied this Chapter, you will know more about WBBS as we will provide a definition to clarify the term and point out that it is based on adult educational understanding. You will also find information on where the discussion of basic skills related to work and the workplace comes from. There will also be some explanations about the changes in society and work, which lead to the demand for WBBS. Of course, you will also find some considerations about the target groups for WBBS training. Finally, to clarify the subject, you will find some theses about the specific characteristics of WBBS and WBBS training.

- What is WBBS?
- Why are we talking about WBBS?
- Who is being targeted when dealing with WBBS?
- What is specific about the educational service of WBBS?

1.1 WBBS—What Are We Talking About?

Every company is an individual.

1.1.1 A First Definition of WBBS and WBBS Training

Work-Based Basic Skills (WBBS) deals with what people should at the very least know and be able to do to participate successfully in their working environments.

Work-Based Basic Skills training—WBBS training—is a learning offer for employees whose basic skills are not or no longer sufficient to meet the requirements on the job.

WBBS training creates learning opportunities, especially for those with low formal qualifications.

Jobs have changed a lot in recent years, and they will keep on changing. There were the so-called low-skilled workplaces, where people without formal qualifications could be employed as low-skilled or unskilled workers. In the meantime, these low-skilled jobs have become sophisticated. Employees who have coped well for more than 10, 20 or 30 years at their workplace have to further their education in order to meet the new challenges.

Example*: Until a few years ago, a helper in the field of geriatric care was considered to be a "low-skilled work". However, anyone looking at the skills that geriatric care helpers have to present and prove at work will no longer talk about it being a low-skilled work and will see how demanding their tasks have become on the most varied levels of action.*

WBBS is, therefore, becoming necessary because the demands on the workplaces are constantly changing. It is interesting that *general basic skills* play a central role in this. The House of Basic Competencies suggests that development in these fundamental competencies help cope with everyday life situations. As you read on, you will see that it is precisely in these areas that changes at work can be identified.
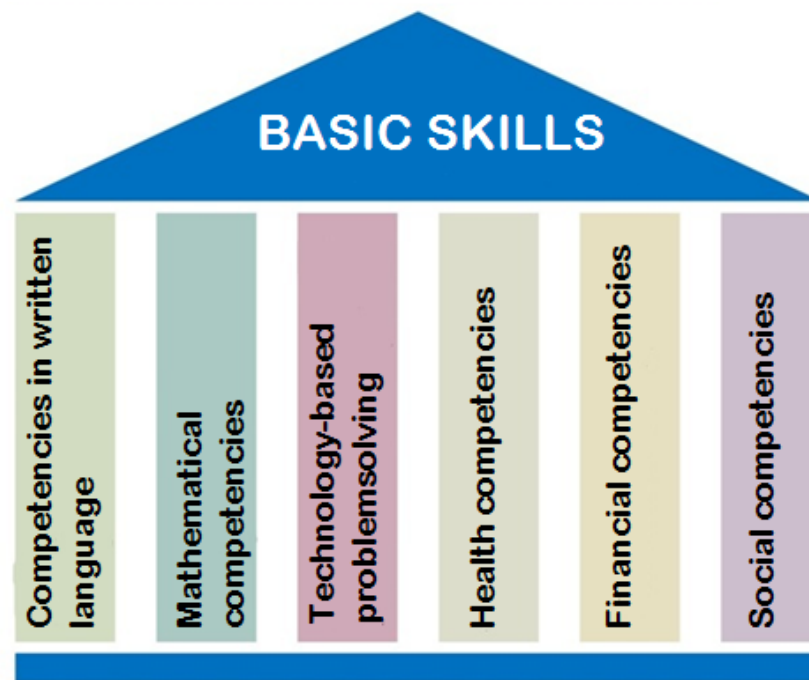
Fig. 1: The House of Basic Competencies (Klein, Reutter & Schwarz, 2017)

- In a service society, language plays an increasingly important role; both the spoken word (e.g. in customer communication) and the written word (e.g. for e-mails and security advice).

- Mathematical competencies are needed, for example, on construction sites or when using software, such as in quality assurance.

- Furthermore, in the course of the increasing digitisation of the working world, computer literacy is still basic, but it is no longer enough to have an internet-driving license or to have user knowledge of Word and Excel. The secure use of IT environments and technology-based problem-solving competencies are deemed as more essential.

- Health literacy plays an increasingly important role, especially when handling psychological stress.

- Financial competencies play a role in reading and understanding one's own payslips or in dealing with money transactions at the cash register.

- Social skills are required when communicating with clients or interacting with colleagues.
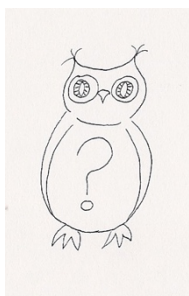
The interesting thing is that these House of Basic Education "pillars" that relate to WBBS training are currently not being carried into the company in the form of subject-specific, curricular courses. Thus, there is no subject-related didactically prepared course, which is about, for example, the acquisition of the fractional invoice, because everybody in the workplace should have already mastered it. Rather, WBBS training integrates various fields of competence, such as those outlined in the basic education "pillars". However, these are being taught, learned and applied in the workplace.

The learning fields for WBBS training are derived from "real" work requirements in specific workplaces.

The place of learning for WBBS is the company; WBBS training takes place in the company.

Hence, WBBS does not carry a learning field into the company, but the learning fields are derived from the real work requirements. This involves looking at the jobs, along with their challenges. This can be done during a workplace inspection or by evaluating the employees' descriptions of what they are doing. One must pay attention to what is working well and what is rather difficult. In this way, needs and interests for learning emerge, from which one can derive learning fields.

Since it is about real work requirements, no WBBS offer is like the other. *Every company is an individual,* and every job entails individual challenges for each respective employee.

WBBS training is specially designed for each company; an individualised concept of in-company training.

WBBS training is always very need-oriented and tailor-made.

1.1.2 A Pedagogical Understanding of WBBS

Discussing our understanding of WBBS will lead us to encounter more than just a definition. By 'understanding', in our adult-pedagogic discipline, we mean a person's theories, experiences, beliefs, and conceptions—in short, the professional attitude from which we operate. Basic skills training is part of an educational theory tradition and represents an educational concept that includes such comprehensive educational goals as participation, reflectivity, autonomy and identity. Basic education contributes to:

- the development of one's own personality;

- one's social behaviour and participation in society; and

- securing one's professional existence.

Basic skills training is part of the concept of lifelong learning.

Basic skills training may be understood as a life-long educational process. If so, then it is like education in general, a fundamentally incomplete educational process; that is, basic skills training does not aim for a "finished, perfect" learner, but for development and change through learning. This makes it possible to think in short learning units of, for example, 10 or 15 hours.

Basic skills training has an enlightening and emancipatory character.

Basic skills training is more than teaching or training relevant vocational skills or abilities. Basic skills training, like any form of adult education, is polyvalent and aims to develop one's personality. It also includes knowledge that is indispensable for orientation in society, in the labour market and in the company, in order to understand and enable social and labour participation. It's about inclusion and the avoidance of exclusion. Thus, basic skills training pursues enlightenment and emancipatory goals.

1.1.3 WBBS Follows the Approach of Situated Learning

WBBS is based on the approach of situated learning. The theory of situated learning assumes that knowledge cannot be transferred from one person to another. Instead, situations in the workplace are given more emphasis. Learning is embedded in these situations. The starting and reference points for learning in WBBS are always practical application situations. Based on these application situations, the specific competencies that the employee needs to manage better the work situation are identified. Hence, learning is embedded in the diverse situational contexts that arise at work. The real learning environment makes it possible to work on realistic problems and authentic situations. This ensures that the application context becomes clear to learners and that its application outside the concrete learning situation is successful. Situated learning aims to make learning possible and to ensure that knowledge is not only acquired in a situational and working context but can also be related to new problems.

So-called descriptors help with realising situated learning as a didactic principle. Descriptors help concretely with didactic planning and design. Descriptors are derived from real tasks; that is, they are oriented towards real workplace situations, tasks and processes, and typify them. Thus, when recording the specific requirements of a workplace and when determining the WBBS requirements, descriptors represent a kind of grid which help assign very specific situations and requirements to a type of action situation. Once an action situation has been identified, it should become the focus of the WBBS training. The description of the descriptor can be called up, and examples, features and resources can be found.

An example of a descriptor:

Table 1:
**SVEB 2016. K1 Understanding direct instructions in the workplace with situational help**

Example	*Characteristic*	*Resources*
Understand instructions for operating a tool or a simple apparatus. Understand the instructions for the work to be done.	This is a face-to-face conversation between two persons; gestures and facial expressions can be used. The conversation is conducted directly on-site; important things can be shown.	Capturing the situation Understand important "deictic" words (*here, there, now, first, then,* etc.) Use language, gestures and facial expressions to

Ask the supervisor/instructor for explanations.	The employee is in a hierarchically lower position.	show understanding or incomprehension.
Indicate that the instructions and explanations have been understood.	The employee's speaking rate is low; it can be limited to yes/no, or to show understanding or incomprehension.	Know that questions are allowed
		Simple question strategies, supported by facial expressions and gestures.

Note. **Adapted from** *Go Toolkit Arbeitsplatzorientierte Förderung der Grundkompetenzen*: *Vol. 2. Deskriptoren* **(p. 16)**

The European Core Curriculum on Written, Oral Communication, Mathematics, Digital Competence and Critical Thinking in the Workplace, which was developed as part of the lit.voc project, is also helpful. It is based on analyses of professional requirements. For the purpose of these professional requirements, typical activities in companies were looked at, and fields of activity and basic competencies were described. In it, you will find information on fields of competence, the concrete activities assigned to them and examples in tabular form. The European Core Curriculum is provided in several languages. The English version can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/project-result-content/d7731d2f-b702-4733-b395-74e4d82c653e/CORE_CURRICULUM_EU_PREFINAL_EN%20_2013.pdf
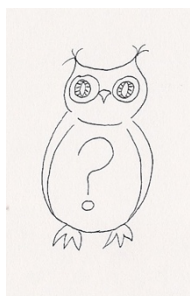
Take some time for a brief reflection:

To what extent do these statements accord with your own pedagogical self-image?

When reviewing your educational experiences in companies or in their courses with an education provider, where do you see references to such major guiding objectives as "participation", "autonomy", "emancipation", "enlightenment" or "inclusion"?

1.1.4 The WBBS Content Scope

It has certainly already become clear that there is no concluded content scope for WBBS. Learning objects are developed according to the respective corporate and work contexts. Learning objects in WBBS training always derive from action requirements in the workplace, which, in turn, are subject to constant change processes. WBBS aims to help people develop their professional skills and secure and strengthen their employability and skills. WBBS claims that through WBBS training, people are able to deal with the changing demands in work processes flexibly.

Based on these objectives, the term WBBS training becomes more tangible. Someone who is able to work and become qualified, and can deal with changing requirements flexibly, needs a bundle of basic skills, which can be subdivided into various main topics. These basic skills include *oral and written knowledge of mother language,* the *ability to calculate* and the *ability to deal with IT-based systems*. Basic knowledge in *English (in countries where the mother tongue is not English), health competencies* and *basic financial competencies* can also be considered as part of this scope. Across sectors, *learning to learn competencies* and *interpersonal and social competencies* are also considered to form part of the basic skills category.

In the PROFI-TRAIN project, the following WBBS content scope was decided (see the following text box). The content canon is like this for two reasons. The first reason involves the basic skills needs, which we were asked to design for WBBS training in many *need analyses in companies*. On the other hand, basic skills needs correspond to the *key competencies* formulated in relevant European documents (Cedefop, 2004; European Commission 2006).

... oral communication (with clients, colleagues, supervisors)

... written communication (dealing with documentation systems)

... mathematical competencies (calculation, calculation of loss, purchasing, sales, time management)

... digital competencies (EDP, online competence, handling of new work technologies)

... **oral and written basic competencies in English** (focus on work)

... **basic health competencies** (ergonomics, diet, stress/relaxation, addiction, hygiene)

... basic financial competencies (dealing with money, debts, avoiding payment of wages)

… **learning competencies** (learning to learn, learning strategies)

... soft skills (interpersonal and social competences like cooperation and conflict capability, critical thinking and acting, intercultural competences, self-organisation and work organisation, correct forms of etiquette)

These learning contents then become concrete in their specific work-based contexts.

For example, the requirements for reading and writing skills changed as a result of the introduction of quality management systems, and employees are confronted with documentation systems. New media now form part of the work processes, and so, employees must be able to use them appropriately. In many areas of activity, especially those with an international focus, English proficiency is one of the elementary basic skills, even for employees in low-skilled jobs.

The comprehensive concept of key qualifications may refer to the way how teams collaborate or communicate with clients and also to the self-reflexive approach; to one's own person. For example, language ability in relation to one's own person means the self-representational capacity of one's own competencies, motives, and interests in diverse working contexts. Reflection competence also includes being able to question one's behaviour, attitudes, opinions and roles. The competence of self-reflection is necessary to be able to speak for oneself and one's own cause and to be understood by others.

> ➢ *However, the extent to which the respective national adult education laws and regulatory frameworks for continuing education enable this canon for WBBS should be noted. For instance, in Switzerland, according to the Further Education Act, basic English skills, health literacy and financial competence do not belong to the canon of WBBS. However, these issues can be addressed when combined with verbal and written expression or with basic digital or mathematical skills.*

> ➢ *WBBS does not have subject-related topics, such as "Basic English", as a business offer. WBBS identifies requirements in the workplace and offers solution-oriented learning units precisely for its purpose, such as "workplace-related English in aircraft handling."*

***Take some time for a brief reflection:** Imagine the following situation: You are a customer in a garden centre, and you want to know where to find the little early flowering plants with the white blossom.*

What are the basic skills needed by a garden centre assistant to help you?

1.1.5 WBBS Training Follows a Process

Unlike a course offered in an educational institution, work-based basic education is an operational project and process. This has already been pointed out in this module. As this is very important, we will consider this in detail.

In general, businesses very often do not directly address training needs for their basic workforce to education providers. They do not come and ask for a Basic Skills offer for their employees. This is an overall experience. To approach and attract companies, one must be aware of company representatives, information and detection of potential needs. The door needs to be opened first and then kept open (see Modules 2 and 3).

Hence, the WBBS process involves:

- approaching and attracting companies and employers;
- analysing workplace requirements and WBBS training needs assessment;
- agreeing on a suitable WBBS training offer;
- assessing and attracting employees;
- developing a tailor-made WBBS training offer;

- realising the WBBS training in the company;

- providing support to ensure learning transfer into work activities;

- evaluating the benefits of the training; and

- completing the process through a discussion with the employer and if possible, planning a follow-up.
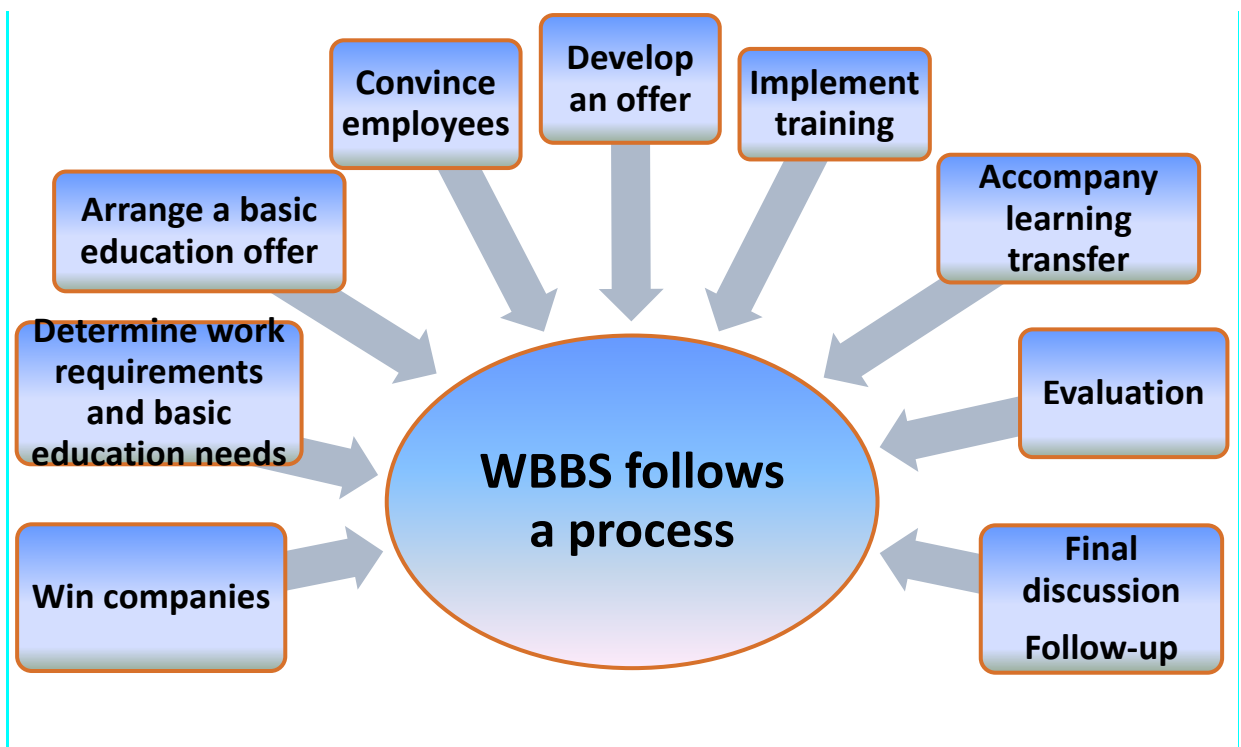

Fig. 2: PROFI-TRAIN Process Model (created by PROFI-TRAIN)

Please note: *This is not a static process model. The sequence of these steps varies according to the specific operational starting situation. For example, the timing of the approach and recruitment of employees and the question of their active involvement in the needs analysis will depend on the corporate culture. More participatory companies will consider the employees' perspectives at an early stage and include them in the conception. Other companies tend to be more directive-oriented.*
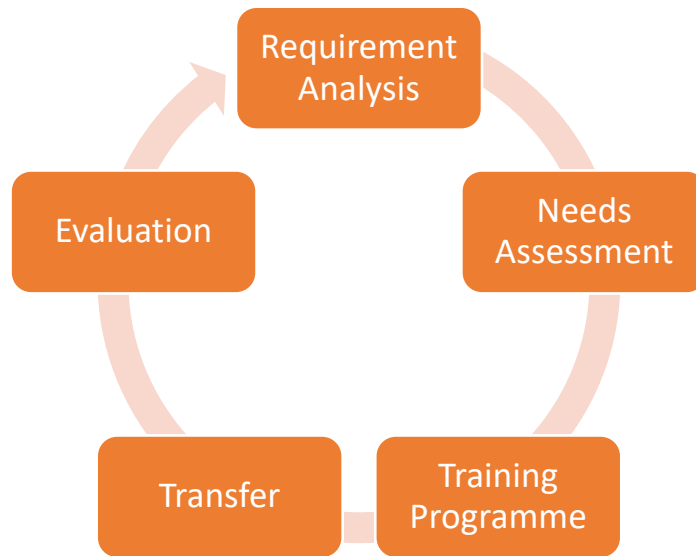
Fig. 3: GO model of process steps (GO2 n.d.)

Another model can be considered. The GO project in Switzerland also addresses the question of what a suitable didactic model that meets the requirements of implementing the basic skills of employees in companies could look like. The GO model describes the process of promoting basic skills in enterprises in five steps.

1.1.6 Key Functions in the WBBS Process

The WBBS process, with its stations and situations, holds various key functions. These form the basis for a description of the professional activities involved in the WBBS process. The PROFI-TRAIN approach describes the following four key functions:

Function 1: Door opener

Function 2: Requirement Analysis

Function 3: Training Implementation

Function 4: Process Monitoring

Fig. 4: Functions in the WBBS process (GO2, n.d.)

Function 1: Door Opener

Whoever takes over this function establishes the initial contact with the company and ensures that a conversation is agreed and takes place. Part of this role involves preparing and conducting a first meeting with a company representative. The purpose of the conversation is to show what advantages a work-related and company-oriented promotion of basic skills for low-qualified employees can bring to the company and its employees. The aim of the conversation is to arouse interest in the company representative and maintain or deepen it to form the bridge to a needs-based discussion.

Function 2: Requirement Analysis

Whoever performs this function analyses the current and future work (place) requirements for the company's employees and relates them to the company's strategic goals. This function holder determines the (basic) educational needs of the employees and the objectives of the training measure through a location assessment that considers low-skilled employees, supervisors and other relevant actors.

Function 3: Training Implementation

The work of those who take on this function depends on the basis of the requirement profiles, the needs analysis and the goals the concrete WBBS offers and reaches in the agreed format in the enterprise. These persons are responsible for the professional didactic planning and designing of the work-based learning and competence development process. Throughout the training process, they use the learning potential of the workplace and integrate didactic elements into the learning transfer.

Function 4: Process Monitoring

Those who hold this function ensure a frictionless and complete course of the WBBS process. They maintain contact with the manager(s) of the company and ensure that

work requirements are identified, basic educational needs analysed and educational goals defined. They also ensure that there is a coherent basic education offer, a suitable WBBS training is carried out, methods of learning transfer assurance are developed and tracked, the results and benefits are evaluated, and a concluding interview with the company representative takes place, in which the necessary plans for follow-up are possibly discussed. This function also includes order clarification, questions of finance and the conclusion of a contract.

Please note*: These four functions each prove to be comprehensive activities, both in knowledge and in competences. In WBBS practice, it is not the case that each of these four functions needs a person to implement them. The frequent practice is that two to three persons maximum share these functions together with the operationally relevant actors.*

Examples:

An education consultant/management consultant/organisation consultant takes over the functions of the door opener and process monitoring, while a WBBS trainer takes over the functions of the requirement analysis and training implementation.

The management of an education provider takes over the door opener function and the formal parts of the process support. A WBBS trainer takes over the needs analysis, the training implementation and other sub-functions of the process monitoring.

A multiplier from a corporate network, a trade association and a trade union takes over the door opener function, a consultant takes over the requirement analysis and a WBBS trainer deals with the training implementation and process monitoring.

1.1.7 Action Approaches in the WBBS Process

Professional skills in the WBBS process require different *competencies and attitudes*, such as persuasive power, interviewing, analysis, empathy and change of perspective, WBBS educational canonical skills, didactic-methodical skills and many more (see

GO2, n.d.). The WBBS process needs actors who are able and willing to operate in the company and with the system company. Our PROFI-TRAIN approach provides, therefore, two approaches that are used:

o   the approach of an *adult learning-teaching design*, which makes use of the needs and opportunities of the learning location company and the learning causes of work activities for learning (see Section 1.5); and

o   the approach of *guidance/counselling*, which advises the WBBS process as a dialogical process and ensures its completeness and good quality.

The Action Approach "guidance as a dialogical process": In the WBBS process, a high degree of sensitivity is required for the business' logic, its way of thinking and ability to deal with the company's communication structure and culture, as well as the expectations of beneficial learning. Basic skills training within companies needs organisational consulting skills because the handling of the system and its actors have to be considered. It deals with hierarchical relationships, cultural conditions and informal knowledge, and it is important to examine their influence on the WBBS process and to ensure the most encouraging influence possible. This includes the following:

- Top management must be held accountable. It should not only stand behind WBBS but actively support it.

- Employee representation must also be won, and within its role, the WBBS process must be advocated and supported.

- Managers and direct supervisors must be encouraged and, if necessary, empowered to accompany WBBS at the departmental and team levels and provide the necessary resources. Giving superiors some responsibility in the learning transfer is indispensable for the success of the WBBS project in the company.

- The company needs operational project management that anchors and coordinates the WBBS project internally together with the trainer and/or process supervisor.

- Employees interested in or needing WBBS must be involved.

- Colleagues in the immediate vicinity of staff participating in the WBBS training must be informed.

In addition, the increase in competencies in the sense of "more and better skills", which was promoted by WBBS training among employees, also requires employees to become "more daring". This may threaten hierarchical patterns (Rossmann, 2011) in

teams and departments and routines of cooperation in the work process. Successful learning transfers can especially provoke counter-reactions.

We view the counselling action in the PROFI-TRAIN project as a dialogical process. What does this mean?

In the professional design of the WBBS process, dialogue describes the planning and negotiating dialogue that takes place between different relevant players in the company. The dialogue is based on the giving and receiving of information from mutual participation in the desired developments.

Dialogue, therefore, wants to ensure a significant degree of transparency among the participants and enable participation and joint responsibility in the pursuit of more and better skills.

In dialogue, the internal and external actors take the time to exchange their contribution to the process, their perceptions and assessments purposefully and at eye level. The dialogue is an opportunity to ensure that what is created in the WBBS process is borne and promoted by all those involved. Dialogue requires good conversational skills and moderation in decision-making situations in which different perspectives are weighed (Behlke, 2012).

Here 'process' means to keep a constant, goal-oriented conversation about a successful WBBS education measure.

The process shows just-in-time developments and indicates where there are stumbling blocks on the way and where further support or reversals are appropriate.

The process usually involves a wealth of unanticipated successes, stumbling blocks and traps. In many cases, it is not enough to have one good conversation when beginning to plan and one at the conclusion of the WBBS process. In living systems like a company, there are dynamics. A look at the process makes dynamics transparent and controllable.

Guidance, as a dialogical process, is an approach in which the internal and external actors, with their different experiences and perspectives, seek mutual understanding

with the aim of negotiating an agreement that enables the pursuit of common goals and clarifies the concrete steps to achieve these goals.

The dialogue works well when the external expert has the following characteristics:

- Willing to change perspective
- Eye-level communication
- Confident in the knowledge of learning, competence development and education
- Understandable and accurate in the language used
- Respectful of views and opinions of company representatives
- Ready to listen and understand
- Interested and question-oriented conversation.
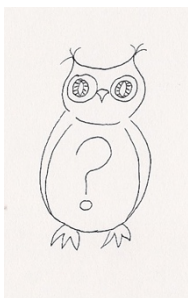
Take some time for a brief reflection:

Imagine you are the one working in these fields and reflect on the process models and action approaches:

In which part of the model and approaches do you feel well prepared?

In which part would you need or like to extend your competence?

1.2 Why Do We Talk About Work-Based Basic Skills?

Do we have educationally disadvantaged adults?

Or does adult education not meet adults' needs?

1.2.1 Work Requirements Have Changed

The demands on employees have changed dramatically in the last two decades. Formerly, a well-founded vocational education was a kind of guarantee for employability that did not have to be nurtured by continuing education. Today vocational training is still a viable foundation, but it requires constant further qualification in order to be able to build on this foundation. While vocational education and training (VET) was previously primarily a tool for facilitating career advancement,

today, participation in VET is a necessary, if not always sufficient, condition for maintaining employability. The need for occupational lifelong learning affects all groups of workers, but its demands mostly impact those who do not have the solid foundations of vocational training or study; that is, the so-called low-skilled or low-paid workplace holders.

Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) studies have shown that writing and problem-solving abilities are often required in gainful employment, closely followed by the ability to learn. At the time of the survey, computing and IT skills were not deemed to be that important. There are hints that digital transformation has picked up speed in everyday and professional life and is changing work processes in companies significantly.

The extent to which reading, writing and problem-solving skills can be improved also depends on how the work is organised. Efficient working methods, such as teamwork, autonomy, discretion, mentoring, job rotation and the application of new forms of learning, increase the learning support of jobs and lead to an expansion of skills (see also OECD 2016 and OECD 2016a).

The increased importance of learning in adulthood is also reflected in various white papers and statements by the European Union and the Organisation of Economic Cooperation Development (OECD), which place lifelong learning as a high priority in education and labour market policies (see also ELGPN, 2015).

1.2.2 VET for a Lifetime?

The fact that this program has also reached the employees can be seen in the continuously increasing participation in further education. In Germany, about 50% of adults in 2016 took part in one or more further education measures (Bilger et al., 2018).

Lifelong learning in continuing education institutions is still considered by many to be a "lifelong imposition of adaptation" rather than a personal enrichment experience. To regard learning as an imposition in adulthood is particularly common with the groups of employees we want to reach with WBBS, namely the so-called low-skilled or employed at so-called low-paid workplaces. They represent the group of those who have been significantly underrepresented in VET provision for decades. For this group, lifelong learning in institutions for continuing education and training does not appear as "biographically meaningful learning" (Rosenblatt & Bilger, 2008, p. 138); that is, learning that offers the person an advantage in both their professional and private lives. The barriers that make this group's lifelong learning difficult are diverse and complex.

The barriers to further education are primarily based on structural reasons; that is, low-skilled people are not really given any opportunities to participate. Let's take a quick look at the causes that exist among the low-skilled themselves.

1.2.3 Refusal of Further Training for the Low-Skilled?

Respondents without a vocational qualification do not participate in further vocational training in continuing education institutions because:

- they see no benefit in it (30.7%);

- their burdens/time resources don't allow this (28.9%); and

- they are under-informed or lack corresponding offers (24.9%).

The costs only play a marginal role. Only 12.7% cite high costs as justification for their abstention from further education (Schiersmann, 2006, p. 48 ff).

To date, there is a lack of qualitative studies that could provide more accurate information on what lies behind the disbelief in the benefits of further education, lack of time resources, inadequate information or inappropriate offers.

One thing; however, seems certain:

> *One-dimensional attempts to explain, such as the assumption of a general educational distance, explain nothing, they relieve at best the educational policy makers, because it blames the responsibility for non-participation on the individuals. (Reutter, 2015, p. 31).*

1.2.4 Educationally Distant Humans or Human-Distant Education?

At first glance, the starting point seems relatively clear—the participation of the low-skilled in continuing vocational training is far below average, but a second look is necessary here. The most common survey instruments, such as the AES (Adult Education Survey), essentially cover only participation in educational offers in formalised learning contexts, such as adult education centres or the educational institutions of the chamber. Therefore, the conclusion should be:

Participation of the low-skilled in **formalised** education is far below average.

It cannot be assumed from this that they are more distant to education than other groups. Whether they learn less than other employees do, we simply do not know. However, we do know that:

The low-skilled consider learning in formal contexts to be less appropriate for them.

Only 8% of the low-skilled mention learning in formal contexts as their preferred format. Clearly, more than half see learning during the process of work as a more appropriate learning context (Baethge & Baehtge-Kinsky, 2004). Whether they actually learn much during the process of work, we do not know. Relevant empirical findings are not available here. To speak of people who are far from education does not seem to be tenable against this background. Rather, it seems that educational offers in formal contexts are remote to these target groups.

Hence, there are high requirements for training providers. If they want to reach out to these groups of employees, they need to design and realise appropriate concepts of work-based learning, and they need to collaborate with companies and employees.

However, it is undisputed that these groups of employees are hampered by a lack of in-company or company-based training opportunities.

The low-skilled are still not in the focus of HR development.

There is a structural inferiority of these employees in the operational personnel and organisation development policy. Until a few years ago, these groups of employees were not or only marginally in the focus of corporate training policy. They were more likely to be attributed the status of "disposable material", which is dismissed in response to changing requirement structures and replaced by forces from the external labour market, as said by a CEO from the power supply industry. The investment in this human capital did not allow a sufficient return, and therefore, largely failed. Although, this view is currently changing, this does not express better morals or changed ethical standards among HR managers. It is—at least in Germany—the result of demographic change, which is increasingly forcing companies to invest in their endogenous potential because exogenous markets have gone largely blank. Various support programs, at both national and EU level, have reacted to this development and are trying to create incentive systems that should contribute to increased

participation in training for the low-skilled (PROFI-TRAIN is also a beneficiary of this development).
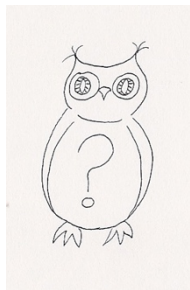
Take some time for a brief reflection:

When reviewing your educational experiences in companies or in your educational courses, consider the following questions:

What do you know about the qualification requirements and formal educational qualifications of your participants?

In which measures or courses was the group of the low-skilled involved or even particularly in focus?

1.3 Target Groups for WBBS

1.3.1 Who They Are

In many European countries, the offer of WBBS training is aimed at the so-called low-skilled workforce, also referred to as the poor basic skills workforce, basic skills deficits or the workforce with a literacy or numeracy gap (Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, 2016). These are groups of people who often look back on critical school careers, often have not completed vocational training or have pursued tasks at entry-level for many years. These target groups often include immigrant workers, including early-generation migrants, whose communicative work-based basic skills are not or no longer sufficient to meet job demands.

This focus is plausible. In some countries, this focus also provides financial backing for WBBS training and fits in with the country's educational and labour market priorities. If we also look at these target groups in this chapter, then it should be stated in relative terms that:

- not all the so-called low-skilled workers have basic skills training needs;
- basic skills training needs can also be found amongst qualified specialists; and
- from an enterprise perspective, it does not matter if an employee belongs to the low-skilled group or not—the question for the company is to what extent do basic skills contribute to solving operational challenges through need-based and useful continuing education.

For the target group of the low-skilled, there is no single authoritative definition in the EU or in individual countries, such as Germany.

Germany:

The SGB III (Social Insurance Code, part III) assumes that people without a vocational qualification, as well as those who have a formal vocational qualification but have worked for more than four years in an unskilled or semi-skilled position, are among the low-skilled. Labour market researchers at the IAB base who deal with the respective qualification requirements of the workplaces, provide the following definition: "Jobs or persons whose work belong to the field of simple work are unskilled and semi-skilled employees as well as employees or civil servants who carry out activities which do not require vocational training. For simplicity's sake, these are referred to below as 'low-skilled'..." (Bellmann & Stegmaier, 2007, p. 11).

Of course, when considering the size of the "low-skilled" group, it makes a significant difference whether one starts with the qualification profile of those affected or follows the requirements of the workplace.

EU:

Again, *the European Union* defines it differently. The low-skilled include those who have only a secondary school certificate or a secondary school leaving certificate, and who have no recognised professional qualification.

The *OECD*, which is influential in education policy, defines the low-skilled as persons who have neither a completed vocational training nor a high school diploma. However, the dominant orientation in these definitions is the lack of vocational qualifications, which is problematic. For example, many who work today as IT administrators or IT experts are self-taught, and although they have acquired and demonstrated their professional skills in their profession, they often did not get certified. If these people become unemployed, they might fall under the "low-skilled" category.

However, the orientation to the work requirements is not without problems. On the one hand, the work requirements for the so-called simple workplaces have become more and more demanding in recent years (Bosch 2014, p. 24), for example, the work of assistants who care for the elderly or the requirements of a dementia attendant. Hence, the equation that simple workplaces = low qualified is becoming less and less true. In the low-wage sector ($^2/_3$ of the median wage), which in everyday life is understood to be the domain of the low-skilled, 75% of low-paid workers have a recognised professional qualification. Conclusion: Missing professional qualifications

significantly increases the risk of becoming unemployed and then remain unemployed for a long time, but even vocational qualifications offer no guarantee that workers will be offered adequate employment.

Despite all the unintended side effects, it seems to make sense to base the definition of low-skilled on the formal qualifications of those affected instead of on the job requirements because, as stated, requirement structures in the workplace do not indicate whether the employee must have formal qualifications to fulfil them.

In the following remarks, the PROFI-TRAIN project starts with the definition quoted at the beginning of this chapter:

Persons who either have no formal vocational qualification or those who are formally qualified but have been employed on low- or unskilled workplaces for more than four years are classified as low-skilled. (SGB III, § 81, para. 2).

1.3.2 Different Situations in the EU

Upon analysing the perspective on the situation of the low-skilled in Europe, it becomes clear that the starting points are very different. It is striking how the proportion of the low-skilled is low in many new member states. One exception is Malta, where the vast majority of people of working age do not have education beyond primary education, although Malta has full employment (see Fig. 5).
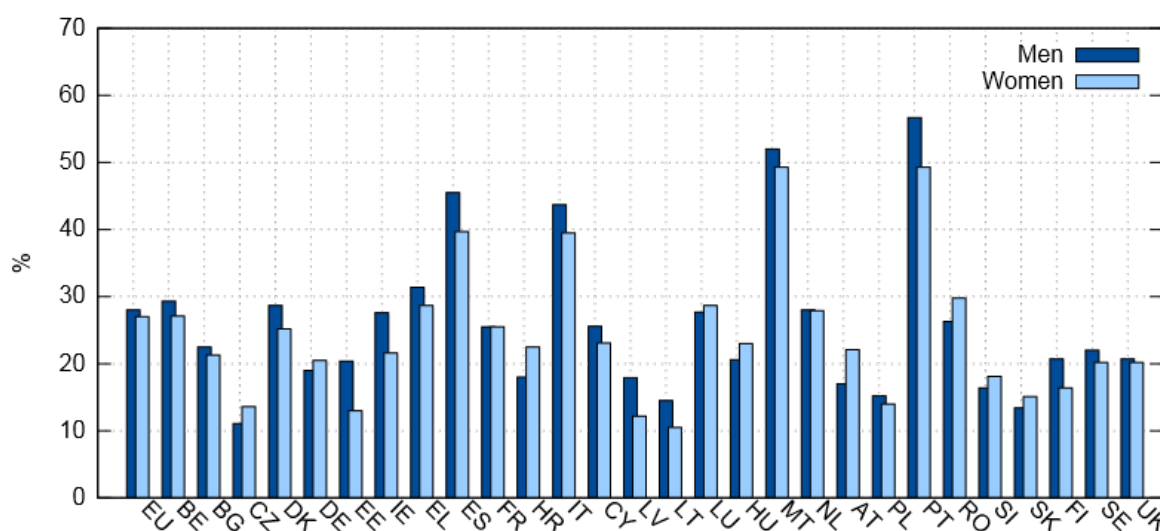

Fig. 5: Low-skilled men and women aged 15–64, 2016 (%) Source: European Labor Force Survey 2017 https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database

This is also the case in Portugal. The relative proportion across Europe has decreased significantly over time, reflected in the much higher proportion of people with a low-skill level in those aged 50 or over when compared with young people who have just completed their education. The decline was particularly high for women, who were responsible for the majority of those with low skills. Meanwhile, this ratio has changed in some countries among the younger age groups.

In 17 out of the 28 countries considered (27 EU Member States plus Norway), the proportion of women aged 25–49 with low qualifications was lower than that among men. The difference was especially big in Latvia and Portugal. Both in Austria and in Malta, the opposite was the case and significantly more women than men were low qualified.
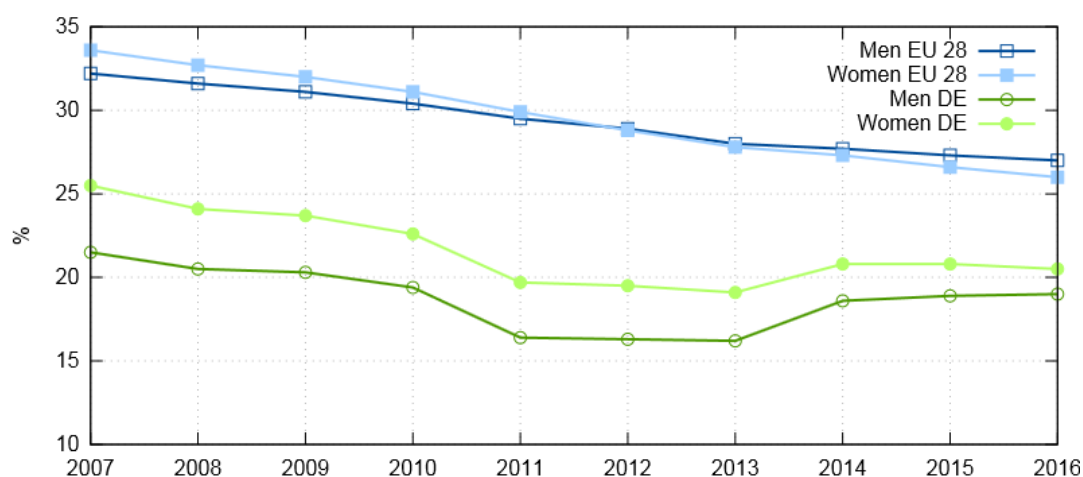

Fig. 6: Low-skilled men and women aged 15-64 in Germany and EU 28, 2007–2016
Source: European Labour Force Survey 2017
https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database

In all countries, the proportion of 25-to-49-year-olds with only primary education was lower than that of the 50-to-64-year-olds, in most cases even significantly lower.
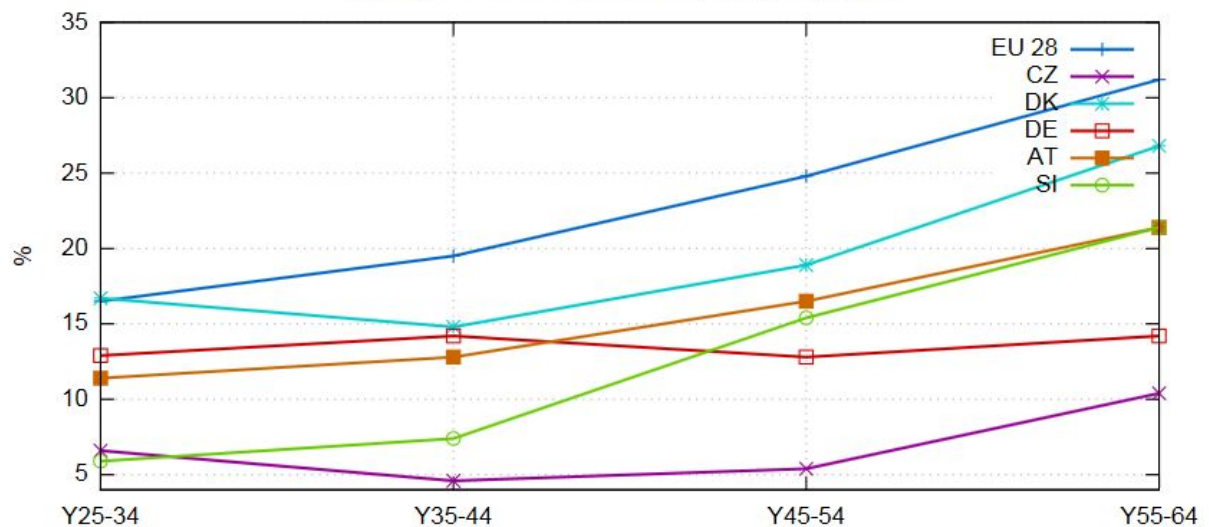
Fig. 7: Low-skilled men and women by age group, 2016 (%) Source: European Labour Force Survey 2017 https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database

1.4 What is Specific About WBBS?

WBBS is a service in need of an explanation.

In this chapter, you will find some research results on the typical characteristics of WBBS. We have worked these out from our practices, especially through discussions with WBBS trainers and institutions who experienced WBBS offers.

A self-presentation of a German WBBS coach network in Northrhine Westfalia contained the following statement on WBBS:

> *Our offers are demand-oriented, individual, exact and tailor-made.*
> *They are related to your work, take place close to the workplace and*
> *are useful for you.*

In Switzerland, WBBS is characterised in a flyer for enterprises as follows:

> *Basic Skills: tailor-made courses directly in the workplace*

Job-oriented training is short, tailor-made courses designed to improve reading and writing skills, language, everyday mathematics, and the use of digital work equipment.

The courses are built on concrete situations in the workplace and ensure the transfer of the lessons learnt back to the workplace.

Competent education partners develop a tailor-made course from the requirements of the workplaces and the learning needs of the employees. Good cooperation between companies and education providers is essential for a successful course. (SVEB, 2018).

WBBS HAS A COMPENSATORY FUNCTION

Anyone who went to school 50 years ago found a different educational canon with quite different topics from that of the younger generations. Work-based basic education takes into account educational differences that arise between the generations, which are known as "intergenerational educational differences" (Mertens, 1988). In other words, WBBS allows groups of people to fill those gaps in education that arise through changes in academic curricula over time between generations. Thus, for example, until the 1970s, the learning of a foreign language in Germany was reserved for high school students.

Not all people have equal access to education and training. The chances to attend a good school and have good vocational qualifications in childhood and adolescence are extremely different due to the environment. WBBS also aims to balance out milieu-specific motivated educational deficiencies and the associated different access and chances for access to education by allowing the acquisition of basic skills in adulthood (Klein, 2013).

WBBS IS NOT READING, WRITING AND CALCULATING ONLY

Reading, writing and arithmetic are important but not sufficient basic skills for dealing with work requirements. Literacy means more than pure literacy. Literacy means the ability to practice, understand and use printed information in everyday life at home, at work and in the community. Literacy is understood as "the ability to use the written word to participate in social life, to achieve one's goals and to further develop one's own knowledge and potential" (Notter et al., 2006, p. 11).

Literacy, like WBBS, is a social and contextual practice. This means that the basic skills to be developed relate to more active and creative participation in the concrete living and working worlds, social systems and milieus in which people move about.

Being able to read, write and calculate are not the only prerequisites for participation in social life and the working world, even in WBBS. Communicative competencies, critical thinking and the ability to reflect are also included.

Therefore, WBBS training is not about promoting cultural techniques and their use per se, as with school. The fields of learning and competence in WBBS always derive from action requirements in the world of work, and because these are constantly changing, it is not possible to define any final and definite work-based basic skills content.

WBBS IS NOT A FINISHED CURRICULUM

The action requirements are different in each workplace; that is, a closed curriculum for WBBS cannot exist. The changes in work situations often have something to do with new strategic developments in companies or with change processes. The learning objectives for WBBS are always developed in a context-specific manner (Klein & Stanik, 2009). The possible content identified above for WBBS becomes more concrete in real-life requirement situations. It is, therefore, a question of determining the needs from the concrete requirement situations that show up in workplaces, conceptualising learning topics from these needs and enabling the employees to optimise their work activities. A strategic development, an operational change is the trigger for WBBS. The workplace is the source for the learning topics and the structure that offers the opportunity to optimise work-oriented basic skills. On its website, the already-mentioned WBBS Trainer Network in Northrhine-Westfalia points out how:

> *Our offers are not off the shelf. Each time they are adapted to the specific development needs of the company and the employee.*

WBBS USES DESCRIPTORS AND CORE CURRICULA AS TOOLS FOR SITUATIONAL LEARNING

Descriptors are short descriptions of vocational action situations. They are relatively abstract because they stand for one type of real, specific vocational action situation or task and its requirements. However, such specific situations or tasks, have common characteristics and require similar resources. Therefore, they can be summarised as types. In Switzerland, a descriptor database exists as part of the Go-Toolkit, in which concrete examples from different application contexts are described along with characteristics of the respective application situations and where a list of the most important necessary and useful resources is given. There are descriptors for work-oriented oral communication, reading/understanding text, writing, everyday mathematics, ICT and collaboration/working methodology.
(https://alice.ch/de/informiert-bleiben/publikationen/)

Even though the European Core Curriculum for Workplace Literacy is not a didactic-methodical guideline for the implementation of WBBS training, we consider it to be a

solid basis to enable situational learning. The focus is on the description of areas of basic training requirements required for the implementation of vocational activities, which are, of course, specified only once in concrete cases.

http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/project-result-content/d7731d2f-b702-4733-b395-74e4d82c653e/CORE_CURRICULUM_EU_PREFINAL_EN%20_2013.pdf

WBBS FOCUSES ON EMPLOYEES

Even if WBBS adapts to the company structures or conditions, participant orientation is considered a didactic guiding principle and the questions of what to learn, how and why cannot be answered solely from the perspective of the respective company or the specific workplace requirements, but also from the perspective of the participants.

According to the tradition of education, the main recipient of basic skills training is the participant, in the workplace it is the employee, and outside the company it is the job seeker. Their needs and interests are a central starting and reference point of basic skills training. This is not necessarily a contradiction to the consideration of basic business training interests but is not necessarily in harmony with them either. The focus is on employees and job seekers who belong to the target groups of the unskilled, semi-skilled and formally low-skilled; those groups that are usually not in the focus of personnel and competence development, which are labelled as "educationally remote" (see above). The work requirements are the starting point, not the social attribution as "functional illiterates" and its stigmatisation. WBBS training does not focus on individual deficits but uses existing, often hidden competencies as a starting point for learning or develops learning events, learning objectives and learning paths that arise from critical requirement situations together with the learners. WBBS training aims to provide learning that proves useful in real life and work situations (Schwarz, 2015, pp. 29-31).

WBBS IS WORK-ORIENTED BUT NOT REDUCED TO WORK

WBBS is work-oriented but not reduced to working needs. Although learning at and for the workplace is the focus of WBBS training, it is not limited to it. Education at WBBS is also adult education. Also, occupational and operational training is always polyvalent and includes not only a reference to work but also to everyday life. The learning needs and learning interests of the employees usually include aspects that go beyond operational needs. In addition, the increased importance of soft skills makes it almost impossible to distinguish between work and life-world relations clearly.

WBBS USES AND DEVELOPS THE PROMOTION OF LEARNING OF WORK ENVIRONMENTS

Although there are still workplaces for low-skilled workers with low or no learning potential, the number of jobs in this sector with a high learning potential is increasing. Since low-skilled people prefer learning during the process of working over any other learning format, WBBS addresses the learning potential of the respective workplace and links it with the learning interests, motives and needs of the employees. WBBS considers their individual learning strategies and learning preferences. Baethge/Baethge-Kinsky (2004) outline what constitutes the learning support of workplaces, thereby providing a wealth of guidance on designing jobs for the low-skilled in care. The following points will help increase learning in workplaces:

- *Allowing professional development and creating opportunities and necessities that allow the acquisition of new skills while working.* A prerequisite for this is that learning in the workplace is understood as a matter of self-evidence and not as an expression of deficits.
- *Making work tasks comprehensive/holistic.* Work tasks are not specified in detail and in the work execution, there is the possibility to make independent decisions.
- *Designing work that requires cooperation with others.* Intensive communication and cooperation increase employees' learning skills.
- *Offering participation opportunities.* Many arrangements can be made with each other, and when changes are made, employees' ideas can be taken up and incorporated into key decisions.

WBBS FOLLOWS CONCRETE CONSIDERATIONS OF USEFULNESS

WBBS with the enterprise as the place of learning has two addressees: the employees and the organisation; that is, the company or the persons responsible for the operation. Company management and employee representatives will only consider WBBS as a sensible option if, in addition to the individual benefit, an operational benefit that is clearly describable and identifiable can be expected. Acceptance among companies and employees for basic education in business and work requires "anchor" and "connection". The return must be right for the company/commissioning institution as well as for the learners (see Module 6).

WBBS CONSIDERS DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES OF USEFULNESS

However, since many different interests and ideas must be taken into account in WBBS, it is worthwhile to get to know the participants' different perspectives and to consider them in educational planning and implementation.

The quality department of a company, for example, wants the participants to write comprehensible documentation, but the teacher wants its participants to learn grammatically correct German and the participants themselves want to stop asking their colleagues for help to complete "admin stuff". The shift leader, on the other hand, is initially interested in having enough staff to run the work processes smoothly, even though the participants are taking part in the training. Now the trick is to generate goals from this mixed situation and, if possible, to formulate learning outcomes that suit all the participants.
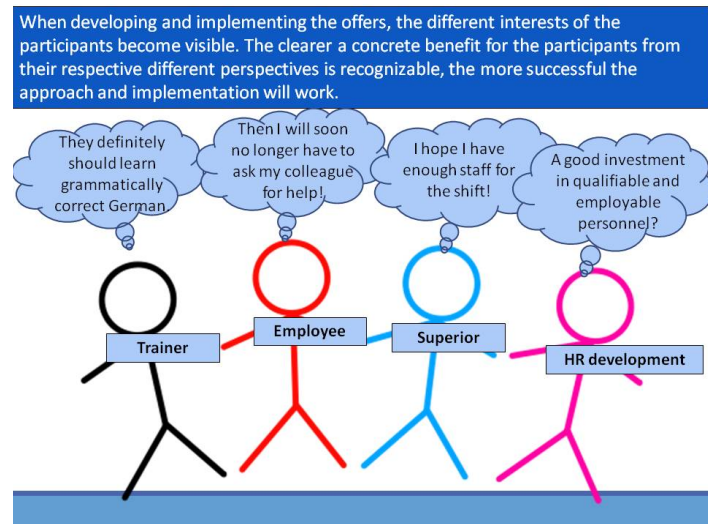

Fig. 8: Different expectations (Klein, Reutter & Schwarz, 2017)

WBBS IS OUTCOME-ORIENTED

In the entire educational landscape, an outcome-oriented view, which focuses on learning outcomes and competence profiles, has prevailed in recent years. This approach also forms an integrative concept in WBBS. Even from a business logic, work and organisational processes, developments and activities are organised in accordance with their expected goals, results and returns. Educational planning based on learning outcomes and competence profiles addresses how best to organise teaching and learning situations to enable the participants to achieve the desired learning outcomes (Klein, 2016).

Achieving learning outcomes rather than teaching specific content or subject matter is the starting point for the development of learning settings. Therefore, the key questions are: *How can employees successfully lose their fear of contact when dealing with new technologies?* or *What skills do temporary workers need to increase their chances with future employers?* Concrete and "useful" educational objectives, which are an important basis for further implementation steps, can be derived from such commonly discussed questions.

WBBS TAKES PLACE IN SHORT TRAINING UNITS IN THE WORKPLACE

Companies often cannot or do not want to release their workforce for a longer period of time for VET. SMEs often do not have enough time buffers and stand-ins. The employees themselves are often not ready to accept long training sessions. Their learning experiences often go back a long way and are associated with failure rather than success. Therefore, we recommend short training sessions, for example, 10 x two- to three-hour training sessions, in which clearly defined goals are pursued. For example, the GO project includes:

- *short courses of 20 to 40 hours, which take place during working hours or are counted as such; and*
- *6 to 12 participants per course, with a maximum of three lessons per day.*

The empirical evidence shows that even short training times lead to changes in the work activity; that is, show effects. This experience of short yet useful learning often leads to follow-on offers.

In this sense, WBBS realises an idea of lifelong learning, which allows its participants to find new occasions and to work on competence development in short learning units.

WBBS takes place predominantly in the workplace. The reasons for this are diverse. On the one hand, it is easier for entrepreneurs to release employees without travel times. On the other hand, the place of learning allows work to be as close as possible to the actual needs for competence development and can ideally be connected to the strategic developments of the company.

WBBS KNOWS DIFFERENT/VARIOUS FORMATS

In terms of learning formats, WBBS is, to a large extent, a flexible service based on operational opportunities and needs. The needs are usually very concrete and individual, which is why it is extremely rare that larger learning groups come about. In practice, learning formats, such as small groups or learning tandems, dominate. In Germany, positive experiences are also made with the format of the WBBS single coaching, which especially reaches employees in small companies, and where impressive learning success can be achieved in a relatively short time.

WBBS ENSURES THE LEARNING TRANSFER

Learning is not enough in WBBS. Further achievement involves transferring what has been learned as competence in the work process (Klein, Reutter & Rodenbücher, 2014). At times, you can count on it to happen incidentally. At the same time, it is advisable to promote and accompany these processes, because it takes courage for one to apply newly acquired knowledge in the reality of everyday work and to

overcome habits ("my colleague has always done that for me"). Also, groups of people who are afflicted with a deficient self-image often have a reorientation of established and traditional role patterns (Klein, Reutter & Rodenbücher 2014, 35). Learning transfer requires a feedback culture in the company, "which invites the development, the transformation of old role models and creates space for changed employee behavior. And you do not find this feedback culture to be inflationary and it cannot be developed everywhere"(Klein, 2012). The learning transfer must also take into account "that increases in competence in the sense of 'more capability' also require competence gains in the sense of 'more permittance'. Thus, traditional hierarchical patterns may be threatened and appropriate counter-reactions must be considered in advance". (Rossmann, 2012, pg 107).
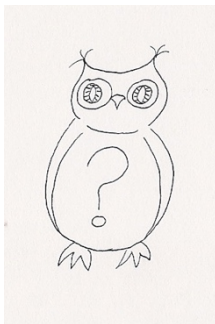
Take some time for a brief reflection: Why so many words to explain a new educational service? In practice, it turns out that WBBS is still a "service in need of an explanation." This is especially true if you want to offer WBBS in companies. The many explanations dealing with this point should help you develop your understanding. Try it once! Here is a scenario:

If my colleague asks me tomorrow "What is WBBS?", what would my spontaneous answer be?

1.5 What Are the Benefits of WBBS?

The question may be strange. Is education not an added value in itself? The WBBS practice in different countries shows that education also has to face the new primacy of evidence-based thinking; that is, the question of what good will it be and what will come out of it.

Businesses understand themselves as and are first and foremost places of work; they are not easily understood by the actors as learning places. WBBS, as an educational service aimed at the simple workforce in the enterprise, is not a sure-fire success!

*THE USE OF **WBBS** IS TO CHANGE PERFORMANCE AT WORK.*

*THE USE OF **WBBS** IS NOT TO REACH A HIGHER LEVEL.*

Companies and employees see the added value and benefits of WBBS when what they have learned translates into a change in performance. That's the expected outcome. This means that at the end of a training course, the employees should succeed in coping with work requirements better than before training. Small steps and changes that can be targeted and achieved in short training times are enough.

The use is determined by two customers.

Anyone wishing to develop WBBS as a business field as a trainer should be aware that unlike classical coursework or classical seminar operations, they can only realise their offer if two customers can be convinced:

- the enterprise; and
- the eligible employees.

In a recently conducted impact assessment on WBBS in Germany (Klein, Reutter & Rudolph, 2018), management and supervisors, employees and WBBS trainers were asked how they could describe the benefits of WBBS from their respective perspectives.

In terms of benefits for employees who had completed their WBBS training, an impressive range was seen:

Table 2:

The benefits of WBBS from the employees' perspective

The benefits of WBBS for employees	
Categories	**Examples from the evaluation material**
Securing employability	➢ Development of the professional profile ➢ Development of new career prospects ➢ Better accomplishment of the work tasks
Personal development	➢ Self-confidence ➢ Confidence in one's own learning capacity ➢ Independence
Team spirit	➢ Active contribution to the work team ➢ Social competencies ➢ Feeling accepted in the team

Empowerment related to learning	➢ Using one's own initiative to train more and develop one's competencies
	➢ Interest
	➢ Motivation and willingness to learn
Increase of basic technical skills	➢ Linguistic basic skills (e.g. subject-specific vocabulary)
	➢ Basic mathematical skills
	➢ Digital basic skills
Identification with the company	➢ Feeling appreciated by the employer through the training offered
	➢ Awareness of responsibility
Change of attitude	➢ Positive about changes in the workplace
	➢ Positive about learning contents (reduction of learning blockages)

Source: Klein, Reutter & Rudolph, 2018, 3-4

One particularly noteworthy benefit is the changed attitude towards learning. The frequently alleged assumption that low-skilled employees are poorly educated and largely absent from further education is not confirmed. WBBS training, which is tailor-made, needs-based and substantively related to concrete work, and which is implemented in the workplace, and the learning formats that range from individual coaching to learning in small groups, have promoted the employees' motivation and willingness to learn. They have also encouraged employees to invest in training and competence development on their own initiative.

The benefits of WBBS for businesses are presented in other categories. It's more about the "return". Managers and supervisors are less interested in the employability of their employees. The benefits they described are related to the optimisation of operational processes. However, a variety of benefits arise even from this perspective:

Table 3:

Benefits for businesses

The benefits of WBBS for businesses	
Categories	**Examples from the evaluation material**
Instrument of employee loyalty	➢ Strengthening the bond with the company
	➢ Higher employee satisfaction

	➢ Less employee turnover
Resource to secure skilled labour/in-house recruitment	➢ Employees can be instated more competently ➢ Employees take on tasks they did not dare to do previously ➢ Low- and unskilled employees are much more flexible with their work
Increase in productivity	➢ Fewer mistakes in production ➢ Improvement of work processes ➢ Decrease in sick leaves and absences ➢ More commitment by employees
Increase in professional external impact	➢ Social interaction with customers, guests, patients
Improvement of the work environment	➢ Fewer questions to colleagues (relief) ➢ Group dynamics
Supervisors learn too	➢ Social interaction with employees (becoming aware of the complexity of communication situations) ➢ Understanding the employees' needs
Adjustment of the business	➢ Restructuring operational procedures

Source: Klein, Reutter & Rudolph, 2018, 7

The question of the benefits of the offers was also examined in the GO project. The experiences of the company representatives showed what expectations they had and in what way they had been fulfilled:

Maître Chocolatier Chocolat Villars: "The employees should understand and implement hygiene instructions and safety regulations and correctly complete reports. The structured approach of the further education provider was very helpful to achieve a good effect."

Restaurant Manager SV-Group: "Our kitchen staff must also be able to answer customer questions. Now they ask if they do not understand something and show more interest in learning something new."

Production Manager Fraisa: "We wanted our employees to be able to use our IT environment safely. For that, it was necessary to improve their reading

comprehension. Now they can independently get and understand test protocols. That relieves the superiors."

Production Manager Zweifel Pomy-Chips: "Our employees can now write e-mails and find their way around the internet. At the same time, it has helped them to make the transition to the computer-controlled screen when automating the final packaging." (GO-Factsheet, 2018)

An evaluation of the feedback from company representatives at the end of the courses showed a very similar picture to the results of the evaluation in Germany:

Feedback from the companies in the GO project after completion of the courses included:

- *improved work processes in everyday operations;*
- *increase in efficiency and productivity;*
- *greater openness for change, greater flexibility;*
- *fewer accidents at work, fewer mistakes;*
- *less turnover and fewer absences;*
- *relief of team leaders/supervisors through greater autonomy; and*
- *stronger identification with the operation.*

(Schmid & Hischier, 2018).

Further Readings

Finally, we give you a few hints to enhance and illustrate the explanations on the basic knowledge of WBBS.

Here is the link to a corporate brochure where corporate executives, WBBS trainers, HR professionals and employees shared their experiences and outcomes during a WBBS training session. What do companies think about WBBS training? We asked four of our SMEs to give us their story: http://www.bbb-dortmund.de/.../Unternehmensbroschuere_en_fina...
Also to be found here: https://ec.europa.eu/epale/de/node/54461
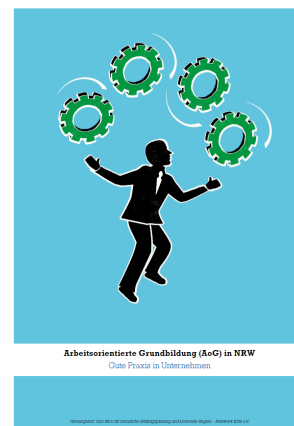
We also recommend the GO Toolkit, which contains "tools" specifically designed to help you plan and conduct work-based learning. It is aimed at specialists who work with the GO model in companies. Volume 1 contains i.a. guidelines for recording requirement profiles while Volume 2 contains descriptors of situations in the work process, their characteristics and the resources they can use to tackle basic skills. Editor: SVEB

Authors: Cäcilia Märki, Bernhard Grämiger.
https://alice.ch/de/informiert-bleiben/publikationen/

The GO brochure contains practical examples from SMEs. In particular, experiences from learning cooperations are presented to show how WBBS has worked in constellations with micro-enterprises. These consortiums are sector-related regional associations (e.g. gastronomy).

https://alice.ch/fileadmin/Dokumente/Grundkompetenzen/GOBroschure2015.pdf

EBSN has cooperated in the writing of a document that may provide a good start. We recommend that you look at the whole document! It was created for the Elinet network by colleagues from the (no longer existing) NRDC (National Research and Development Centre for Basic Skills, Institute of Education, University of London). You can find the document here: http://www.eli-net.eu/fileadmin/ELINET/Redaktion/user_upload/ELINET_Guiding_principles_for_terminology_use_in_adult_literacy_-_a_rationale1.pdf

There are also some good definitions in a document created by a project coordinated by the EBSN member in Malta, the Director for Adult Learning. You will find it here: https://ec.europa.eu/epale/sites/epale/files/using_digital_technology_for_adult_literacy.pdf

There are also some good definitions/explanations of the levels of skills in the Norwegian Competence Goals, which you can find in English here: https://www.kompetansenorge.no/English/Basic-skills/#ob=9957&Toolsandresources5

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https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/497544/BIS-16-36-impact-of-poor-basic-literacy-and-numeracy-on-employers.pdf

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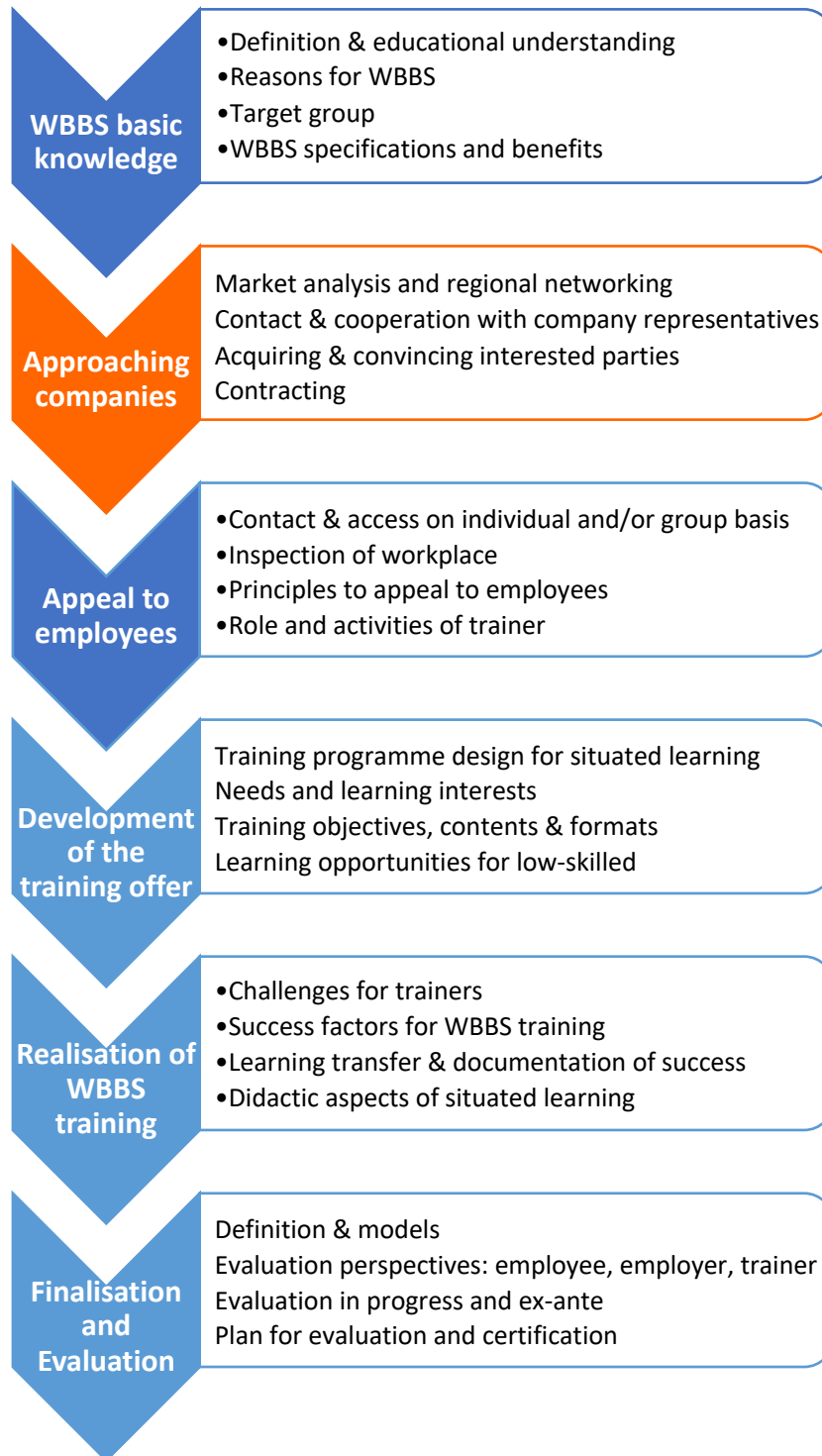
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Module 2 | Approaches to Companies

WBBS basic knowledge
- Definition & educational understanding
- Reasons for WBBS
- Target group
- WBBS specifications and benefits

Approaching companies
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- Contact & cooperation with company representatives
- Acquiring & convincing interested parties
- Contracting

Appeal to employees
- Contact & access on individual and/or group basis
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- Role and activities of trainer

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Realisation of WBBS training
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Finalisation and Evaluation
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BEST

Content

Introduction

In this chapter, we deal with the question of how to identify and address parties that are potentially interested in WBBS and how they can realise it in their company.

A targeted market analysis is indispensable to identify potentially interested parties for WBBS training. It is important to identify sectors and companies in which primarily low-skilled persons are employed. Moreover, those sectors and companies in which there have been fundamental changes or in which there will be fundamental restructuring processes in the future, are also of interest.

The development of a comprehensive (local) network and the continuous contact or involvement of the relevant stakeholders[1] and disseminators[2] are of decisive importance to be able to reach potentially interested parties, which often proves to be difficult. Each respective sector or company must consider with care which acquisition strategies could be the most effective for them to act expediently.

If a potentially interested party shows a fundamental interest in WBBS training, the first step is to convince the employer of the expected economic benefits and other related advantages for the company and the employees. At this point, the presentation of public funding options is important, especially for SMEs. Once this is achieved, the focus becomes the realisation of the WBBS training in the course of constructive cooperation with the responsible people of the company and to sign the corresponding training contracts.

How this can be achieved and which factors should be considered will be explained in this module. Specifically, the following questions will be addressed:

- Which factors are guiding the conduct of the market or needs analysis of potentially interested parties for WBBS training?

- Who are the disseminators and stakeholders that contribute to the wide distribution of the information about offers of WBBS training and provide the first access to potential sectors and companies?

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[1] Stakeholder. In *Collins Dictionary.* Retrieved June 25, 2018, from
https://www.collinsdictionary.com

[2] To disseminate. In *Cambridge Dictionary.* Retrieved June 25, 2018, from
https://dictionary.cambridge.org

- How can potential companies be reached and which acquisition strategies can, therefore, be used?
- How can potentially interested parties be convinced of the meaningfulness and necessity of WBBS training in their company, including the financial aspect?
- Which criteria should be considered in order to be able to push forward the further concretisation of the planned WBBS training in the company within the frame of constructive cooperation?

2.1 Market Analysis: Receivers of WBBS Training

The realisation of WBBS training starts with a basic research phase analysing the situation on the market and the needs of the companies and potential trainees:

- In which branches and companies do we find the target group of low-skilled workers?
- In terms of WBBS, what needs do these branches, companies or employees probably have when considering their characteristics and situations?
- Are there competitive training providers offering WBBS training? How do they work? What do they offer? What can we learn from them? What are their strengths and weaknesses?
- Are there any important changes in the branch (new laws, techniques, trends) that could be a challenge for target companies?
- How is the financial situation of the branch and its companies? Is there any prognosis for the future development of the concerned sector?

Target market analysis is indispensable.

The market analysis can be realised according to the following model[3]:

1. *Description of the target market*

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[3] Selbststaendigkeit.de.(n.d.). Das Portal für Gründer, Unternehmer, Selbstständige und KMUs: Marktanalyse richtig durchführen – warum Sie unverzichtbar für Gründer und Unternehmer ist. Retrieved June 25, 2018, from https://selbststaendigkeit.de/existenzgruendung/businessplan/marketingplan/marketinganalyse/marktanalyse-richtig-durchfuehren

Clear distinction of target sector(s), subdivision into groups (e.g. Group A: cleaning, Group B: gastronomy…or Group A: big corporations, Group B: SMEs) and analysis of these groups.

2. **Analysis of the dimensions and development of the market**

   Determination of market size, the prognosis of future development and prospective growth rate.

3. **Competition analysis**

   Analysis of main competitors, their training products, strengths and weaknesses and what distinguishes them from competitors and their offers.

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4. **Analysis of the most promising potential clients**

   Which client groups are the most promising ones concerning turnover? The analysis of the structure of these potential clients, and of the resulting needs and demands, are key to a successful entry strategy.

5. **Investigation of market potential**

   Get an overview of the potential of the market, possible future development and trends.

To gather all the necessary information, it is recommended to conduct:

a) primary research: e.g. interviewing professionals, insiders, experts of the target market; and

b) secondary research: using existing information, e.g. articles, statistics, reports, publications which can be found online in newspapers or on company websites and publications of branch organisations, economic chambers, statistical offices, etc.

Focus on branches with a high rate of low-skilled employees.

WBBS offers are primarily of interest for those sectors and companies in which low-skilled people are being employed. These areas mainly include the cleaning and constructing sectors and the gastronomy and care sectors. Usually, in these sectors, a fairly high share of the workforce is foreign or has a migrant background. Sometimes, the chance of being employed as an assistant worker is given to people with little or no education. This is how they get a chance for regular employment. Fundamental basic skills vary considerably here, and an increase in the different skills and

competencies would facilitate the everyday working life of these employees significantly and help them work more efficiently.

Good practice example—experiences of businesses employing low-skilled persons at the BEST Institute in Austria

Concerning work-based training for low-skilled persons, BEST has been cooperating with companies in the construction, tourism, care and cleaning sectors for years. The challenges in the different sectors are similar and can be summed up as the following:

- *It's easier for employers to hire new employees than to train currently employed ones.*
- *Small companies don't have the financial resources for a training project.*
- *Large companies, e.g. in the construction sector, have their own internal training programmes and responsible departments.*

It is not easy to convince them, but this does not mean that it is impossible. This can be achieved by:

- *explaining to them how they will benefit economically;*

- *offering small companies small and affordable training packages and funding options;*
- *presenting excellent references/recommendations of companies that already did such training with BEST; and*
- *presenting large companies with a detailed, sound training package at the very beginning in order to convince the decision maker (although it will be adapted or even totally changed according to the employees' needs and circumstances).*

The access to new companies without any contact so far is easier on an informal level, e.g. at Christmas parties and other events of the sector.

WBBS can be found in more areas apart from the ones mentioned above. People with a lack of basic skills, such as reading, writing, calculating and IT skills, can also be found in offices or in sales, etc. They might be able to do the tasks they are asked without any problems, and sometimes deficits in certain areas will not be recognised by their superiors or colleagues unless they are of relevance for the execution of the work. These employees mostly adapt to their situation by, for example, ensuring work-sharing among their colleagues, where they will pass on potentially problematic tasks to them. In areas in which this is not possible, they might ask other colleagues for help. This is often associated with discomfort. Those employees would certainly benefit from a need-oriented improvement of their basic skills in order to gain security in the execution of work and to increase their self-esteem. Potential employees for

WBBS training, both as individuals or as smaller groups, exist in nearly all sectors and companies.

WBBS training can also be of interest for companies in which major changes or restructurings have been taken place recently. In the case of fundamental changes in the company where employees are confronted with new, changed requirement structures, WBBS offers can be a good opportunity for them to familiarise themselves quickly with the new working conditions and challenges. A targeted, demand-oriented expansion of various skills and competencies, which are of particular relevance for the daily work might enable a quick adaptation to changed working structures and conditions. Hence, WBBS ensures that employees are able to do their job tasks satisfactorily and that they can quickly regain security and routine in their work process.

Moreover, in companies in which there will be major necessary changes in the near future, which will influence the employees' working conditions and basic work processes, a WBBS education can help prepare such employees for the new challenges ahead. This ensures that employees will be made familiar with the new conditions and requirements before or during the restructuring. Hence, the continuation of everyday work can be guaranteed.

The continuous observation of trends and basic developments on the (local) labour market is a good possibility to learn about changing working conditions in certain areas and sectors in order to identify potentially interested parties for WBBS.

Take some time for a brief reflection:
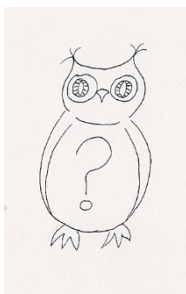
Without doing any research, think about the following questions as part of a quick, mental market research:

Which is/are the target sector(s)? Why?

In which subcategories can you divide the target market?

Do you know any competitors and their training products?

How could you distinguish your offer from already existing training?

2.2 Networking

Contacts and networks play an important role to, on the one hand, inform potentially interested companies and sectors of WBBS offers, and on the other hand, to be able to find out about existing requirements in companies.

To get in contact with people who know people.

2.2.1 Contacts and Cooperation with Stakeholders and Disseminators

A good possibility to promote WBBS training and identify potentially interested parties is to cooperate with trade unions, chambers, the public employment service, business consultants familiar with the branch, professional associations, branch unions, employers' and workers' organisations, local/regional business promotion institutions and workers' councils on a regular basis. In general, the people concerned would be aware of any existing needs in the sectors and companies or if there are any pending restructuring processes. They can be seen as an important interface through which one can deposit requirements to the appropriate recipient.

An important role involves contacts and cooperation with public authorities at different levels: municipality, district offices, state governments, ministries and all their subordinate institutions, such as employment services. Contact persons that are part of these authorities and institutions can be invited to events, presentations, talks etc., and given informative material (e.g. flyers, brochures, posters) that they can put at their offices for free withdrawal or pass on to interested persons.

Good practice example—cooperation with public administration & subordinate institutions at the BEST Institute in Austria

Depending on the exact target groups and training goals, the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) and its regional offices find a lot of cooperation from the Austrian Integration Fund (ÖIF) and the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) as subordinate institutions of the foreign ministry, local district offices ("Bezirkshauptmannschaft") and also nonprofit organisations like "fair & sensible", which is a subordinate association of the Vienna police. The cooperation consists of mutual PR support and the dissemination and publication of flyers, brochures and posters. However, it especially focuses on creating contact with "people who know people".

The ongoing contact and network care, as well as efforts for successive expansion with relevant stakeholders and disseminators, are essential for finding out the specific needs of individual companies and necessary adaptations and restructurings. Moreover, it is they who should be able to communicate WBBS offers as a profitable investment in companies and to sensitize employers accordingly. They can be seen as important door openers[4] in companies, which might make a decisive contribution to implementing WBBS training. Participation in relevant events, lectures and meetings opens up new opportunities for discussion with the relevant actors. Existing contacts can be maintained and intensified, and new contacts can be made.

2.2.2 Local Business Networks

The creation of a comprehensive (local) business network and the integration of a business consultant is of central importance to promote WBBS training in companies and to intensify its realisation. Contact with many companies enables the constant exchange of resources and actual needs and also leads to the possibility to use resources efficiently.

Take some time for a brief reflection:
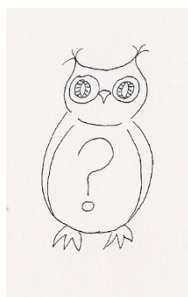
Think briefly about your personal contacts and networks. Who do you think might know of respective actors of relevant companies to get information on existing needs or pending restructurings? Who would be able to sensitize responsible actors for WBBS offers?

What are your possibilities of further increasing and intensifying your networks in order to gain access to potentially interested parties?

2.3 Acquisition and Access to Relevant Companies

Gaining access to relevant companies for WBBS training proves difficult in practical life. Sectors or companies employing mainly low-skilled people, tend to show a lack of

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[4] *A door opener is a contact that will help with gaining access to the decision maker of a company.*

MBASKOOL. (n.d.). Study.Learn.Share. A Comprehensive Management Resource for Students & Professionals: Door Opener Retrieved June 25, 2018, from https://www.mbaskool.com/business-concepts/marketing-and-strategy-terms/11399-door-opener.html

interest in investing in further education for their employees. High fluctuation can be observed in these sectors or companies, and employee retention is generally quite low. The work and tasks to be done are carried out with low engagement and motivation. There is also little willingness to "do more" or to educate oneself further in order to perform better and more efficiently at work. There is a high labour supply in these areas. If the employees' work is not of the desired quality, the responsible persons tend to recruit new employees rather than invest in the further education of their existing employees.

Existing contacts or networks prove to be a valuable resource when determining the general willingness for WBBS training in companies in the run-up. If no contacts or networks exist, then it is all about building them up.

A possibility to establish contacts in potential sectors is to get a first overview of the companies in a particular sector from the yellow pages. The advantage of yellow pages is that you don't just find large corporations and companies, but also small and medium-sized enterprises, which you would not have considered otherwise.

Experience has shown that gaining access to large corporations and companies is rather difficult. Corporations and companies, which care about the further education of their employees, might already have their own regulated further education system and cooperate with established providers. That's why they might show little interest in new offers and providers. In the case of small and medium-sized enterprises, there might be a lack of financial or personal resources or a general lack of willingness to invest in the further education of their employees. These are the key elements that hinder the realisation of WBBS training.

The prerequisites to realising WBBS training in companies can be described as less beneficial or even difficult. In order to motivate companies to conduct WBBS training, besides targeted disseminators and stakeholders, there need to be well-considered acquisition strategies to convince the responsible actors of the meaningfulness and benefits of WBBS, which are described in Subsection 2.4.1 "Clarification of the positive effects of WBBS training."

Acquisition Strategies

Basically, there are three options through which access to companies for the implementation of WBBS training can be gained:

Pixabay: Creative Commons

a) Cold acquisition

- 1st research (online, yellow pages, business directories, etc.): Which company could be interested?

- 2nd research (online, contacting via telephone companies or branch organisations, chamber of commerce, professionals, visiting trade shows, etc.): Gather information about possible clients and the needs of the branches and companies.

- 3rd research: Find the best contact person and the responsible decision maker of the company.

- Direct approach: either personally (appointment in the office of the company, at a trade show or at other business events) or via telephone first. Mail or e-mail usually do not cause any reaction.

b) **Informal/personal acquisition** with the help of personal contacts, door openers, business contacts, informal gatherings (e.g. Christmas party of the chamber of commerce or branch organisations), etc. This approach also includes:

- preparation and research, as described above; and

- personal contact with decision makers, either directly at informal gatherings or organised by personal contacts/door openers.

c) ***Existing contacts/cooperation*** with companies from other/former projects (warm acquisition)[5].

In practice, the mailing or electronic mailing of information material or concrete offers for WBBS training has been shown not to be very promising. Establishing personal contact with a decision maker (head of department or HR manager) is far more appropriate to present and promote the offer. It is important to get in touch with the respective person, who is responsible for the further education of the employees in order to promote further door opening efforts expediently.

Every company has its own culture and structures. For this reason, it is not very useful to have a fixed procedure or strategy to get to the right contact person. In small companies, the owner or director might be the responsible decision maker. In bigger companies, the immediate supervisor, HR managers or other company representatives would be the right contacts.

Once the responsible person is identified, it is advisable to ask for a personal meeting by telephone. Once the meeting has been scheduled, it is necessary to develop an appealing and convincing initial offer, which is tailored to the concrete anticipated need of the company. For this to succeed, it is essential to get detailed information on the company, employees, basic work and operations, whether work conditions had been changed in the recent past or are pending restructuring.

This is the basis for identifying potential topics which contribute to a beneficial investment in the skills and competencies of the employees and which has a positive effect on their work and operating results. To convince the people responsible in the company and to increase their interest in potential realisation possibilities, they must be presented with the expected positive effects as well as the real economic benefits for the business (e.g. savings potential, increase in productivity and efficiency, increase of the satisfaction of employees and customers, lower fluctuation, etc.).

Be well prepared!

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[5] Für Gründer. (n.d.). Mit Kaltakquise Kunden gewinnen: So sollten Sie vorgehen. Retrieved June 25, 2018, from https://www.fuer-gruender.de/wissen/unternehmen-fuehren/businessplan-umsetzen/kundengewinnung/kaltakquise/

CentralStationCRM. (n.d.). Was ist Kaltakquise - eine Definition. Retrieved June 25, 2018, from https://centralstationcrm.de/blog/was-ist-kaltakquise-eine-definition

Large corporations and businesses are likely to expect a comprehensive and well-edited offer. Smaller companies might prefer offers that are tailored to their needs and that are more relevant and promising for them. Good practice brochures with listed references are a useful tool to convince both large and small companies of the positive effects of WBBS training and of its being a valuable investment. Comprehensive persuasion in terms of need and efficiency must be done in order to arouse fundamental interest in WBBS training.

Another important criterion to further increase the interest of WBBS training in the company is the offer to plan and execute the WBBS training tailor-made to the current needs and challenges of the company or to the planned restructuring.

Take some time for a brief reflection:
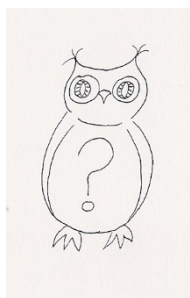
If you already scheduled a first meeting: Which basic information about the company, employees, etc. is relevant for you to be able to prepare and present an attractive offer and suitable practice exercises?

Which pursuing questions could be relevant to demonstrate potential training needs in the company and to clarify the meaningfulness and necessity of WBBS training?

Which specific (economic) benefit could you recommend to the company representatives?

Good practice example—"business contacts" at the BEST Institute (Austria):

At the BEST Institute in Vienna, so-called "business contacts" are in charge of:

- *networking and setting up contacts and cooperation with companies;*
- *organising and monitoring on-the-job-training;*
- *mediating between trainees, companies and training institutions;*
- *organising presentations, talks, field trips, expert lectures and job fairs;*
- *presenting the benefits of WBBS training; and*
- *gathering feedback from trainees and companies and evaluating the training.*

Through years of work experience, they build up and maintain a network of companies as cooperation partners, meet different companies, branches, industries and their characteristics, methods and operating principles. They are the contact persons for the manager responsible for the company as well as the trainees and trainers.

An exemplary profile of a BEST "business contact" includes:

- *training and teaching certificates;*
- *many years of training, teaching and coaching experience;*
- *profound knowledge of the labour market and (vocational) educational system;*
- *deep economic understanding;*
- *profound knowledge of the relevant branches and companies, including contacts to a large number of decision makers;*
- *a reflective attitude; and*
- *excellent communication skills.*

2.4 Contact and Cooperation with Interested Companies

The first personal meeting with the director, HR manager or department manager is all about intensifying further the basic interest in WBBS training and clarifying its expected positive effects on the company and the employees. Constructive and open dialogue should be secured in order to present the offer and discuss practically the actual needs and interests of the company. The character of the contact and cooperation is supposed to be dialogical from the beginning and not missionarylike, which means that the training institution should not try to implement a set of fixed ideas but must listen well to the needs and requests of the company in order to achieve success and mutual satisfaction.

It is important to understand the perspectives of the employer. Questioning or even criticising the employer would be an absolute no-go. Instead, respecting the employer's view, listening carefully, asking open impulse questions, having a mutual understanding and negotiating with the aim of reaching an agreement, are principles which should be followed for a successful dialogue.

At all stages of contact, cooperation and communication with company representatives and decision makers, it is important for the acting training institution to understand and speak the same language concerning lexicon, technical terms and sociolect. Training and educational institutions tend to use their specific technical language, and so do companies, depending on their branches. Part of the research and preparation involves finding out more about the language of the business and leaving behind one's own technical language in order to facilitate mutual understanding and be more convincing. The use of clear and precise words which do not need long explanations is important for communication. The trainer should avoid promising and raising expectations which might not be fulfilled in the end. Trainers who have gathered

experiences in the concerned business are a big advantage for every training institution[6].

A checklist for a so-called "elevator pitch" can help you with the preparation of the first contact/talk (see Annexe).

2.4.1 Clarification of the Positive Effects of WBBS Training

Besides building a constructive discussion atmosphere, the effort should be laid on creating a positive image of WBBS for the potentially interested party.

Benefits, benefits, benefits…

In order for this to work, offering basic information on WBBS would be essential to clarify the learning approach and the particularities in contrast with normal further education, e.g. a seminar. The following points summarise the objectives and potential possibilities of WBBS training, which could be essential for potentially interested parties to start viewing WBBS training as an adequate option for their business.

It needs to be clarified that WBBS training:

- focuses on the current needs and interests of companies and employees;
- is a good way to react quickly and efficiently to current trends and developments in the labour market, and related changes and restructurings;
- is tailored individually to the current needs of the company to secure a goal-oriented expansion and improve the necessary competencies and skills of the employees;
- enables learning settings that meet the needs, prerequisites and interests of the employees so as to reach the learning objectives more efficiently;
- is able to secure quickly a learning success for the employees, which increases motivation, joy in learning, and active participation and engagement;

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[6] TRIAS – Guidance in the workplace. Involving employers, reaching low qualified. (2017). *IO2: The TRIAS textbook* [PDF file]. Retrieved June 25, 2018, from https://www.oesb-sb.at/fileadmin/user_upload/oebs_sb/Publikationen/2017_OESB_TRIAS_Textbook_EN_LizenzCCBYSA.pdf

- takes learning and skills experiences and development into account;

- has a very high practical orientation;

- continuously checks on the learning progress of the employees and flexibly adapts the learning settings to their current needs in order to be able to ensure a target-oriented achievement of the learning objectives of all employees; and

- is able to initiate a positive attitude towards learning and further education in the ethos of the company.

The director's, HR manager's or department manager's first introduction to WBBS training should include the clarification of the expected positive effects for the company. They need to be convinced that investment in the further education of their employees pays off and has a sustainable effect on the operating result.

With the realisation of the WBBS training, a company can expect the following positive effects:

- Increase in profit and productivity.

- Faster and improved implementation of work processes.

- Minimising/avoiding mistakes in work execution.

- Employees are more flexible in their work and are able to take over tasks and exercises, which they weren't able to do before.

- Employees don't need to ask their colleagues for help as often as they used to.

- Increase of group dynamics and collegiality.

- Higher loyalty of employees to the company.

- Higher employee satisfaction.

- Less sick leave and absences as well as lower fluctuation.

- Transparent need for further demand-oriented learning which can be developed by considering the employees' interests.

- Employees show interest in further development and education, whereby security and routine in the execution of work is increased.

- Evidence of on-the-job training may be useful for employees to obtain necessary certification (ISO) or tenders for the company's orders.

- Higher customer satisfaction as a result of more competent employees (e.g. solid language skills and communication competence → fewer misunderstandings and mistakes → higher customer satisfaction → additional orders, etc.).

It is recommended to not only explain the positive concrete effects of WBBS training but also to clarify them using concrete practice examples. It is of decisive importance to choose and highlight the best-fitting practice examples for the respective sector or company. If directors, HR managers or department managers are able to understand the positive effects of WBBS because of real practice examples, then they are more likely to be convinced of the benefits and profit of WBBS training. Furthermore, they might perceive WBBS training as a beneficial measure worth investing in.

Solid preparation for the meeting is, therefore, indispensable to be able to align as far as possible the presentation of the positive effects of WBBS training with the needs and interests of the company and its employees. In addition, the selection of adequate practice examples to reinforce what has been said is essential, to be able to further increase the interest of the company representatives responsible for WBBS training.

Any questions asked should be answered. During the meeting, company representatives should have the feeling that you are informed about fundamental working areas, current trends and developments in order to present and design WBBS training as goal-oriented in as authentic a manner as possible.

Take some time for a brief reflection:
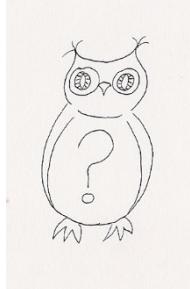
If you were a decision maker of a company:

Which benefits would be the most important and most convincing ones? Why?

Which pros and cons of WBBS training would there be for the company?

How can empathising with the decision maker help you as a trainer in the preparation and realisation of the first personal talk and further cooperation?

2.4.2 Public Funding Opportunities for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

Especially for SMEs (Small and medium-sized enterprises), the financing of WBBS training for its employees is a considerable challenge. For this reason, many SMEs prefer to recruit new, better-trained workers instead of training them in the workplace. This means that immediately after presenting the positive (economic) effects of WBBS training, some funding opportunities have to be offered in order to convince the decision maker of the company not only of its benefits but also of its feasibility.

Unsplash: Creative Commons

Public funding can be offered by governmental institutions or public administration at various levels through, for instance, the EU, federal government/ministry, states, districts, municipality and subordinate institutions, as there is, for example, the national labour market service. The Ministry for the Economy, economic chambers and/or branch organisations usually offer lists of various funding options for different types of enterprises and training. In Austria, for example, the Austrian Economic chamber runs a database with numerous funding options and further information[7], e.g. for further training of employees[8], for the target group of low-skilled employees[9], for the target group of SMEs[10], for the training of digital competencies[11], etc. It is strongly recommended to set up a compilation of funding options in accordance with the characteristics of the company and the expected training needs when preparing to contact the decision maker so as to present these opportunities together with their benefits.

Take some time for a brief reflection:

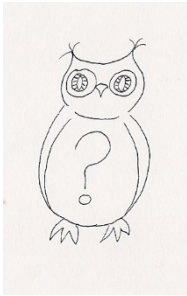*As public funding opportunities vary nationally and regionally:*

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[7] Wirtschaftskammer Österreich. (n.d.). Förderungen finden. Retrieved June 25, 2018, from
https://www.wko.at/service/foerderungen.html?geltung%5B%5D=w&branche=0&fuer%5B%5D=1&art=0&textfilter=#foerderdb-search-form

[8] Wirtschaftskammer Österreich. (n.d.). AMS Qualifizierungsförderung für Beschäftigte - Förderung von Weiterbildungsmaßnahmen in Wiener Unternehmen. Retrieved June 25, 2018, from
https://www.wko.at/service/foerderungen/AMS_Qualifizierungsfoerderung.html

[9] Wirtschaftskammer Österreich. (n.d.). Qualifizierungsförderung. Retrieved June 25, 2018, from
https://www.wko.at/service/foerderungen/waff_Qualifizierungsfoerderung.html

[10] Wirtschaftskammer Österreich. (n.d.). WAFF - Förderung Innovation und Beschäftigung für KMU. Retrieved June 25, 2018, from
https://www.wko.at/service/foerderungen/W_neu_waff_Innovationsassistent.html

[11] Wirtschaftskammer Österreich. (n.d.). aws Industrie 4.0. Retrieved June 25, 2018, from https://www.wko.at/service/foerderungen/aws-industrie-4.0.html

Do you know where to find information about public funding opportunities in your country/region?

Do you know how to select prospectively adequate funding options according to the circumstances and needs of the target company based on your research and preparation for the first personal contact?

2.4.3 Survey of Existing Needs for Further Education

During the meeting, it is very important to give the company representatives enough chances to talk about the current situation in their company. They should be able to talk about current needs and interests, challenges and concerns as well as recent or planned changes or restructuring measures. New requirements, which will arise for all employees should be given special attention during the discussion because through this, important arguments for the implementation of WBBS training could come up. Listening attentively and asking interesting questions contribute to the development of a constructive and conducive dialogue. Through this, the respective company representatives can convince themselves of the competence of the trainer and of the value of the WSSB offer.

If the company representatives do not seem to be very talkative, ask precise questions related to the points mentioned before in order to enhance the need for furthering the employees' education.

For example, the following questions could be asked (a detailed questionnaire can be found in the Annexe):

- What is your company really good at? For which field of activities in your company would you award yourself a prize or would you win in a competition?

- What challenges (internal and external developments) does the company currently face?

- How will the market develop in the next months/years? How will the company adapt to these developments? What are your goals for the next few years?

- Consider low-qualified employees and unskilled labour: Are they affected by the changes?

The newly available information needs to be exactly concretised. The need for further education can be derived from it. At the same time, the resulting positive effects of WBBS training can be clarified. The company representatives need to be convinced that the implementation of WBBS training in their company will be a successful

investment that supports the various basic skills and competencies of the employees according to the company's demands and expected needs. This should have a positive and sustainable impact on the future operational output and results of the company.

Another important point is to highlight and discuss available funding and financing opportunities. If the director and the HR representative are aware of any possible funding programs and opportunities, they may be more likely to implement WBBS training in their company.

Once the concrete needs and requirements of the company are identified, and the director or HR manager agrees to carry out the WBBS training, rough content, as well as the organisational aspects of the implementation, can be identified and clarified. For further concretisation of the intended WBBS training in the company, it is recommended to involve immediate superiors, e.g. shift, ward and department managers, because they are more likely to know of the needs, problems and desires of their employees.

2.4.4 Concretisation of Planned WBBS Training and Contracting

If the implementation of WBBS training in the company has been approved by the director or HR representative, a preliminary agreement/framework contract between the company and training institution has to be signed, agreeing about the basic framework of the training (see Annexe).

Pixabay: Creative Commons

At this point, it is also necessary to concretise the planned WBBS training in one or more meetings with the supervisors. In this case, the trainer needs to be well prepared for the meeting to secure a constructive dialogue with their conversation partner. A preliminary checklist/questionnaire for assessing the training needs within the company can be of help (see Annexe).

The superior also needs to be convinced of the meaningfulness and the expected positive effects of the WBBS training, before they can talk about the concrete needs and concerns of the employees. Immediately convinced superiors are of utter importance for the setting up of constructive and fruitful cooperation for further planning and concretisation as well as during the actual realisation of the WBBS training. These superiors are essential for selecting, contacting and reaching out to concrete employees. They must be able to motivate the employees to be part of the WBBS training and to clarify to them the benefits of WBBS activities.

The following questions could help with assessing the needs correctly:

- In which sites do the employees work and what exactly do they do there?

- What do the employees' tasks consist of; which of them work out well and which work processes are causing errors?

- Which basic skills and competencies do employees need in order to fulfil their given tasks and exercises?

- Do all employees possess the necessary skills and competencies or are there deficits and shortcomings which need to be compensated?

- Have there been any fundamental restructuring measures or major changes in the recent past that had a direct impact on the employees' everyday work?

- Which specific workflows are affected, and which skills and competencies do employees need in order to execute the relevant work and tasks?

- Which basic requirements have been changed and are new for the employees?

- What specific deficits and shortcomings can be compensated in the course of WBBS training?

- What should the employees be able to do better after completing the WBBS training and which specific skills and competencies need to be developed and improved further?

- How could WBBS training be realised in a way that motivates employees for active participation?

- Which general conditions should be considered in order to enable easy participation for employees?

- Should the WBBS training take place inside or outside working hours and how could WBBS training be realised in time?

- Where should WBBS training take place, and to what extent can the workplace act as a place of learning in order to secure the most context- and practice-oriented expansion of the required skills and competencies?

This discussion should be conducted as constructively as possible in order to determine and concretise the specific needs and foci. That is how the most beneficial course of the WBBS training can be prepared for both the employees and their employer. The direct supervisors usually have a pretty good insight into the work concerned and know about any difficulties or challenges in the individual areas of work. They should also be able to provide specific inputs concerning the main topics or specific tasks and work processes, which will be processed, improved and practised during WBBS training.

With that, the transparency of basic tasks and topics, which shall be the basis for the planned WBBS training, can be ensured. It mostly makes sense to include works council or other relevant colleagues (e.g. department managers) in the discussions in order to take as many different perceptions and interests into account as possible to implement the most profitable WBBS education course in the company.

For more specifically targeted tasks and topics, it is necessary to include employees as well, e.g. in the course of a joint visitation of the workplace. This is done to adjust and tailor the WBBS offer to the current needs.

Moreover, the cooperation during the WBBS training between the immediate supervisor and the coach or the works council, other relevant colleagues or department managers, HR managers and the director should be brought to the issue already in the course of the preparation talks. Defining the basic modalities of the regular exchange of information is important for the involved persons to make their right to participate clear. Moreover, it demonstrates the efforts to evaluate continuously the progress of the WBBS training. This helps to be able to react quickly to changing requirements and make corresponding modifications in the execution of WBBS training.

After all the described preparation, a detailed training contract has to be set up and signed by the company and the training institution. You can find an example of a contract used by the BEST Institute in the Annexe.

Both the preliminary contract, as well as the final training contract, are important for documenting framework, details, objectives, etc. This way, it is guaranteed that both parties have the same understanding of the whole project and agree on the goals and methods. Thus, misunderstandings and dissatisfaction during or after the training project are avoided.

A good and detailed training plan is a proper step to success.

Concerning the timeframe of the implementation of the training, practical experience has shown that two to three weeks are the most promising duration of such a training cycle. A shorter training would not have much of an impact considering the target group while a longer duration would be a considerable financial burden for SMEs and probably impede most of the training intentions for financial reasons.

The starting point of the WBBS training is the current need for further education of the employees and the changing requirement structures of the company. These need to be considered in the course of planning and implementing the WBBS training. The

development of a basic understanding of intensive and constructive cooperation is essential in order to secure the most profitable and smooth implementation of the WBBS training possible.
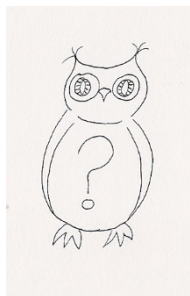
Take some time for a brief reflection:

Have a look at the list of questions for assessing the training needs:

Which ones are the most important ones? Think about three other questions that could be important but are not part of the list.

What challenges or difficulties can occur at the stage of concretisation and contracting? How would you face them?

Good practice example—profile of WBBS trainers at the BEST Institute (Austria)

At the BEST Institute in Vienna, WBBS trainers have the following profile:

- *Training & coaching certificate of adult education*
- *Diversity and gender training certificate*
- *Perfect German and communication skills*
- *Academic studies at Master's level or a teaching certificate (secondary or vocational school)*
- *Minimum of 2 years training/coaching experience in work-based training, preferably 4+ years*
- *At least 25 years old.*

Their tasks are among others individual and group training of basic skills in German, English, Mathematics and ICT as well as soft skills, motivational workshops, coaching and individual support.

2.4.5 Evaluation of WBBS Training

In order to examine the learning progress and improvements in defined areas (regardless whether it's the same company or another), it is indispensable to evaluate continuously the implementation of the training both during and after the training intervention. This can also serve as a basis for future training projects. This section consists of a short overview of the topic of evaluation, which is covered in detail in Module 6.

A good evaluation is the base of future training success and customer satisfaction.

The trainer should constantly initiate learning settings where the gained inputs, skills and competencies need to be used. Trainers and employees can convince themselves of their learning success. Existing deficits and shortcomings in individual areas will be made transparent instantly and can be quickly compensated through further explanations, exercises and tasks.

The immediate supervisors play an important role in this case. They are able to judge whether employees can efficiently accomplish their respective tasks and work steps or if they still require more learning and practising. The observation of work execution gives valuable feedback to the employees, which impacts further WBBS processes. If there are additional learning and exercise needs, then they should be immediately communicated by the immediate supervisor to the trainer, so that the latter takes appropriate measures and adapts the WBBS course accordingly.

The continuous feedback from the immediate supervisor as well as from the employees themselves is of utter importance, in order for the WBBS training to function as needed and be as employee-oriented as possible. At the end of the WBBS training, those skills and competencies that enable better and more efficient work execution should have improved.

Employees should be given a chance to communicate their personal satisfaction with the WBBS training and its output. It is about illustrating the learning success, which positively influences the self-esteem and motivation of the employees and which should be maintained for the future work routine and everyday life.

The final consideration and evaluation of the WBBS training gives valuable information and allows one to conclude how far the WBBS training execution has been purposefully realised and which aspects in the planning and implementation of WBBS training in the company should be considered further in the future. The ongoing, as well as the final evaluation, illustrates the efforts of a quality-oriented further education process. The evaluation provides valuable feedback, which needs to be sustainably taken into account and implemented during future projects.

Result reports for each employee drafted by the trainer at the end of the WBBS training, provide the department managers as well as the HR managers and the director with professional documentation of the learning process and the respective output and learning success. The responsible persons can convince themselves of the need-oriented expansion and improvement of the necessary skills and competencies

of their employees. This will have a positive impact on the future operating performance and the respective results of the company. At the same time, they would be confirmed in their decision to invest in the future education of their employees.
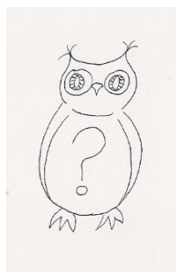
__Take some time for a brief reflection:__

What are the benefits of training evaluation?

How should you react if the results of the evaluation are not as good as expected?

Further Readings

The Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) offers a wide selection of statistical evaluations of the Austrian labour market. It also considers the educational level, e.g. the following up-to-date document:
http://www.ams.at/_docs/001_am_bildung_0518.pdf

Besides statistics, the AMS research network published an article about the importance of WBBS in trade, tourism and technical professions, connecting the situation in the workplace with education at school:
http://www.forschungsnetzwerk.at/downloadpub/AMS_info_388-389.pdf

The following textbook of the European project "TRIAS – Guidance in the workplace. Involving employers, reaching low qualified[12]" offers comprehensive information, good practice examples and tools for WBBS training:
https://www.oesb.at/fileadmin/TRIAS/TRIAS_Textbook_EN_Finalversion_LizenzCCBYSA.pdf

The following extensive article "Work-based learning: Why? How?" by Richard Sweet, which was published by the OECD, analyses the mutual benefits and impacts of work-

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[12] TRIAS: Guidance in the workplace. (n.d.). Retrieved June 25, 2018 from
https://www.oesb.at/projekte/jugend-ausbildung/projektarchiv/erasmus-project-trias/trias-project-products.html

based learning. Richard Sweet is an international education and training policy consultant based in Sydney, Australia and a Professorial Fellow in both the Education Policy and Leadership Unit and the Centre for the Study of Education Systems at the University of Melbourne's Graduate School of Education. Between 1998 and 2005 he was a Principal Analyst in the Directorate for Education at the OECD in Paris where he was responsible for major comparative reviews on the transition from school to work, ICT and education policy, career guidance and tertiary education:

https://unevoc.unesco.org/fileadmin/up/2013_epub_revisiting_global_trends_in_tvet_chapter5.pdf

Reference List

The information used in the present chapter originates from a variety of extensive interviews with "business contacts" and trainers of the *BEST Institut für berufsbezogene Weiterbildung und Personaltraining GmbH* located in Vienna, Austria, who possess many years of practical experience in WBBS training, training in the workplace and cooperation with companies. Additional sources include:

CentralStationCRM. (n.d.). Was ist Kaltakquise - eine Definition Retrieved June 25, 2018, from https://centralstationcrm.de/blog/was-ist-kaltakquise-eine-definition

Für Gründer (n.d.). Mit Kaltakquise Kunden gewinnen: So sollten Sie vorgehen. Retrieved June 25, 2018, from https://www.fuer-gruender.de/wissen/unternehmen-fuehren/businessplan-umsetzen/kundengewinnung/kaltakquise/

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sb.at/fileadmin/user_upload/oebs_sb/Publikationen/2017_OESB_TRIAS_Textbook_EN_LizenzCCBYSA.pdf

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http://www.forschungsnetzwerk.at/downloadpub/TRIAS_O3_Curriculum_DE_2017-erasmus.pdf

To disseminate*.* In *Cambridge Dictionary.* Retrieved June 25, 2018, from
https://dictionary.cambridge.org

Wirtschaftskammer Österreich. (n.d.). AMS Qualifizierungsförderung für Beschäftigte - Förderung von Weiterbildungsmaßnahmen in Wiener Unternehmen. Retrieved June 25, 2018, from
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https://www.wko.at/service/foerderungen.html?geltung%5B%5D=w&branche=0&fuer%5B%5D=1&art=0&textfilter=#foerderdb-search-form

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Annexe

Checklist for an "Elevator Pitch" for cold-calling companies *(from the project TRIAS – Guidance in the workplace[13]):*

- Whom do I want to win as a customer/cooperation partner?

- What are my objectives for the talk? If I want my conversation partner to agree to a follow-up talk: How can I achieve this objective?

- How can I start the conversation in an appealing way? How can I attract attention?

- What information do I want to provide my conversation partner? How can I describe my offer so that my conversation partner can easily follow?

- How can I highlight the benefit and added value for my conversation partner? How will the company benefit from my offer? ("What's in it for me?")

- How do I distinguish myself as a WBBS training provider?

- I want to appeal to my conversation partner's emotions and make them curious about my offer.

- How can I ensure that my conversation partner listens carefully and remembers?

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[13] TRIAS – Guidance in the workplace. Involving employers, reaching low qualified. (2017). IO 3: The TRIAS Framework Curriculum [PDF file]. Retrieved June 25, 2018, from http://www.forschungsnetzwerk.at/downloadpub/TRIAS_O3_Curriculum_DE_2017-erasmus.pdf

Extract from the document:

The Benefits of Workplace-Oriented Promotion of Basic Competencies for Companies and their Employees—An Argument

The advantages of in-house and workplace-oriented training measures can be summarised as follows:

- Tailor-made and on-site, flexible and team-promoting
- Situational and personalised, therefore easy to transfer into everyday working life
- Flexibility of course providers

- Training measures that are specifically tailored to companies will be developed. They take place within the company and respond to the needs of the company and its employees. Which basic skills are needed now and/or in the future and should, therefore, be trained?

- The training measures show the support potential of the employee.

- They enable employees to master current and future requirements in the workplace.

- The transfer of what has been learned into the workplace is ensured, in cooperation with the company.

- The transfer is implemented individually and as an integral part of the educational measure (individual transfer tasks).

- When implementing the training measures, the course providers flexibly focus on the needs of the company and its employees.

Companies are less interested in models and concepts than in the concrete benefits of continuing education. They mainly think economically and want to improve the productivity of their company and the efficiency of their work processes.

Possible arguments

Less waste of time and improved quality

- ✓ The professional qualification of the employees will be improved.

- ✓ The error rate is lowered because the employees are safer and more competent in work processes and implementation.

Improvement of internal company communication and work processes

- ✓ The employees understand assignments/documents better and can get involved in a more targeted way.
- ✓ The employees feel more confident, dare to take the initiative themselves and ask questions if uncertain.

More efficient staffing from your own ranks

- ✓ Can be a first step towards tackling the shortage of skilled workers.
- ✓ The courses make it possible to recognise the potential of the employees for vocational qualifications for adults or other training and further education and to promote them systematically.

Identification with the company

- ✓ Free training during working hours signals appreciation and recognition.
- ✓ A higher level of identification with the company helps reduce fluctuation.

Relief for superiors

- ✓ MAs, who can carry out their daily tasks safely and without errors, and who ask questions if they do not understand something, relieve their superiors.
- ✓ Improved communication and a lower error rate improve the working atmosphere and give superiors more scope for other tasks.

Higher motivation of employees

- ✓ The employees recognise their potential and become more independent and motivated thanks to the courses.

Fewer accidents and absences due to illness

- ✓ Safety instructions and regulations are better understood.
- ✓ Health prevention measures are more effective because they are better understood.
- ✓ Stress is reduced thanks to a better understanding of work processes.

Greater openness to change/flexibility

- ✓ New, especially digital workflows, are better understood and implemented.
- ✓ The employees can start to work in other fields of activity.
- ✓ An increase in self-confidence promotes the ability and willingness to change.

- ✓ Basic competencies are essential in the context of mechanisation/digitisation and standardisation of work processes.

Greater efficiency and productivity

- ✓ By making better use of their learning and performance potential, the employees are more productive in their daily work and able to perform their tasks more competently.

Image gain

- ✓ Companies assume their social responsibility and invest in the skills of all their employees.

The company's reputation is enhanced by its contribution to the lifelong learning of its employees. This strengthens its competitiveness

- ✓ They are at the forefront because they have recognised that better-educated employees are worthwhile.

The benefits for employees

Better qualifications

- ✓ The employees are better qualified, more competent and able to apply the newly acquired knowledge and skills directly in their professional and private everyday life.

- ✓ Greater confidence in reading, writing, speaking and understanding means that employees are more likely to take on new tasks.

- ✓ A positive learning experience helps employees to want to continue learning. Catching-up on a vocational qualification can also become a realistic goal.

Confident dealings with customers

- ✓ The employees improve their ability to communicate with customers. They understand their questions and can answer them competently.

More relaxed, more likely to get involved in the team

- ✓ Through the targeted promotion, e.g. of oral expression skills, the employees are more able to contribute actively to the team, ask questions and think for the company.

The ability to learn and self-confidence are strengthened

- ✓ Higher competencies and knowledge in relation to their daily job operation increase the employees' self-confidence. They become aware that they are

capable of learning and performing well, and thus, have the confidence to take on new tasks and challenges.

Greater independence

✓ Thanks to their newly acquired skills, the employees can now perform more tasks and are less dependent on their superiors and/or colleagues in the workplace.

Positive learning experiences

✓ The employees discover joy and interest in learning. They can achieve positive learning experiences and can use what they have learnt not only in the workplace but also directly in everyday life.

✓ Fewer avoidance strategies are needed; the employees are less stressed, and therefore, have more energy.

Benefits for the economy

✓ Competitiveness

✓ Optimal use of labour market resources

✓ Further development into a service and knowledge society

✓ Implementation of technological development.

Source: This argument was developed within the framework of GO2 of the SVEB with the support of the SBFI.

Example of a checklist/questionnaire for a decision maker of a business for assessing the training needs within the company (from the project TRIAS– Guidance in the workplace[14]):

These products and services are the most promising for the market in the coming years:

1. …
2. …
3. …
4. …

What concrete changes do you expect in the near future?

Organisational structure of the company	O _____
Work flows	O _____
New technologies, digitalisation	O _____
Developing	O _____
Buying, applying	O _____
Reacting to developments on the market	O _____
Accessing new customer groups	O _____
New offers for regular customers	O _____
Developing innovation	O _____
New regulations	O _____
Introducing new provisions	O _____
Optimising cost management	O _____
Introducing a controlling process	O _____
Improving the controlling process	O _____

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[14] TRIAS – Guidance in the workplace. Involving employers, reaching low qualified. (2017). IO2: The TRIAS textbook [PDF file]. Retrieved June 25, 2018, from https://www.oesb-sb.at/fileadmin/user_upload/oebs_sb/Publikationen/2017_OESB_TRIAS_Textbook_EN_LizenzCCBYSA.pdf

The following are the most important changes (concretised):

1.
2.
3.

Consider low-qualified employees and unskilled labour: Are they affected by the changes?

How do you involve your employees (especially your low-qualified staff) in the expected changes?

How are you preparing them for and supporting them with tackling these changes?

How important are the competencies of the employees for achieving the objectives of the company?

Examples of contracts used by the BEST Institut für berufsbezogene Weiterbildung und Personaltraining GmbH in Vienna:

Framework Training Contract

Between the company _____
business direction _____

and the training institution _____
business direction _____

for the approximate number of ____ to ____ trainees.

The aforementioned company contracts the aforementioned training institution to implement training of the aforementioned number of employees.

The training takes place in the workplace.
The timeframe of the training starts on __.__.____ and ends on __.__.____.
The average training has a duration of __ hours within a timeframe of __ weeks per trainee.
The costs of ____ Euro per trainee (without VAT) include
-
-
-
-

The general learning objectives are:
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Further agreements:

Contact person of the training institution
Name: _____
Phone no.: _____ E-Mail: _____

Contact person of the company
Name: _____
Phone no.: _____ E-Mail: _____

Signatures, company stamp, date, place

Company:

Training institution:

Personalised Training Contract

Between the company _____
business direction _____

and the training institution _____
business direction _____

for the employee _____
phone number _____

Based on the Framework Training Contract of __.__.____ the aforementioned company contracts the aforementioned training institution to implement a training of the aforementioned employee in the time period from _____ to _____.

The training takes place _____ hours/_____days (____ hours per week during ____ weeks).

The company encourages participation to achieve the following objectives:
   1. _____
   2. _____
   3. _____

Further agreements:

Contact person of the training institution
Name: _____
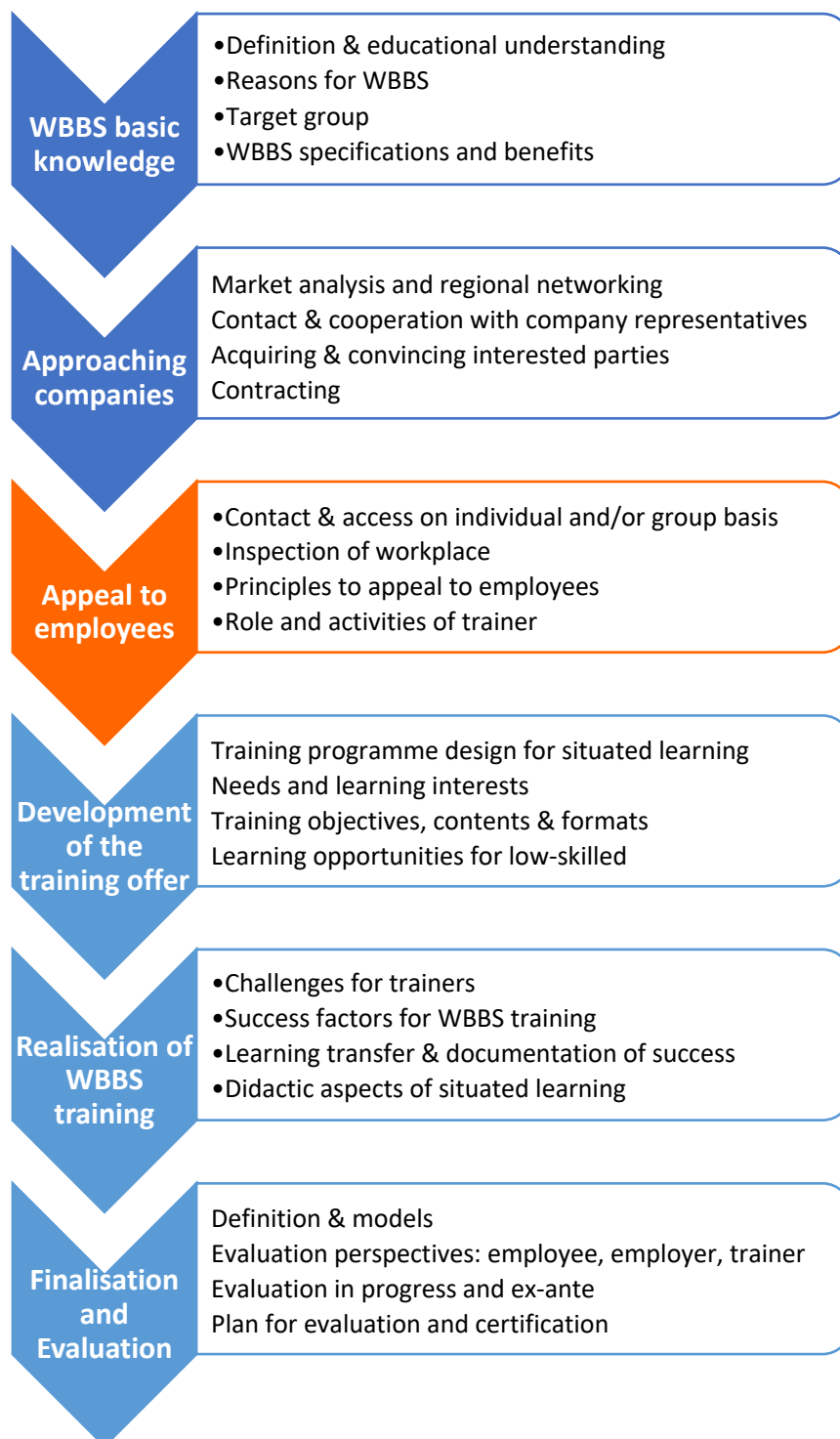Phone no.: _____ E-Mail: _____

Contact person of the company
Name: _____
Phone no.: _____ E-Mail: _____

Signatures, company stamp, date, place
Company: | Training institution:

Module 3 | Appeal to Employees

WBBS basic knowledge
- Definition & educational understanding
- Reasons for WBBS
- Target group
- WBBS specifications and benefits

Approaching companies
Market analysis and regional networking
Contact & cooperation with company representatives
Acquiring & convincing interested parties
Contracting

Appeal to employees
- Contact & access on individual and/or group basis
- Inspection of workplace
- Principles to appeal to employees
- Role and activities of trainer

Development of the training offer
Training programme design for situated learning
Needs and learning interests
Training objectives, contents & formats
Learning opportunities for low-skilled

Author:

Helmut Kronika

Realisation of WBBS training
- Challenges for trainers
- Success factors for WBBS training
- Learning transfer & documentation of success
- Didactic aspects of situated learning

BEST

Finalisation and Evaluation
Definition & models
Evaluation perspectives: employee, employer, trainer
Evaluation in progress and ex-ante
Plan for evaluation and certification

Content

Introduction

This module deals with the question of how to win employees for WBBS training and how to motivate them to participate in the program. Comprehensive preparation through HR managers is needed in order for the program to work. They shall present WBBS as an appreciative offer to their employees. Furthermore, it is necessary to determine the current needs as well as potential difficulties which might arise in certain areas. Discussions with HR managers or immediate supervisors, as mentioned in Module 2, will provide valuable initial information.

The actual needs and interests must be clarified in discussions with employees. Therefore the responsible trainer needs to listen carefully to the learners during the first meeting. A joint visitation of the workplace is a good possibility in order to get to know employees and to get a first insight into the basic processes at work. A sensitive and valuable approach is essential to get employees to communicate any challenges and difficulties they might encounter.

The information gained is the starting point of the WBBS. It is the task of the trainer to develop a suitable training programme that meets the current needs and interests of the employees. Therefore the trainer has to consider appropriate didactic-methodical approaches. Through them, it is possible to gain the participants' motivation and to accept the offered further training as a valuable offer that should contribute positively to their future work and everyday life.

In this module, we will deal with the following questions:

- How can we convince employees to participate in the WBBS programme?

- How can employees be convinced of the meaningfulness of WBBS, in order to be able to compensate and eliminate any counterproductive attitudes?

- Which factors need to be considered during the concretisation of WBBS in order to secure adequate learning settings for all employees?

- Which didactic-methodological aspects need to be considered in order to ensure motivating and beneficial further training for all employees?

3.1 Access to Employees–Kick-off

3.1.1 Information Event at Work

If managing directors or HR managers decide to conduct further training, specifically WBBS training for their employees, it is their task to inform their employees on the planned further training. In the course of an information event attended by employees, representatives of the works council and the designated trainer, it is necessary to clarify the general framework conditions, the objectives of the training and, most importantly, the expected positive effects for all employees.

WBBS training is not a punishment!

It is essential to find a particularly cautious and appreciative approach. The planned training should not be considered as a punishment or a compulsory event by the employees, but rather as a useful opportunity to acquire further advantages in their future work and everyday life.

The announcement of further training might cause discomfort for certain employees. This may result in doubts and fears. Semi-skilled or unskilled people, as well as early school-leavers, have especially negative connotations with terms such as "learning" or "further training". They often cause them unpleasant emotional states, tension, pressure to perform or fear of failure. This counterproductive attitude needs to be eliminated or at least compensated at the beginning of the project in order to reach a certain willingness and motivation for participation.

The presentation of the following *basic information and framework conditions* by HR managers and the responsible trainers takes this requirement into account and represents an important prerequisite in order to eliminate potential fear and doubts and motivate employees for the planned further training.

Language has an important role when talking to and about the (future) trainees, especially at the information event, but also throughout the whole training. Language has to be used in a very respectful, sensitive and positive way by highlighting good things, positive characteristics, skills and competencies. Talking about deficiencies and negative performance, knowledge gaps, etc. could cause demotivation and bad moods on either side, but especially among employees.

- **Organisational framework conditions: duration and schedule of class**

The responsible decision makers of a company have to schedule the planned further training in advance. On the one hand, they have to define how many units of WBBS training there need to be and how long they need to last, and on the other hand, they need to clarify when they should take place. An important criterion involves considering whether further training needs to take place outside of working hours. However, low-qualified employees in particular, who, generally speaking, possess a lower learning and training readiness, might not accept this measure. It might also increase these employees' already existing counterproductive attitude regarding further training.

In case of further training outside of working hours, employees who have child care duties will need to be considered. It is likely that employees would rather accept further training within working hours. This fact might also lead to an increase in participation. Furthermore, employees are not faced with additional organisational challenges and would not need to complete further education during their free time.

- **Objective—personal profit for employees**

The clarification of the expected positive effects is probably the most important criterion in order to convince the employees of the planned WBBS and to secure a certain willingness to participate in the programme. Again, it is necessary to be sensitive. It is important to state that employees make a valuable contribution to the success of the company with their skills and that they are perceived as a valuable resource. Further training should be based on their already existing competencies which should be developed according to demand. Moreover, there is the possibility to balance weaknesses and shortfalls in certain areas.

And again: benefits, benefits, benefits…

Employees will benefit from WBBS in their company because:
- they will further develop and improve their basic skills and demand-oriented competencies, which are relevant for their daily work;
- they will quickly and efficiently get used to new work requirements;
- they will complete tasks faster, better and more efficiently;
- they will be able to take over new tasks;
- they will gain more security and routine in the execution of work;
- self-esteem, independence, confidence in their own learning and performance ability will be increased;

- they will engage themselves actively in the work team and take over and carry out tasks independently;
- they will feel accepted by their colleagues and team and can develop their competencies;
- they will develop a positive and motivating attitude towards change in the workplace;
- their interest in the work process as well as in the further development and expansion of their skills and competencies, and their willingness to learn and further their education will be increased;
- they might replace already existing negative experiences in learning with positive and motivating learning experiences, which might be a further motivation to deepen their skills and competencies;
- the content learned can directly be used and strengthened in practical situations;
- they will fulfil their tasks with higher engagement and motivation;
- they might discover new professional perspectives in the company; and
- their satisfaction with the company will increase, and fewer employees will consider a change of job.

These expected positive effects must be perceived by employees as a real value and a personal profit that is likely to influence their daily work routine positively. In order to illustrate the expected benefits, it is advisable to show a practice example of a successful implementation of WBBS at the beginning of the information event. The more real the expected benefits and profits are perceived by the employees, the more they will be convinced by the meaningfulness of the planned further training. That's why general reservations should be alleviated from the start.

- **Employee-oriented content**

Another important criterion to meet in order to minimise potential counterproductive attitudes among employees is to convince them that there will be no need to learn complex content but rather, the focus will be on topics and questions that are relevant to their everyday work and personal life. Areas and topics where employees want to gain more know-how and security will be identified and will be focused on throughout the WBBS. These should be further developed and continuously improved through further training and practical training at work, in order for employees to gain more security and routine in the execution of their daily tasks. These can involve the practice of writing a business letter on the computer, the creation of a cost overview using Excel, fast research on the internet, or leading a professional conversation with a customer.

Pixabay: Creative Commons

Focus on the employees!

The actual needs and interests of the employees are the focus of the planned WBBS training. It is necessary to communicate this fact in the course of the information event, to increase interest in the planned further training and to alleviate counterproductive attitudes. The participation of the employees and future trainees during training should be encouraged by allowing optional learning content where the trainees can choose what to train according to their interests and subjective needs. The optional training contents can be implemented flexibly, but the different options can be named next to the obligatory training content in the detailed training contract (see Module 2) before the training starts.

- **Employee-oriented design of courses**

The real implementation of WBBS training will be determined by the actual learning needs of the employees. A diverse method compendium with a clear focus on the highest possible practical and competence orientation contributes to the varying needs and learning preferences of the employees. They should also know that further training is not carried out through frontal teaching, but rather, through various varied

learning settings. Moreover, concrete work situations in the company will be used as learning opportunities in order to be able to support the development of the employees' personal skills and competencies.

Depending on the needs and contents of the topics, WBBS training can be carried out in both big and small groups as well as in individual settings together with the trainer. The objective is to be able to offer framework conditions that enable fast success, and as a consequence, increase the employees' willingness to participate and learn, as well as their motivation and self-confidence.

As an example, we could describe the way WBBS training was presented to the employees at FAKOM (Germany) by Karin Behlke, Stephanuswerk Isny, at the Information Kick-Off Event.

The slides used addressed the following issues:

- Organisational Framework (duration of the course, start and end dates, venue)
- Objective (which knowledge and skills do you need for your further professional life, how could the trainer support you, which topics and methods make sense)
- Employee-oriented design of courses (not everyone is going to train in the same way, you choose the methods and topics that fit you, the possibility to decide whether to continue the participation or not after the third training unit).

Take some time for a brief reflection:
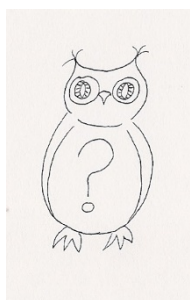
Place yourself in the situation of an employee:

Which course design, organisational framework and training methods would you prefer? Why?

Which benefits would be the most important and most convincing ones? Why?

Would you be willing to undergo on-the-job training outside of working hours? Why (not)?

3.1.2 Meet and Greet at Work

To further plan and settle WBBS, a joint inspection of the workplace is recommended. Thereby, the trainer meets the employees in their workplace and lets them talk about the various tasks at work, basic practices in the company as well as any innovations and changes in the company and in individual processes at work in recent times. Once again, an empathic and valuable approach is essential to create a good and

constructive basis for further cooperation in the course of WBBS. It is the trainers' task to engage fully with the employees.

The basis for good WBBS training is to get to know the future trainees and their work.

Pixabay: Creative Commons

The objective hereby is to gain concrete information in order to concretise further the planned WBBS. Besides getting to know each other, building trust is also necessary as a first step. Therefore the trainer needs to attentively listen to the employees while they talk about themselves and their work. In addition, he should also ask questions to concretise the current needs, interests and potential difficulties or challenges in their everyday life. The following questions could be asked by the trainer:

- Which tasks/work processes work out well, and where do the employees feel particularly secure?

- Which areas of work/topics are of particular interest to the employees? Which are the most fun?

- Which work/operations at work are gladly carried out by the employees and which ones do they not like?

- Which work/operations at work turn out to be a challenge, and where do employees look for more security? How could this be secured? Which topics/contents could contribute to an enhancement?

- How were challenges or difficulties dealt with so far, e.g. did employees address other employees, have solutions been found together, etc.?

- When tasks have to be solved in a team: which conditions and circumstances have been perceived as positive and useful and which ones as more difficult or could have been organised and carried out better?

Depending on the company and sector, trainers might also ask precise questions on specific work processes and discuss those matters with employees. Trainers are advised to inform themselves on basic work and work processes in the company in advance in order to control the dialogue with the employees and to collect all the necessary information. Accurate listening and asking open questions are essential components to obtain the desired information as well as to establish mutual cooperation built on trust and appreciation.

As already mentioned, it is also important not to focus on difficulties and problems right from the beginning. If the employees are given the possibility to talk about their success in the daily work routine, they are more likely to report any challenges and difficulties they encounter in the individual areas in the company.

This carefully conducted dialogue provides the trainer with valuable information that will help with further planning the WBBS training. At the same time, the employees will understand that their current needs and interests are being taken as a starting point for implementing the WBBS, as mentioned in the information event. Hence, they are given a voice, and their wishes and desires are taken seriously. In this way, any existing counterproductive attitudes concerning participation in further training can be diminished.

Here is the example of such an information exchange given in the Toolkit of the GO-Project conducted in Switzerland:

In the respective toolkit, the following three methods of identifying the educational needs of employers are described:

1. *Survey based on profile requirements*
2. *Use of test method*
3. *Survey based on GO-Descriptions.*

The choice of the method depends on the size and type of the company, the number of affected staff or planned objectives and the scope of educational measures. It may also be recommended to combine two procedures at once.

***Method 1** is especially applicable when the number of involved employees is manageable, and the goal of the planned educational measures is the improvement of*

their performance at their current workplace as part of the requirements of a quality assurance system.

*Method 2 is applicable to companies with a larger number of employees.*
It is also suitable if the aim is to identify the abilities of the employees in relation to changing work situations or a possible change in position.

Method 3 is applicable if no requirement profile in terms of basic skills exists, and it is not possible or does not make sense to create one.

The starting point for the discussions between the managers and the employees is the descriptors for each competency area, as defined in the GO Toolkit.

A constant visualisation of the expected benefits for each individual employee through WBBS training is necessary. Moreover, trainers should take the chance and report any positive experience with WBBS, which they might have experienced already during a company visit. Valuable sources include previous successful implementations of WBBS training in various companies where the respective success and improvements of their employees are reproduced in a real and individualised manner. Employees are more likely to accept their situation when given well-defined practical examples as they would be able to understand the expected benefits from the start.

If employees perceive the offer of further training as a real chance to compensate for deficits in certain sectors and to further improve their competencies, any initial concerns will be replaced with a prevailing positive mood and more willingness to participate and learn.
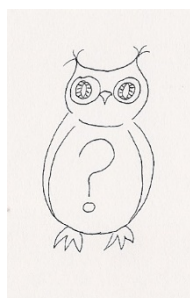
Take some time for a brief reflection:

Place yourself in the situation of the employees with their possibly prevailing doubts and negative attitudes concerning further training: Which approach or further information would you like to get in order to be fully convinced to take part in the planned WBBS training?

What interventions could you set to disperse any future concerns and to increase the willingness to participate and learn among the employees?

3.2 Appeal to Employees in WBBS Training

The information that the trainer was able to get during the discussions with the HR representative or the immediate supervisors as well as with the employees in the

course of the company visit is the basis for further didactic-methodological thoughts. Furthermore, this is important to ensure the training's realisation in terms of participation, requirements and motivation of employees for active participation and cooperation.

Trainers have to think about how they can shape the planned WBBS so that the employees can have a motivated start and to eliminate any potentially remaining doubts and counterproductive attitudes. A good start is of utter importance to convince the employees of the meaningfulness and usefulness of the project and to secure a certain willingness to participate.

The physical but also active participation of the trainee has to be documented, e.g. signing an attendance list that gets forwarded to the superior/HR manager together with a report of the learning content and a short confirmation of active participation. This transparent documentation and reporting serves as proof of training on the part of the training institution as well as proof of participation and performance of the trainee.

Intrinsic motivation is the best motivation.

WBBS has to be conducted in a way which leads to a fast feeling of success among the employees. It also needs to enhance their readiness to improve their competencies further and compensate for deficits in certain areas. Approaches, topics, and learning settings which maintain and improve the employees' motivation during the whole WBBS need to be initiated. An important element that helps with motivating the trainee efficiently and in a sustainable way is intrinsic (internal) motivation. Intrinsic motivation has its sources in doing and learning things that the trainee likes, is interested in and perceives as useful and reasonable. The fun and enjoyment of mutual learning and working are core elements, which positively influence the motivation and willingness to learn and perform. The advantage of intrinsic motivation is that you don't need many external incentives to promote a successful learning process. Nevertheless, in the beginning, extrinsic (external) motivation given by the trainer and employer is often necessary as a kind of start-up support. The interests of the (future) trainees have to be considered, and participation in the selection of the learning content has to be allowed in order to foster intrinsic motivation[15].

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[15] Wirtschaftspsychologische Gesellschaft. (n.d.). Intrinsische und extrinsische Motivation. Retrieved, June 27, 2018, from https://wpgs.de/fachtexte/motivation/intrinsische-und-extrinsische-motivation/

To achieve this, the trainer has to deal with the gained information and the following points presented below before the actual WBBS training starts. This should be done in order to create attractive learning settings for the employees and to give them the best possible support throughout their training. This is the only way through which one can ensure the employees' motivation as well as their willingness to participate and learn throughout the whole process of WBBS.

3.2.1 Demand-Oriented WBBS

After getting to know the potential participating employees, the target group can be analysed. Which requirements do the employees bring along? Are they a rather homogenous participation group with similar requirements, needs and interests? Or are the groups made up of men and women of various ages, origins and social backgrounds, and with different attitudes and levels of motivation? What are the specific needs and challenges of the different sub-target groups (e.g. women with caring responsibilities, migrants, young men, etc.)? These criteria need to be taken into account when setting up further plans for the WBBS.

Good practice example—practical experience with low-skilled trainees in Austria (BEST Institute):

The target group of low-skilled employees proves to be a very heterogeneous and challenging group. In the day-to-day training of the BEST Institute, a large number of these trainees have a migrant background. Some of them were born in Austria while others came in as refugees in recent years. Most of them, more or less, have difficulties with the German language. Even some of the low-skilled trainees without a migrant background have problems with the language, especially when it comes to their writing skills. Many of them dropped out of school and vocational education. Almost all of them come from strata remote from education, with the exception of recent migrants/refugees who sometimes have a sound education and maybe even mentionable work experience in their country of origin. Nevertheless, they have big problems with getting an adequate job in their new host country because of prejudice, missing certificates, no recognition of their education, lack of language skills etc., and are trapped in low-skilled workplaces. In general, the branches that employ low-skilled persons include the cleaning, gastronomy and care sectors, as well as the construction industry and security companies for males. One of the biggest challenges is the motivation of this target group. A considerable part of this group does not have the slightest interest in training. In order to achieve good training results, the trainer has to focus on the motivated trainees.

- **Specific needs of (sub-) target groups**

  Depending on the company, there will be more or less heterogeneous participation groups. If you take a closer look at individual components, such as age, family/social situation, education/professional biography, you'll find that even in supposedly homogenous groups (e.g. only women, only men) various varying factors exist which ultimately lead to a heterogeneous group. However, there are also certain factors to bear in mind and to consider in WBBS training.

  For example, it is observed that once they take a break from their job due to parenting, for instance, a lot of women are not aware of their available competencies anymore. Women with a lower educational background or even with incomplete education often tend to be unaware of their informal competencies acquired through their daily family or household management, e.g. organising, setting priorities, empathy, etc.

  An important approach in WBBS would be to raise awareness or to initiate concrete tasks which allow those women to reuse their available competencies again in order to raise their level of self-esteem. This could help them with their everyday job and personal life.

  The conscious perception of available competencies is of key importance for increasing self-esteem and motivation among all employees, which might also influence their learning enthusiasm and engagement positively. In general, it is necessary to make use of the special competencies of the (sub-) target groups (e.g. young/old men/women) and to implement them in the course process.

  For example, young employees who are savvy users of smartphones and tablets can pass on their knowledge to their older colleagues. They might conduct appropriate internet research or use adequate apps to accomplish various tasks. On the contrary, older employees might pass on their work experience as well as tips and tricks to their younger colleagues to facilitate their daily work.

- **Specific needs of the various types of learners**

  Another component which leads to having heterogeneous groups of participants is the fact that each participant is a different type of learner. As a consequence, this has a lasting influence on learning and learning success. A multifaceted set of methods ensures that employees can find the most suitable approaches and methods for them to make the most out of their personal learning efforts.

The respective types of learners and learning preferences of the employees will gradually show in the process of learning and working together. The trainer needs to act attentively and flexibly in this case, especially when taking the respective current learning requirements into account.

A short and general introduction into simple but efficient learning strategies at the beginning of the WBBS training would probably be a good idea in order to affect the learning behaviour of the employees positively. Possible negative experiences associated with school or learning can easily be reduced by experiencing fast success in learning. This might result in employees regaining confidence in their own learning performance and in developing fun and joy in learning.

Take some time for a brief reflection:
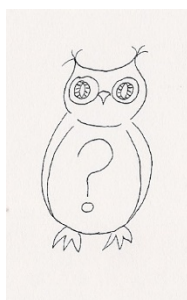
How does the fact of a probably heterogeneous target group influence the training?

In which way could the training change in case of trainees with a migrant background?

How should trainers react if they notice that the trainee has a negative attitude towards learning because of bad experiences at school?

3.2.2 Follow-Up Learning and Competence-Oriented Learning

As briefly mentioned in earlier chapters, the already acquired competencies and skills of the employees are a valuable resource on which to build in the course of the WBBS. The clarification and recognition of the available competencies of the employees, which they use on a daily basis to accomplish their work tasks, is of decisive importance in order to be able to attract the employees for further training and active cooperation.

It is the trainers` task to think of possible approaches, concrete exercises and tasks that are suitable for revealing the employees' available potentials, skills and competencies. Depending on the content and tasks to be worked out in the course of WBBS, it is necessary to offer simple but practice-oriented tasks, through which employees can show their competencies. The creation of rapid success is a crucial factor of motivation which has a huge impact on the rest of the learning process.

As a next step, new content that is linked to previous knowledge and skills can be presented. It is easier for employees to internalise new content, problem-solving possibilities or concrete work steps if they can connect it to their existing know-how or competencies. It is important to give them a chance to participate actively using their competencies and experiences. Through diverse exercises and tasks, employees should have the possibility to present themselves as experts in certain areas and to demonstrate concrete work steps, positive methods of resolution or any experiences gained.

It needs to be made sure that employees can actively use their available skills and competencies in the course of the WBBS training. In doing that, they can expand and enhance expediently the skills and competencies needed during their working day.

3.2.3 Use of Available Potential and Synergies

Through the active engagement of employees in WBBS, it is possible to reveal their existing potential and resources and make them available for everyone. Employees should learn with and from each other in order for prevailing synergies to be used optimally. Employees should act as active and valuable co-designers with a sustainable contribution from which everyone can benefit. Work in various social forms, such as tandems, small or big groups and collectives, offers diverse options for active engagement.

Employees should be encouraged to participate and contribute actively and to engage in the mutual accomplishment of various exercises, tasks or problem settings. By actively perceiving the perspectives and approaches of other employees, personal perspectives are enhanced with valuable possibilities. Moreover, basic soft skills, such as elements of teamwork, organisation and problem-solving competence for the daily work routine and constructive cooperation, are further developed. Mutual learning and acting represents a valuable profit for employees and should be a significant factor in WBBS training.

It is also the task of the trainer to think of creating learning settings in which employees are able to actively bring in their available potentials, skills and competencies, and that enable mutual and constructive learning and working processes. Through active engagement and cooperation, the employees' self-esteem, joy of learning and motivation can be increased. At the same time, they may experience how joint learning and working will enable the use of new synergies, perspectives and possibilities, which have the potential to widen their personal horizon. Solving tasks and problems together can result in a motivating feeling of success. The considerations and approaches made will be instilled and can be used to make the most of any future tasks.

3.2.4 High Practical Orientation in WBBS

Another important criterion, which needs to be considered during WBBS, is the assurance of high practical relevance. The connection of theory and practice is of utter importance for instilling newly won knowledge, skills and competencies in one's daily work. This can be achieved through the use of a diverse method compendium that motivates employees to be proactive. Through various practical exercises and tasks which can be completed alone, in tandem or in a (small) group, newly acquired or existing skills and competencies can be practised in order to gain more security and routine in the execution of work.


Learning by doing.

Pixabay: Creative Commons

This can be done through a variety of ways, such as working on the computer or on different machines; engaging in dialogue or role-plays to practice conversations like discussions with customers, suppliers, colleagues, etc.; conducting discussions; and carrying out pre-defined work assignments alone or in a team, such as soliciting cost estimates, looking for new suppliers, etc. The focus will be on different practical training options, depending on the sector and company. It is important that this practical transfer is secured in any manner, and that the employees are given sufficient time and space to practise.

Through the practical application of what has been learnt, employees can convince themselves of their learning success and of the improvement of their skills and competencies. The associated success has a positive effect on the motivation and

engagement of the employees. This results in the WBBS positively influencing the employees and instilling in them a higher willingness to participate and learn.
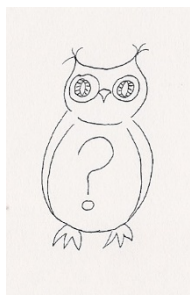
Take some time for a brief reflection:

Why can a practical approach be more efficient and successful for the target group of low-skilled employees?

How can a trainer pack basic theoretical skills in a practical learning process? Think about some examples.

3.2.5 Varied Method Compendium

Taking the above-mentioned points into account, the trainer now needs to choose adequate methods for the preparation and practice of the content, tasks and topics of the WBBS training. A diverse and varied method compendium (interactive methods, methods of acquiring practical knowledge, visualisation and feedback methods) should be suitable for active participation as well as for comprehensive training. The demonstration of new, activating learning approaches and methods, apart from front teaching, has a motivating effect on employees. Furthermore, this helps with reducing any negative experiences regarding learning and further training and gaining a positive attitude regarding the topics mentioned before.
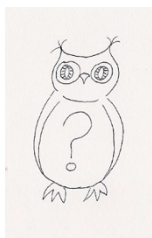
In general, the training/learning methods are supposed to be as practical as possible. The focus should be on practical relevance, and the learning should be practical as well. Learning by doing can be implemented and developed to a dimension where the trainees are learning unconsciously. They can develop new competencies without even noticing the fact that they are learning.

http://www.teachit.so/activelearning.htm

The active development and direct practice of various skills and competencies allow the employees to experience success

really quickly and to influence their motivation and willingness to participate and learn in a positive way (intrinsic motivation).

3.2.6 Continuous Evaluation of Satisfaction

An important criterion that helps maintain or even increase the employees' motivation and willingness to participate and learn during WBBS training is the employees' satisfaction with the progress of the training so far. The trainer should constantly evaluate satisfaction by using various feedback methods. This can be done at the end of each day, at the end of determined milestones or, in case of suspected dissatisfaction, at any time. There will be a certain requirement or a certain rhythm in the course of the programme. There will be different needs depending on the company and sector, and the covered content, tasks and topics. This is why it is essential for trainers to be sensitive and act attentively, as they would be able to notice any emerging dissatisfactions from the start and to cope with them on time.

It is also important to tell the employees from the beginning that their opinions and concerns are being heard and taken seriously. Any dissatisfactions and misunderstandings, as well as ambiguities and problems, should be communicated immediately. As a result, they will be encouraged and invited to do so. Dissatisfactions can also relate to the content and methods chosen, to the trainer, the framework, the behaviour of other employees, etc.

The underlying causes and satisfactory solutions can only be found if the trainer hears about the emerging dissatisfaction. Misunderstandings and sprouting conflicts need to be settled immediately in order for them not to escalate, and consequently, destroy the group's dynamics. If the content and methodological procedures are being considered as insignificant, inappropriate, too easy or too difficult, this should be communicated by the employees. By continuously determining the employees' feelings and satisfaction levels during WBBS, dissatisfaction and problems, which might result in counterproductive effects on the employee's willingness to participate and learn, would be prevented from spreading out.

In the end, the WBBS training and the trainee satisfaction need to be evaluated. This process is described in detail in Module 6. Through these essential findings, suggestions for the future improvement of WBBS projects can be derived.
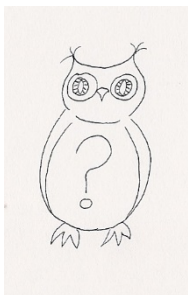
3.2.7 Control of Learning Outcome

Besides the satisfaction of the employees, the learning results during the whole WBBS training process should also be taken into account. Options to check on the learning outcome and the progress in skills and knowledge may include short oral/written revision of the content learned so far, quizzes, practical exercises and tasks. Again, the focus is on the practical approach. The practical execution of various tasks and exercises gives both the trainer and the employee a good experience with the learning transfer. Thus, emerging deficits and ambiguities will be made transparent and can be compensated over time, e.g. through repeated explanations, presentations or practice on other examples, for sustainable learning to be secured.

Employees are told to communicate directly and inquire about any arising ambiguities and problems. The importance of asking questions and the resulting gain in knowledge should be shown as valuable resources to the employees. They should also learn to ask questions throughout their working and everyday life even once the WBBS training is over.

A good possibility to record personal learning results individually is by keeping a *learning diary* during the whole process of WBBS. In the learning diary, it is possible to evaluate and document the tasks, results achieved and feedback. The Annexe includes an example of a learning diary for WBBS training. The learning diary fosters sustainability and raises awareness among the trainees about the learning content and learning process. With the help of the learning diary, it is easier for them to reflect on the training and to recognise its individual value and benefit. The documentation of personal impressions and insights, as well as of feedback from other employees or from the trainer, enables the assurance of the respective learning outcomes and the traceability of the successful learning progress. Learning diaries serve for self-evaluation and for intensifying the learning process. They represent a good possibility of ensuring the motivation and willingness of the employees to participate and learn[16].

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[16] Stangl Werner. (n.d.). Lerntagebücher als Werkzeuge für selbstorganisiertes Lernen, Retrieved, June 28, 2018, from http://arbeitsblaetter.stangl-taller.at/LERNTECHNIK/Lerntagebuch.shtml

Take some time for a brief reflection:

Think about the target group and work-based learning context:

Why is it important to control and document the learning outcome?

Which methods would you (not) recommend for controlling the learning outcome? Why (not)?

3.2.8 The Trainer as the Interface Between the Employer and Trainee/Employee

In the course of the whole training project, the trainers have the important role of acting as an interface between the employer/superior and the trainee. They are responsible for mediating between these two groups and for ensuring absolute transparency in communication in order to avoid misunderstandings. In case of difficulties, misunderstandings or challenges related to the WBBS training, the trainer tries to conciliate, give advice, offer solutions or different approaches, etc., while always keeping in mind and practising the principle of absolute transparency in communication.

Good practice example—"business contacts" as the interface between employers and trainees at the BEST Institute in Vienna:

At the BEST Institute in Vienna, the tasks of the so-called "business contacts" do not involve solely the preparation of the training, but also supervision during and follow-up support after the training in the workplace. In case of problems, doubts or questions concerning the training, the employer, as well as the trainee, can contact the "business contact". Contact can be made via phone, e-mail or in person (best option). It helps with avoiding misunderstandings, solving problems, answering open questions or doubts, etc. This mediation is usually not perceived as an inappropriate interference as the "business contacts" work with sensitivity and respect the rights, role and tasks of the employer. This way, the interface function of the "business contacts" can increase the training success and the satisfaction of both the employer and the trainee.

3.2.9 Follow-Up and Sustainability

The training has ended…now what?

At the end of each WBBS training, the question of sustainability and maximising the impact of the training has to be dealt with. The trainer has to think about future plans concerning individual development together with the trainee:

- What are the options?

- What is realistic?

- What makes sense?

- What is the trainee especially interested in?

- What is the trainee good at?

Some options would include some kind of further training, certificates, elements of lifelong learning or professional goals within the company. In order to increase the sustainability of this reflection and planning process and the commitment of the trainee, the results should be written down by the trainer and handed out to both the trainee and the superior/HR manager in order to ensure transparency and prove the sustainability and impact of the whole WBBS training project. These written results should consist of any specifications of future options or even plans. This means that they are recommendations, not binding obligations.

In order to increase sustainability and impact, there is the possibility of carrying out optional individual support, in the sense of aftercare following the WBBS training, when necessary. Of course, this has to be offered to the employer and fixed in advance when setting up the contract by including the time frame and extent (e.g. up to 4 hours of individual support within 3 months after finishing the training).

Good practice example—aftercare at the BEST Institute in Vienna, Austria:

Most of the training projects implemented by the BEST Institute offer individual support as an integral part of the training once it ends. For example, a (former) trainee who needs help can request up to 3 hours/sessions of aftercare within 3 months after finishing the original training. Individual support can be realised by means of a personal meeting, phone calls, e-mails, Skype, etc. In case several trainees have the same needs or problems, the support session can be turned into a group session if the content allows this setting.

3.2.10 Empowerment

A superior goal, which should not be ignored in WBBS training, is to motivate employees to create an independent and self-responsible work and lifestyle beyond the WBBS programme. Thereby, it is necessary to raise the employees' awareness of their potentials and resources and show them how they can consciously use and develop them. They should learn that there are other possibilities that might be able to influence their personal work and lifestyle positively.

Positive learning experiences during the WBBS training can provide employees with an incentive to inform themselves further through other learning and training programmes. This is particularly important for those with a lower educational background. The prerequisite for this is that WBBS training is perceived as a personal profit that might have positive influences on future work and everyday life.

Upon considering the aspects and requirements so far, the creation of an adequate framework and appropriate learning settings is necessary to help the employees derive positive learning outcomes and keep up their motivation and willingness to participate and learn during the whole WBBS training.

Take some time for a brief reflection:
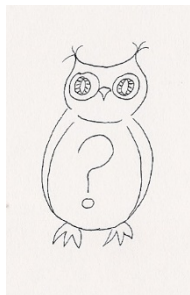
Put yourself in the situation of the employees: Which further didactic-methodical aspects can be of importance when realising WBBS, in order to ensure a sustainable and useful increase in competencies?

What specific measures would you take if there are employees who, in the course of the WBBS, tend to tip over the positive group dynamics because of their dissatisfaction?

Further Readings

Kendra Cherry, author, educator and psychologist, has published thousands of articles on diverse topics in psychology, including personality, social behaviour, child therapy, research methods, and much more. As a psychosocial rehabilitation specialist, she utilises behavioural, cognitive, and socialisation strategies to help her clients cope with family relationships, peer interactions, aggression, social skills and academic difficulties. In the following two articles, Cherry describes how intrinsic motivation works and what the differences between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are[17]:

https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-intrinsic-motivation-2795385

https://www.verywellmind.com/differences-between-extrinsic-and-intrinsic-motivation-2795384

The article "The Learning-by-Doing Principle" by Hayne W. Reese from the West Virginia University, published in the *BEHAVIORAL DEVELOPMENT BULLETIN Vol. 11, 2011*, is a scientific text about *learning by doing* which has been a principle for thousands of years. It has had many proponents, including Plato, Thomas Hobbes, Karl Marx, Mao Zedong, Montessori and John B. Watson. It also came in many forms, including learning by doing, discovery versus instruction, practical experience versus book-learning, the practice-theory-practice dialectic and proof upon practice. The paper includes a discussion of several of the forms and provides examples to establish what the principle means. It also describes any modifications of the principle, such as instructed learning-by-doing, and the role of reasoning and the possible explanations of its effectiveness[18]:

http://psycnet.apa.org/fulltext/2014-55719-001.pdf

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[17] Cherry, K. (n.d.). Intrinsic Motivation. Why You Do Things. Retrieved June 28, 2018, from https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-intrinsic-motivation-2795385

Cherry, K. (n.d.). Extrinsic vs. Intrinsic Motivation: What's the Difference? Retrieved June 28, 2018, from https://www.verywellmind.com/differences-between-extrinsic-and-intrinsic-motivation-2795384

[18] Reese, H. W. (2011). The Learning-by-Doing Principle. *BEHAVIORAL DEVELOPMENT BULLETIN, 11.* Retrieved June 28, 2018, from http://psycnet.apa.org/fulltext/2014-55719-001.pdf

The following article "How can we motivate adults to engage in literacy and numeracy learning?" by David Mallows and Jennifer Litster, published by the *Government Office for Science* in 2016, gives a detailed insight into basic skills training in adult education in Europe and the UK[19]:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/590873/skills-lifelong-learning-motivating-engagement.pdf

Reference List

The information used in the present chapter originates from a variety of extensive interviews with "business contacts" and trainers of the *BEST Institut für berufsbezogene Weiterbildung und Personaltraining GmbH* located in Vienna, Austria, who possess many years of practical experience in WBBS training, training in the workplace and cooperation with companies. Additional sources include:

Stangl Werner. (n.d.). Lerntagebücher als Werkzeuge für selbstorganisiertes Lernen Retrieved June 28, 2018, from http://arbeitsblaetter.stangl-taller.at/LERNTECHNIK/Lerntagebuch.shtml

Wirtschaftspsychologische Gesellschaft. (n.d.). Intrinsische und extrinsische Motivation. Retrieved June 27, 2018, from https://wpgs.de/fachtexte/motivation/intrinsische-und-extrinsische-motivation/

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[19] Mallows, D. & Litster, J. (2017). How can we motivate adults to engage in literacy and numeracy learning? [PDF file]. London: Foresight, Government Office for Science. Retrieved July 2, 2018, from
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/590873/skills-lifelong-learning-motivating-engagement.pdf
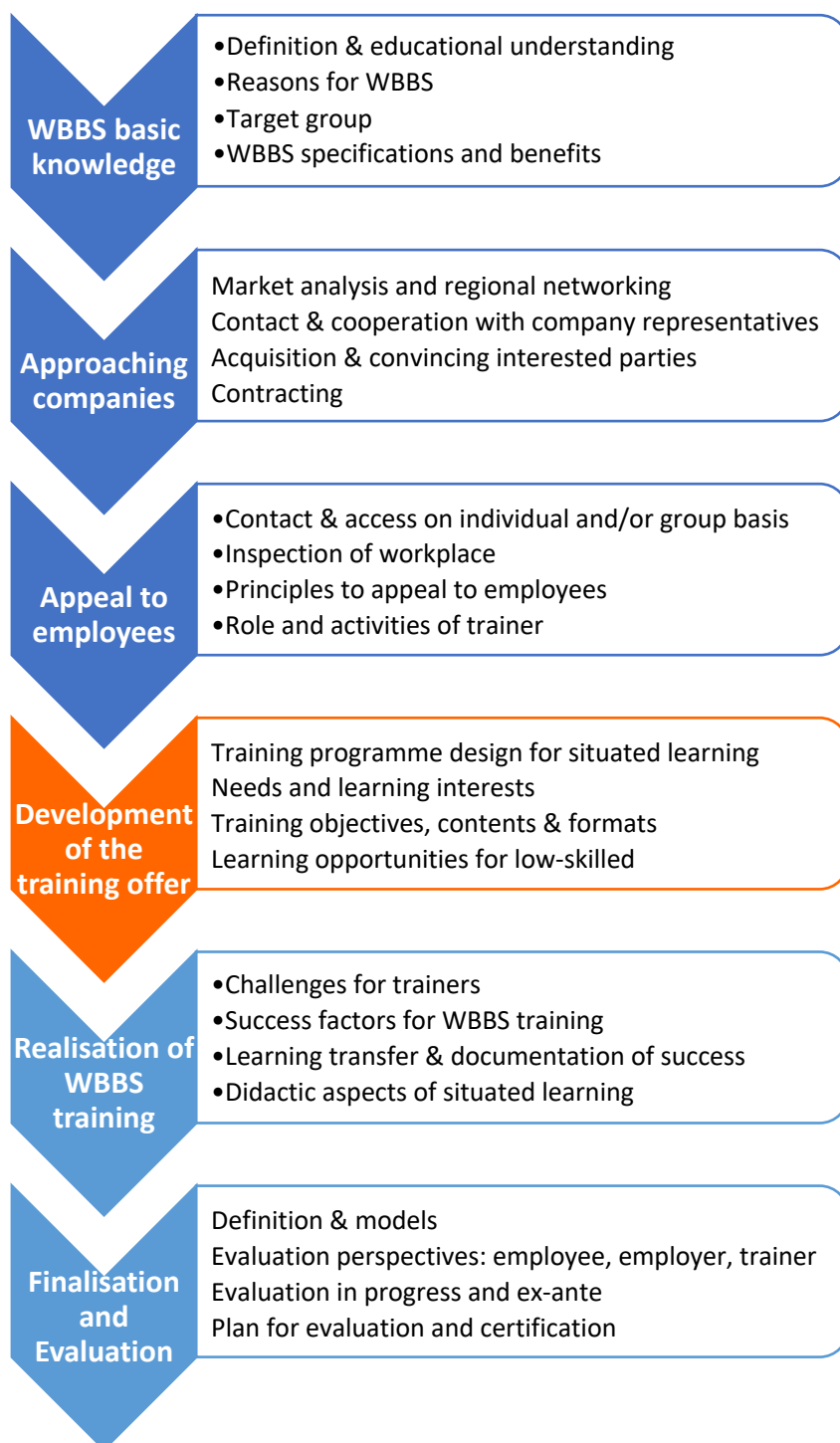
Annexe

Example of a learning diary:

Date: __.__._____

Learning Diary

- What did I learn today?

- Which content can I apply in my (daily) work?

- This was easy:

- This was difficult:

- What do I still have to improve?

- I am satisfied with myself because…

- Notes

Module 4 | Developing an Operational Training Programme for Work-Based Basic Education

WBBS basic knowledge
- Definition & educational understanding
- Reasons for WBBS
- Target group
- WBBS specifications and benefits

Approaching companies
Market analysis and regional networking
Contact & cooperation with company representatives
Acquisition & convincing interested parties
Contracting

Appeal to employees
- Contact & access on individual and/or group basis
- Inspection of workplace
- Principles to appeal to employees
- Role and activities of trainer

Development of the training offer
Training programme design for situated learning
Needs and learning interests
Training objectives, contents & formats
Learning opportunities for low-skilled

Realisation of WBBS training
- Challenges for trainers
- Success factors for WBBS training
- Learning transfer & documentation of success
- Didactic aspects of situated learning

Finalisation and Evaluation
Definition & models
Evaluation perspectives: employee, employer, trainer
Evaluation in progress and ex-ante
Plan for evaluation and certification

Authors:

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Ms Popi Sourmaidou

ERGANI CENTER, GREECE

Content

Introduction

This module deals with the question of designing and developing a WBBS training programme. The steps of a training programme design are described while taking into consideration all three dimensions involved in training: knowledge, skills and attitudes. Training course planning and design include the analysis of training demands and needs, project design, coordination and implementation monitoring as well as the assessment of the training's impact (CEDEFOP, 2014).

The actual needs and interests of both the company and its employees must be taken into consideration. The previous two Modules (Modules 2 & 3) are the starting point for the need analysis and the training design.

This module presents how concrete basic skills training requirements and needs can be identified at work and how learning subjects and competency development can be planned from the identified needs.

This module is a guide for coordinators and trainers who have the responsibility of designing the WBBS course. It is focused on the following questions:

- o   Which steps constitute a training design?
- o   What is special in the preparation and planning of WBBS training?
- o   What are the components of a successful training course?
- o   What are the potential obstacles in a WBBS training course?
- o   Which didactic methods and techniques are the most effective?
- o   What do trainers have to learn about this?

In Module 1, it was mentioned that WBBS is based on the approach of situated learning. According to this approach,

> *"the starting and reference points for learning in WBBS are always practical application situations. Based on these application situations, the specific competencies that the employee needs to manage better the work situation are identified.", (Module1.1.3).*

Trainers should always be aware of this while reading this module. They should use the principles of effective adult training courses, the design of which is based on the principles of situated learning.

4.1 Designing the Training Programme

The training process could be described as a four-level process, as follows (Fig. 9):

Fig. 9: The four levels of the training process, **Source: National Centre for Certification, 2008**

Training should be planned and developed in advance.

The design of a WBBS training programme consists of the following basic steps:

Steps of the training design	
1	Training needs analysis
2	Identification of the training goals
3	Development of the training content
4	Selection of the training methods
5	Evaluation of the planning
6	Summarising: Components of an Adult Training Design

4.1.1 Training Needs Analysis

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to WBBS training. The learning goals, content, focus and mode of learning are tailored to the needs and demands of the learners and are in line with the employers' needs.

Education or training provided to adults needs to consider the participants' characteristics, background, needs, demands and prior experience. The training should not just solve a skills gap, but should also empower the participants to remain engaged in further learning. Engaging participants in basic skills learning is not easy; employees should be aware of how they will benefit from the training. Therefore, it is of the highest importance to apply general adult learning principles to the outreach, content, approach, mode and organisation of learning. Training should be provided in

a flexible way in terms of the delivery approach, timing and duration, and should align with the situation of the participants.

Adult learning in the workplace must also take into account the employers' needs. The employees' training has to be relevant to them. This does not necessarily mean that there should be an exclusive focus on practical or technical work-related skills; companies also value transversal skills and basic skills that are also essential in the work environment (EU, 2018, pp. 32–33).

The first step for the development of a training programme is the training needs analysis. It is a systematic method for determining what caused performance to be worse than expected.

The word 'need' itself implies that there is a lack or a shortfall of something. The fundamental questions that will eventually lead to need-based training are the following:

- What is needed?

- Why is it needed?

- To whom is it needed?

There are three levels of training needs analysis: organisational assessment, occupational assessment and individual assessment (Fig. 10).

- *Organisational analysis:* It is focused on the skills, knowledge and abilities a company needs to meet its strategic objectives.

- *Job analysis:* This type of assessment is focused on the specific tasks, skills, knowledge and abilities required from the employees within the company.

- *Individual analysis:* It looks at the performance of an individual employee and determines what training should be conducted for that individual.
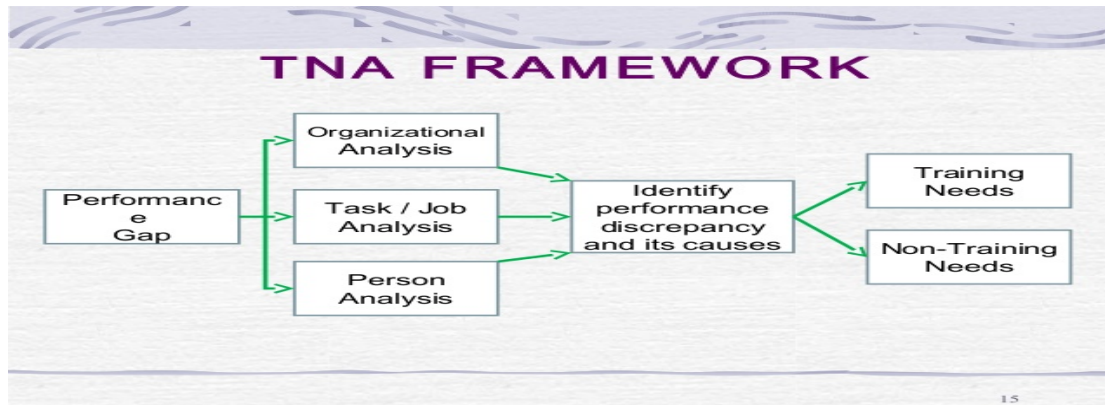
Fig. 10: The training needs analysis levels, Source: Grand Murphy, 2010

More details about training needs analysis can be found in Module 2.

When the training needs analysis is carried out for WBBS, it focuses on employees whose basic skills are not sufficient to meet the requirements on the job. Basic skills are described and analysed in Module 1, as follows: oral communication, written communication, mathematical competencies, digital competencies, basic oral and written competencies in English, basic health competencies, basic financial competencies and social skills.

After the need analysis, which is an important task in designing, the question arises on how to use the results of the need analysis to develop the competencies needed in the workplaces. So-called descriptors (see Module 1), work-based basic skill frame curricula information or the Basic Job Skills Profiles developed by Skills Norway (Directorate for Lifelong Learning of the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research) are very useful for realising situated learning as a didactic principle. The Basic Job Skills Profiles describe how reading, writing, numeracy, and oral and digital skills are part of the work tasks in various occupations. The profiles show which concrete basic skills the employees should have and are always based on the competence goals.

The Basic Job Skills Profiles are a tool meant to facilitate the design of basic skills courses tailored to the needs of each work place and individual learner. The profiles describe how each of the basic skills are used by employees in a particular occupation. The profiles are based on the competence goals. Through the use of these profiles, employers can get an overview of the skills that need to be strengthened and workers can increase their awareness about their need for further training in literacy, numeracy, oral communication and digital competence. (Norwegian Agency for Life Long Learning, 2013).

In Annexe 2, you will find the English translation of the Kindergarten Assistants Job Profile created in cooperation with various enterprises, organisations and teachers. This Norwegian example aims to be an inspiration for course providers who can develop their own adaptations to create courses that are really relevant to the needs of the participants.

When planning a WBBS training, it is important to analyse the **main characteristics of the employees/participants**, including sex, age, qualifications, professional experience, existing basic skills and expectations and gather information about the following questions:

- Which learning competencies do the trainees have?
  - Expertise?
  - Cognitive skills?
  - Learning behaviour?
  - Linguistic competence (oral and written language)?
  - Social competence?
  - Emotional competence?

- What is the attitude of the participants towards the WBBS offer?

- Do the participants know each other?

The most important learning prerequisites include the following areas of competence:

Expertise:

Knowledge, understanding, skills (related to the respective content/objectives of the WBBS offer).

Cognitive skills:

Intelligence, planning, ability to act, memory, ability to learn, problem-solving skills, ability to recognise relations.

Learning behaviour:

Independence, concentration, willingness to perform, endurance, care/accuracy, motivation, use of tools.

Language skills:

Oral and written.

Social competence:

Teamwork, communication skills, ability to solve conflicts, responsible behaviour, helpfulness.

Emotional Competence:

Learning and performance anxiety, self-esteem, frustration tolerance, emotional stability, expectations of success or failure.

(Grundbildung bewegt Unternehmen, 2017).

Draft questionnaire for gathering important preliminary information at the beginning of the WBBS training course

Job description

- ✓ What tasks do you have in the company?
- ✓ What do you like about your work?
- ✓ What do you like less or dislike at work?
- ✓ What is easy for you to do while working?
- ✓ What do you find difficult?

Competencies

- ✓ What is your level of education?
- ✓ What professional training do you have?
- ✓ What else did you learn besides?
- ✓ What further work experience do you have?
- ✓ What hobbies do you have? What do you like to do?

Individual goals

- ✓ What would you like to be able to do better at work? (e.g. oral communication, written communication, calculation, dealing with money, work organisation)
- ✓ Would you like to take on other tasks at work? Which tasks?

Expectations of the training programme

- ✓ What do you expect from the course?

The most appropriate methods for gathering the available information about the participants' existing skills and attitudes are **the interview and the observation**

Employees with low skills who participate in training often have more needs to satisfy. During the phase of need analysis, we could detect their predominant needs, so they could be assessed, and their further development could be attained.

—Mr Miltiadis Vogiatzis, Business Counsellor and Trainer (full text in Annexe 3).

During the first step of training design, it is necessary to assess the available resources for the training course, which include:

- specific processes, forms, documentation systems in the company;
- budget;
- equipment;
- working time; and
- contact persons from the company.

When this step is completed, all the determinants of the training framework should be identified, and the following questions **(6 W)** should be answered:

- ➢ Who are the employees, what are their basic characteristics?
- ➢ Why is the whole training implemented?
- ➢ What is the content of the training programme?
- ➢ Where is the training to be implemented?
- ➢ When is the training to be offered?
- ➢ What resources are available for the training's development? (EKEPIS, 2006).
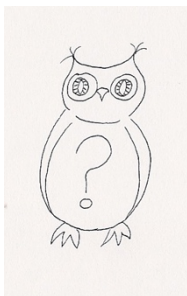
Take some time for a brief reflection:

In your job as a trainer and/or course designer, which are the most often used tools for training needs analysis? In which part do you feel well prepared? In which part would you need or like to extend your competence?

4.1.2 Identification of the Training Objectives

The learning objectives are a type of agreement between the trainer and the participants, and they help with making the purpose of the training concrete and measurable. Objectives must be focused on the desired outcomes from both sides.

A learning objective is what the training participant should be able to do, explain or demonstrate at the end of the training course. Effective learning objectives should be clear and performance-based, and the end results must be observable and measurable.

The objectives must meet the training needs of the programme and correspond to the real potential of the participants. The objectives are the framework according to which trainers determine the detailed content of the training and select the appropriate educational techniques, necessary training materials and evaluation methods.

The learning objectives are closely connected to the competencies. Competencies consist of the basis for skill standards that specify the level of knowledge, skills, and abilities required for success in the workplace as well as potential measurement criteria for assessing competency attainment.

The difference between a competency and a learning objective

Competencies define the applied skills and knowledge that enable people to successfully perform their work while learning objectives are specific to a course of instruction. Competencies are relevant to an individual's job responsibilities, roles and capabilities. They are a way of verifying that a training participant has indeed learned all that was intended in the learning objectives. Learning objectives describe what the learner should be able to achieve at the end of a learning process. Learning objectives should be specific and measurable. In short, objectives are what we want the learners to know, and competencies are the means of how we can be certain of what they know.
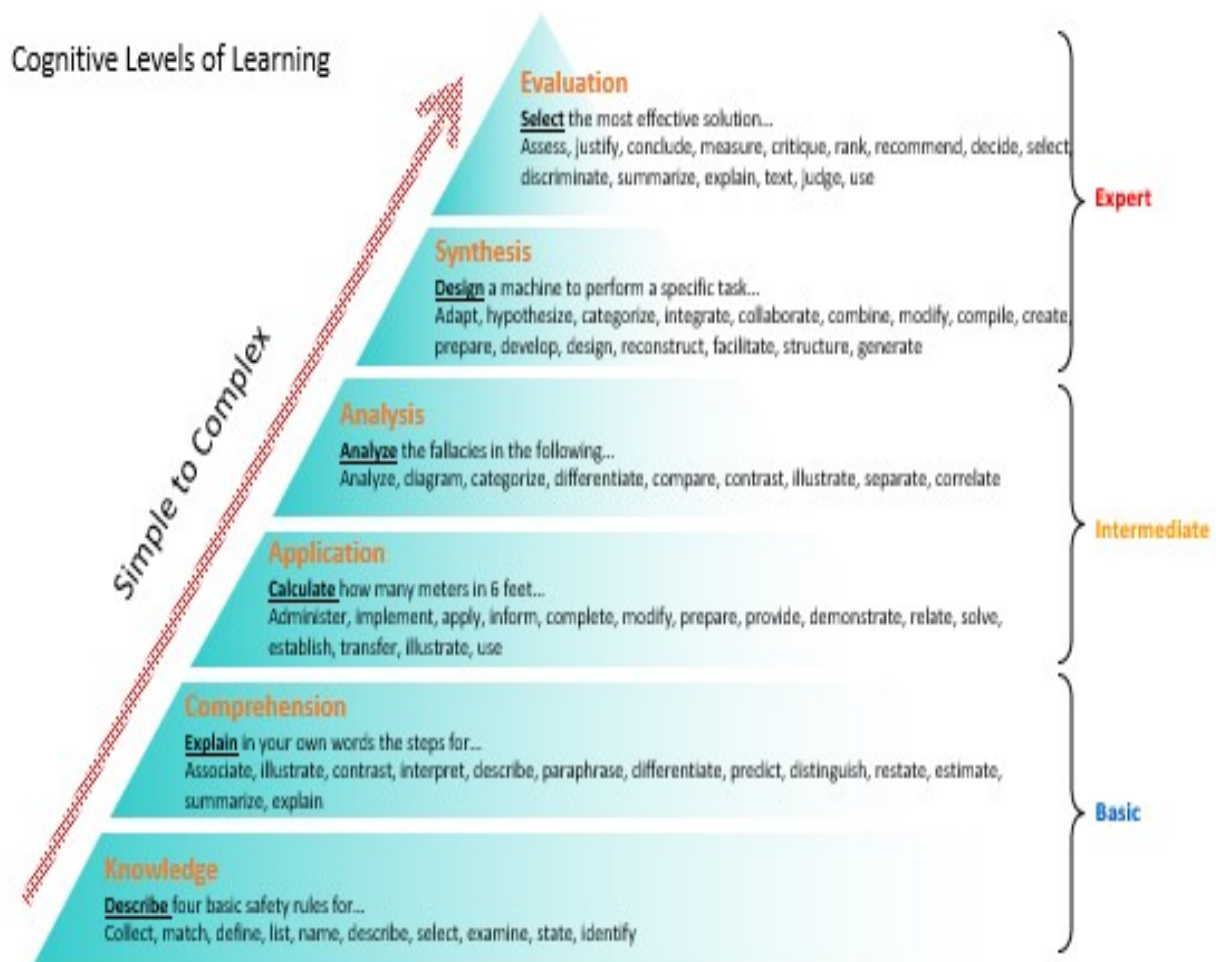
The fact that gaps in competencies drive the demand for training suggests that they are directly linked to the training objectives. A helpful and frequently used resource when setting learning objectives is Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Skills (Bloom, 1956) and the later revisions by Shane (1981), Gagne (1985) and others.

They identified three domains of learning objectives:

- cognitive: mental skills (knowledge);
- affective: growth in feelings or emotional areas (attitude); and
- psychomotor: manual or physical skills (skills).

The domains are further subdivided, starting from the simplest to the most complex. The first of these domains is the cognitive domain, which emphasises intellectual outcomes. This domain is further divided into categories or levels. The divisions outlined are not absolute, and there are other systems or hierarchies that have been devised in the training world. However, Bloom's taxonomy is easily understood and is probably the most widely used today.

Bloom's Taxonomy Verbs & Examples

Cognitive Levels of Learning

Evaluation

<u>Select</u> the most effective solution...
Assess, justify, conclude, measure, critique, rank, recommend, decide, select, discriminate, summarize, explain, text, judge, use

Synthesis

<u>Design</u> a machine to perform a specific task...
Adapt, hypothesize, categorize, integrate, collaborate, combine, modify, compile, create, prepare, develop, design, reconstruct, facilitate, structure, generate

Analysis

<u>Analyze</u> the fallacies in the following...
Analyze, diagram, categorize, differentiate, compare, contrast, illustrate, separate, correlate

Application

<u>Calculate</u> how many meters in 6 feet...
Administer, implement, apply, inform, complete, modify, prepare, provide, demonstrate, relate, solve, establish, transfer, illustrate, use

Comprehension

<u>Explain</u> in your own words the steps for...
Associate, illustrate, contrast, interpret, describe, paraphrase, differentiate, predict, distinguish, restate, estimate, summarize, explain

Knowledge

<u>Describe</u> four basic safety rules for...
Collect, match, define, list, name, describe, select, examine, state, identify

Simple to Complex

Expert

Intermediate

Basic

Various researchers have summarised how to use Bloom's Taxonomy. The major idea of the taxonomy is that what educators want students to know (encompassed in statements of training objectives) can be arranged in a hierarchy from less to more complex. The levels are successive so that one level must be mastered before the next level can be reached.

A competency should be written in the following manner:

1. Each competency is measurable and/or observable.
2. Each competency is based on performance.
3. Do not use evaluative or relative adjectives (Do not use words like good, effective, appropriate).
4. Do not use evaluative or relative adverbs (Do not use words like quickly, slowly, immediately).
5. Do not use qualifying phrases (Do not use a phrase such as "Write with greater confidence").
6. Say what you mean using only the necessary words.
7. Use all the following domains as appropriate:
    - **Knowledge:** patterns, concepts
    - **Skills:** practical abilities
    - **Attitude:** realising feelings, values, motivation.

(Dave, 2010, pp. 33-34).

An example of using appropriate verbs when writing WBBS competencies

Knowledge Level: What can learners do verbally?
Use verbs such as: define, identify, name, know, recognise, list.

Skills: What can learners do in practice?
Use verbs such as design, represent, create, compose, apply, change, use, register, and perform.

Attitudes: What are they able to feel or change in their behaviour?
Use verbs like feel, mobilise, challenge, accept, appreciate, accept, reject, sensitize, support.

In conclusion, developing effective objectives relevant to the purpose of training is not an easy task, but following a few simple steps could be very helpful. Objectives should be written from the participants' point of view. They should emphasise what the trainees value, understand or want to do with the information or the skills acquired.

While designing a training programme, we should always keep in mind that for the participants in a training to improve the basic skills in the workplace, means also to tend to create links with the others and the workplace, to know themselves better, to contact their own "difficult self', improve themselves.

—Ms Vasso Askitopoulou, Psychologist, Adult Trainer (full text in Annexe 3).

A simple way to start writing learning objectives is by answering the following three questions:

1. What will the participants be able to do as a result of the training?
2. What are the conditions and/or the circumstances, according to which the participants will perform this activity? What knowledge or materials do they need in order to do this effectively?
3. What level of proficiency is needed to perform the new task and/or role?

There are several different models created to help with designing the learning objectives. It would be very helpful to consider the SMART Model when setting practical and effective objectives (Doran, 1981).

SMART Model → SMART Goals

Specific

• Well defined

• Clear.

Measurable

• Know if the goal is obtainable and how far away completion is

• Find out when you have achieved your goal.
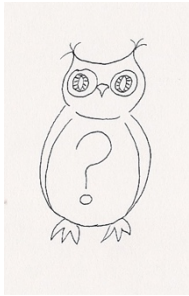
Agreed Upon

• Agreement with all the stakeholders on what the goals should be.

Realistic

• Within the availability of resources, knowledge and time.

Time-Based

• Enough time to achieve the goal.

4.1.3 Development of the Training Content

The training content is the result of the study of educational needs and follows the identification of the learning objectives of the programme. The analytical content of a course consists of small modules that are directly related to the already set needs and objectives and the determined duration of these modules.

These steps include the:

- determination of the training modules (learning units);
- splitting of the modules into topics;
- identification of the time per module/topic; and
- development of the training materials.

Creating training materials involves writing, creating learning exercises, and working with content experts and trainers. It is the most time-consuming phase, but it is also key to making sure that the training is successful. The most common types of training material are handouts; training manuals; audio-visual material, such as films and tapes; PowerPoint presentations; pictures; drawings; diagrams; objects; flipcharts, etc.

The selection of training methods and techniques depends on the:

- training objectives and learning outcomes;
- training content;
- learners' basic characteristics;
- available time;
- possibilities of implementation and available infrastructures; and
- trainer's competencies.

The three-phase scheme of the learning units:

1. Introduction to the topic

There are several ways to get involved in a topic.

One important question is: How can motivation, interest or curiosity be aroused?

2. Development of the content/implementation

There is a variety of possibilities of how to develop topics.

An important question here is: How can the learners successfully deal with the topic in as independent a manner as possible?

3. Assurance of results/Conclusion

Successful conclusions give orientation: what has been learned can be arranged and applied by the learner in an overall context (competence to act). Assurance of results comes from knowing that training on the topic has led to an increase in learning. This increased learning can be demonstrated through the appropriate methods (e.g. application, transmission).

(Grundbildung bewegt Unternehmen, 2017).

Take some time for a brief reflection:
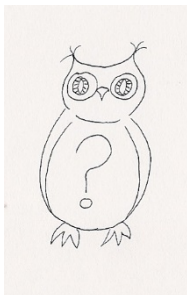
Consider your experience as an adult trainer and/or course designer. Can you find and write down an example of how you would develop the training content (units, topics, duration and training materials) of a course for low-skilled employees?

4.1.4 Selection of the Training Methods

The basis of any selected didactic methods to be used in any adult education programme is the statement that adult learning is based on the learner's experience.

It is not the purpose of this module to analyse and evaluate the learning theories in detail but to highlight their common admissible elements in relation to adult learning. It is noted that in recent years various theories converge to three key elements in a learning process (Rogers, 1999).

● The first commonly accepted element is that the "knowledge transfer" learning model is not effective, especially when it comes to adult education. This is because it creates dependency, weakens critical thinking and reduces the ability of the learners to process problems on their own. The opposite of this model suggests that learners actively participate in the learning process by relating the educational material to their experiences and pre-existing knowledge. Adult learning programmes emphasise the development of creative learning rather than the development of mechanistic learning.

● The second element of learning deals with the increasing assumption that experience is the basis of all learning. Freire and other writers argue that learning ends with the critical analysis of one's experience. They argue about how the "learning cycle" begins with experience, proceeds to one's reflection on this experience and ends with putting this experience into practice. In turn, this prepares the specific experience for further processing in the next stage of the cycle. According to Kolb (1984), learning is divided into four stages. Kolb's empirical learning cycle shows that experience is transformed through reflexive observation into abstract concepts and generalisations, which then lead to new experiences through experimental application.
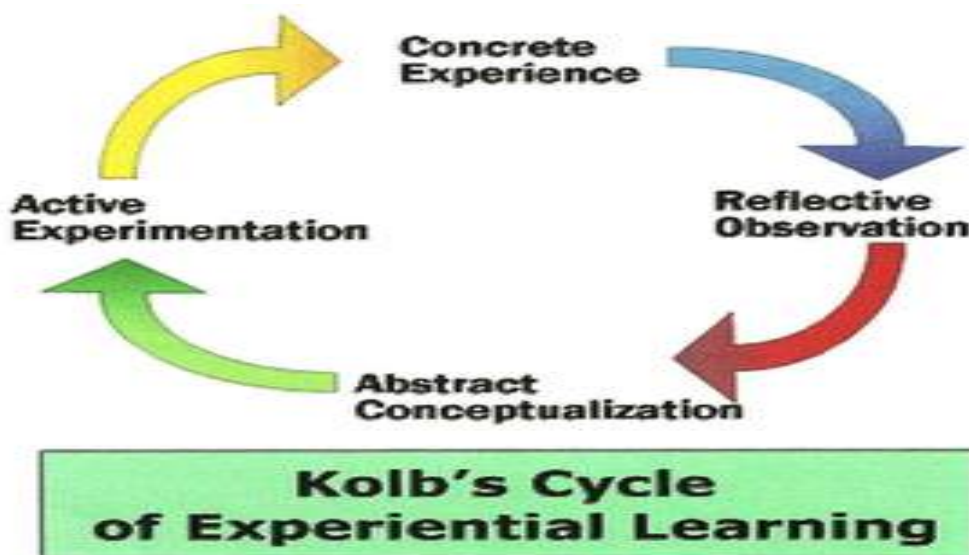

image by Karin Kirk

● The third point concerns the different learning styles that characterise the trainees. Everyone prefers to learn in a certain way, depending on their personality and abilities (Sarri & Trichopoulou, 2017).

These common points are currently the basis for the design of an operational training programme and especially for a WBBS training course.

I was specifically intent on not treating my 'audience' as low-skilled. This way of interacting with trainees is empowering in itself… By sharing their own experiences, they were able to empower each other by seeing what is possible.

Mr Naoum Liotas, Psychotherapist, Coach and Trainer (full text in Annexe 3).

The trainer has a wide range of training methods to choose from. Some important training methods are listed below:

- lecture;
- discussion;
- case study;
- role-playing;
- brainstorming;
- computer-assisted learning;
- exercise;
- business games;
- on-the-job training; and
- project work.

The training objectives and outcomes determine the choice of the training method. For example, if the objective is to develop social skills, then methods, such as role-play and group work are needed. For professional skills, project work could be an available method (Table 4).

Role-Playing, an important technique that facilitates the emergence of attitudes that participants would have inhibitions to express directly or even would not be aware of. Also, another key goal of this technique is to expand the ways that trainees see social life and their social roles.

—Mr Yannis Gavanidis, Sociologist, Adult Trainer and Counsellor (full text in Annexe 3).

Table 4: Forms of learning, and forms, methods and types of competencies

	Content learning	**Methodical learning**	**Communicative learning**	**Reflexive learning**
Participants will be able to	Read, understand, analyse, synthesize and evaluate	Research, structure, organise, plan, decide, design, visualise and present	Listen, justify, argue, ask, discuss, exchange, give and receive feedback, and cooperate	Develop personal goals, reflect on individual learning actions, and any previous knowledge and experiences, and develop an awareness of their own motives, interpretive patterns, attitudes and values
Exemplary forms and methods	Text work, lectures, individual work, plenum	Project work, interviews, creativity techniques, individual work, group work	Teamwork, small group work, plenary sessions, moderation, feedback	Role-play, observation instructions, partner interviews, self-questionnaires, learning diaries, coaching, counselling, collegiate counselling
Type of skills acquainted	Professional skills	Methodical expertise	Social skills	Personal skills

Note. Adapted from *Social Entrepreneurship Projekte. Unternehmerische Konzepte als innovativer Beitrag zur Gestaltung einer sozialen Gesellschaft* (p.307)*, by S. Schwarz, 2014, Wiesbaden, Germany: Springer V. Wiesbaden.

The didactic methods and techniques that are available for an effective WBBS training programme are described in detail in Module 5.
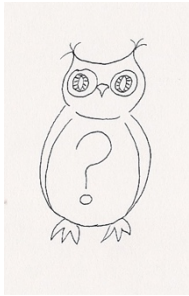
Take some time for a brief reflection:

Imagine you are responsible for designing a course for developing the social skills of employees in communication. Which didactic methods would you choose and how are they connected to the learning objectives?

4.1.5 Evaluation of the Planning

The last step of a training plan is to design the evaluation of the types, the tools, the methods and the results. The evaluation is focused on the design and the development of the programme, the effectiveness of the programme, and the degree of the objectives achieved.

The evaluation and the monitoring system needs to take under consideration the different perspectives of the different stakeholders and then focus on what it is important for those stakeholders. This is not only for accountability reasons but also for gathering evidence of what works and what does not work and showcasing how adult learning in the workplace can yield benefits for employers, employees and the broader society (European Commission, 2018, p. 35).

The evaluation plan includes:

Employee Feedback about the Programme: It includes the performance of the trainer, as well as other factors, such as learning units, adequacy of training materials, the effectiveness of didactic techniques, etc. Collecting this kind of feedback from employees who participate in training sessions will help you come up with new and improved programme versions.

Employee Assessment: This must be done during the training sessions. Evaluate how much the employees have actually understood the training. This can be done using mini quizzes, practical exercises, etc.

Programme Assessment: It aims to obtain a valid estimation of the degree of knowledge, skills and competencies acquired through participation in the training activity. This type of evaluation should be done after trainees return to work.

Common evaluation tools include questionnaires, tests and questions to trainees, discussions and observation.

The steps, levels and tools of evaluation are described in detail in Module 6.

4.1.6 Summarising: Components of an Adult Training Design

The mandatory components of an adult training programme are summarised as follows:

- *Title of the programme*

The title of the programme is short and instils motivation in adult employees. It evokes positive associations related to learning while also indicating the aims and objectives of the programme when possible.

- *Aims of the programme*

The aims define the generally expected changes the programme intends to bring about in adult participants. They also justify the purpose of the programme. They are based on the need analysis of the target group(s) in any given context.

Through the description of the training's purpose, it is made evident that the basic skills and key competencies are integrated into the aims of the programme.

- *Target group*

The programme is aimed at a target group of adults. The target group's characteristics need to be analysed very carefully. For example, the following information is relevant: gender, age, level of education, employment status, skills and competencies, interests, and other relevant data (migrant status, socioeconomic status, etc.). From the description of the target group, it may be evident which needs the programme addresses.

- *Objectives of the programme*

These are the specific and measurable skills and competencies that the programme is aiming for. For adults, attitudes are also important.

In the content of the programme, the knowledge, skills and competencies are defined in order to reach each of the objectives.

- *Content of the programme (standards)*

Areas of basic knowledge and skills that programme is aiming for:

Content	Knowledge	Skills
Literacy, for example		
Mathematical		

Knowledge and skills can be defined in different levels of difficulty (using, for example, Bloom's or Mezirow's taxonomy).

- *Duration of the programme*

How many hours of organised learning are planned for the programme?

- *Catalogue of knowledge and skill that will be assessed and methods of assessment*

This includes the list of knowledge and skills that are being assessed (taken from the content) and the description of the assessment procedures and methods (oral, written, tests, portfolios, project work, etc.). In short, what is being assessed, how and when? Which are the criteria, in case there are any, for the programme's successful completion?

- *Entry requirements*

If there are any entry requirements, they have to be described here. For example, level of education, assessment, validation of previous learning, etc. The designer needs to be clear about any possible barriers preventing adults from participating in the programme, especially to those belonging to vulnerable groups.

- *Requirements for progression and completion of the programme*

If there are any requirements for the progression and completion of the programme, they need to be described here. For vulnerable groups of adults, programme designers need to be sensitive and avoid formalising excessively the requirements for the progression and completion of the programme.

- *Organisational aspects of the programme*

The organisation of the programme enables its realisation because of the relation between the different components of the programme. The components that need to be in close relation include the aims, objectives and content (standards). The means for the realisation of these components include methodical and didactical approaches, such as individual or group training (course, consultation, distance, online, etc.), appropriate teaching and learning methods (lecture, discussion, role-play, case study, study of different sources, etc.), as well as suitable approaches for assessing knowledge and skills (learning diary, individual learning plan, portfolio, career plans, etc.).

- *Formal requirements, and other knowledge and skills of the trainers*

The level and area of specialisation of trainers as well as any other specific knowledge and skills that trainers and teachers are required or expected to have.

- *Certificate of training/attendance*
- A certificate of attendance is an official document proving the attendance of the training course.

(Käpplinger, 2017).

4.2 Creating Learning Opportunities for Low-Skilled Employees with Low Competencies

The main characteristics of adult participants in any vocational training are described (Kokkos, 2005) as follows:

- They participate in training with specific goals.
- They have a wide range of experiences.
- They tend to participate actively.
- They face barriers to learning.

Kokkos (2005) classifies learning barriers in the following four categories:

- ✓ Obstacles due to poor organisation of educational activity
- ✓ Obstacles resulting from their social roles and tasks
- ✓ Internal obstacles, which include barriers related to pre-existing knowledge and values, as well as obstacles resulting from psychological factors
- ✓ Participants develop defence and resignation mechanisms.

This may be the case when internal obstacles prevent an adult from sharing new opinions during a training programme and redefining their previous knowledge, values and habits.

The characteristics of adult learners who are members of vulnerable groups are described as follows:

• Low self-confidence
• Low motivation for learning
• Obstacles to the learning process (accumulated problems, multiple roles, lack of time)
• Biological/physical obstacles (vision, memory, diagnosed learning problems)
• Absent from the learning culture
• Inability to express themselves using the written and spoken language.

(Papaioannou, 2014).

Particularly important are the teamwork processes (learning agreement, group exercises) that contribute to the development of a climate of confidence and promote the active participation.

—Ms Anastasia Koukidou, Psychologist, Adult Trainer (full text in Annexe 3).

Components of a successful employee learning experience

Based on the characteristics and principles of adult learning, the components of a successful employee learning experience are mentioned in the following checklist:

- The goals of the employee training are clear.
- The employees are involved in determining the knowledge, skills and abilities to be learned.
- The trainers use the experiences and knowledge that employees bring to each learning situation.
- New material is connected to the employee's past learning and work experience.
- The employees have an opportunity to reinforce what they learn by practising.
- The learning environment is supportive.
- The learning opportunity promotes positive self-esteem.
- The didactic method increases active participation.

Participants who are not used to taking part in training programmes, who have negative learning experiences, who find it difficult to learn or who have insufficient (written) linguistic knowledge, need special methodical and strategic approaches for a successful learning process.

There are several obstacles to the participation of low-skilled people in any training programme, e.g. discouragement, embarrassment…due to feelings of shame, especially by those over 50...cannot read or write… Reaction: The life experience is more important than diplomas, after realising the kind of inability I avoided any activity requiring these basic skills and in the context of the principle of full participation, they had the opportunity to participate orally and use narrative ways either in plenary or in their group.

Participants who are not used to learning usually need:

- ✓ reasonable, manageable learning units and learning steps;
- ✓ an overall small-step approach;
- ✓ a clear and transparent procedure;
- ✓ repetitions or summaries of what has been worked out at the end and/or at the beginning of the following learning unit;
- ✓ tools for insufficient (written) linguistic knowledge; and
- ✓ motivational and encouraging learning experiences.

(Grundbildung bewegt Unternehmen, 2017).

Adults face barriers to learning due to many factors. A trainer should have them in mind…An important factor seems to be the personal situation which negatively affects the learning process: increased anxiety, work and fatigue from family obligations. The training process must be flexible enough to give time and space to the participants.

— Ms Vassiliki Zagoumidou, Economist, Adult Trainer (full text in Annexe 3).
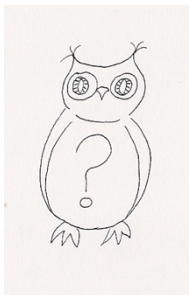
Take some time for a brief reflection:

In your job as an adult trainer/counsellor/responsible course planner, which were the most common obstacles for the low-skilled participants? Which measures did you take to facilitate their participation?

4.3 Showcases: Interviewing Key Persons in Planning and Implementing Training Offers in the Workplace

In order to create a clearer and more practical picture of WBBS training for low-skilled employees, a number of workplaces were visited. We selected three of them as case studies, and we interviewed the trainers/coaches. Here are their opinions on what they think is important.

SHOWCASE 1: TRAINING EMPLOYEES IN A WOMEN'S RURAL COOPERATIVE

This first showcase is an example from an on-the-job training course that took place in 14 women's rural cooperatives during the years 2008–2012. It was part of Ergani's wider project, the aims of which were:

1) to enhance the personal and professional development of female participants and employees of women's rural (mainly) cooperatives in northern Greece (14 cooperatives, in three regions) by improving their work-based basic skills; and
2) to develop the business of the cooperatives.

Ms Athanassia Lazaridou, who was responsible for training the women, reported:

The training needs analysis in women's agro-tourism cooperatives takes place at the level of knowledge, skills and attitudes, always taking into account the needs of the socio-economic, cultural context in which the beneficiaries live and work. This stage is included in the integrated planning of each training programme of these groups. For this purpose, appropriate research tools and techniques (quantitative and/or qualitative) are chosen and used. A good and very important technique used is the initial or "ex-ante" evaluation because by systematically exploiting its results,

any training offer is adapted to the women's abilities and experiences. Alternatively, in the first meeting, the trainers discuss with trainees and give them an assessment test of knowledge and skills related to the subject of training. However, the training programme is designed to respond not only to the trainees' educational needs and interests but also to the interests and goals of the social cooperative or project funding organisation.

The person needs analysis can be achieved through specific qualitative methods and techniques, such as life stories and interviews, and quantitative methods, such as questionnaires and tests, that have been adapted to the skills, needs and level of knowledge and experience of the target group.

Trainer: Ms Athanassia Lazaridou, Sociologist, career guidance counsellor adult trainer. Life-Long Learning (MSc) working in the Community Centre of the Municipality of Thessaloniki. For contact him/her contact Ergani Center at ergani@ergani.gr

Workplace: 'ANTIGONIDES' Women's Rural Cooperative in Gonnoi village, Larissa district, Region of Thessaly, Greece.

SHOWCASE 2: TRAINING THE MEMBERS OF THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE OF REFUGEES "ALKYONI"

Alkyoni is a day centre providing basic services to newly arrived refugees and immigrants. It is operated by the Ecological Movement of Thessaloniki, a nonprofit organisation and it is supported financially by the German Evangelical Church. Through its operation, a cloth shop was started, run by a group of volunteers, Greek and foreigners. This group worked together to clean, organise and sometimes repair the cloths or even reuse them by making totally new products. For this work, they had to be trained, so training was organised for them. However, after they finished this training, a new business idea emerged. This involved creating a social enterprise to sell all the reused and 'transformed' products. However, in order to proceed with this business start-up, they had to be trained again, this time for setting up and operating a business. Therefore, their trainer and coordinator took the responsibility to organise such a training program. They agreed to meet once a week and follow a flexible training programme set and prepared by him, but they were free to add new 'questions' whenever they felt it necessary. A problem they had to face was the fact that the group was not stable because of the unstable citizenship of the immigrants and the refugees.

Mr Thanassis Makris, trainer, coach and coordinator of the group, reported:

Before the training, we organised a workshop in order to get to know each other better and feel confidence and trust in each other and in the procedure. At this stage, they were discussing with the coach their values, their life visions, their professional experience as well as their professional interests and targets. The workshop was coordinated by a coach and an animator; persons with economic as well as pedagogical studies, and experience in social solidarity projects, in animation and in designing educational workshops.

In the second phase, they trained the team in the context and aspects of entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship.

Training in "business" and "professional" skills was organised in different workshops, combining theory and practice. The most used training methods included problem solving within a team and personalised training from more experienced employees to those with little or no experience in the training subject. The path of the group was very positive, as we encouraged their active involvement and participation, and we fully respected their doubts and fears by giving time to discussions, and not setting a straight time frame. We gave them all the time needed to feel secure and start the new social business.

Trainer/reporter: Mr Thanassis Makris. Trainer, coach and group facilitator / coordinator. For contact him/her contact Ergani Center at ergani@ergani.gr.

Workplace, Alkyoni Day Centre, operated by the Ecological Movement of Thessaloniki (employer), Orfanidou 5, Thessaloniki.

SHOWCASE 3: ON-THE-JOB TRAINING IN THE WORKSHOP OF NAOMI

In Naomi, a nonprofit organisation based in Thessaloniki, under the title NAOMI Ecumenical Workshop for Refugees Salonica, has been in operation for the last 5 years as a sewing and cloth-making workshop. In this workshop, they produce a wide range of textile items made by experienced tailors, refugees or immigrants, and practitioners who are members of the organisations' lifelong learning workshop. Most of them are women, but not all of them. Some of them are newcomers, while others have been living in Greece for several years. A lot of their projects are linked to several European organisations who promote Naomi's products to buyers in their countries (mostly but not only in Germany). They receive orders from European organisations to prepare, for example, special t-shirts or conference materials like cloth bags. One of their most successful projects was the production of coats by reusing the blankets left behind by refugees in one of the biggest 'informal' camps in Europe, outside the village of Idomeni.

Elke Wollkschloger is the trainer in the workshop and the coordinator of the production.

She reported the following:

During the phase of planning, we run a test, to identify the knowledge level of the trainees. In addition, we have an interview with each candidate. It is very simple, but it allows us to understand if they are able to start to work immediately or to enter one of the training programmes and at what level.

We have classes at two levels, one for beginners and one for experienced and they are operating in parallel with the production workshops. This double intervention (training and producing) lasts for 4–6 months, and it is quite flexible with appointing the needs of the trainees. What is quite difficult is to manage the different needs and competency levels of trainees. We aim to motivate them and to cultivate the creative spirit in each of them. Another important issue, which plays a positive role, is to support them, to produce some small items so they can feel satisfied by themselves very quickly, and this motivates them and engages them to the procedure. Additionally, they feel so motivated by the creative spirit that they are encouraged to express it by producing different, beautiful things.

In order to facilitate the participation of women with small children, we provide a free, friendly space for children.

Trainer: Elke Wollkschloger, on-the-job trainer for NAOMI organisation. For contact him/her contact Ergani Center at ergani@ergani.gr

Workplace: Naomi's Sewing Workshop, Ptolemaion 29a, Thessaloniki.

https://www.facebook.com/NAOMIPROJEKT1/

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Annexe

Annexe 1

Checklist Steps for Developing a Training Plan

Why implement a training programme?

- In general, which knowledge and skill areas will be the focus of this training or workshop?

- Does the target group know that this knowledge/skill is important for them to succeed in their jobs?

- Does the company/employer comprehend and accept the importance of this knowledge/skill?

- Does the workplace system support and reward the desired knowledge, skills and behaviour?

- Does the target group have the ability to acquire this knowledge/skill?

- Does the target group have the desire to acquire this knowledge/skill?

What resources are available for the development of the training programme?

- Specific processes, forms, documentation systems in the company?

- Budget?

- Equipment?

- Working time?

- Voluntary participation?

- Where is the training to be implemented?

- When is the training to be offered?

- Contact persons from the company?

Who are the participants?

- What are the participants' basic characteristics (sex, age, qualifications, professional experiences, existing basic skills)?

- Which learning prerequisites and competencies do the participants have?
    - ✓ Expertise?
    - ✓ Cognitive skills?

- ✓ Learning behaviour?

- ✓ Linguistic competences (oral and written language)?

- ✓ Social competencies?

- ✓ Emotional competencies?

- What is the attitude of the participants towards the WBBS offer?

- Do the participants know each other?

- Is it possible to get to know the participants?

What are the aims of the training?

- What are the learning objectives for the participants (Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes)?

- What do you expect the participants to learn during the training?

- What learning achievements will the participants gain as a result of the training?
- What level of proficiency is needed for the participants to perform their task(s)?

What will they be trained on?

- Training modules?

- Topics per module?

- Time per module/topic?

What methodologies will be used?

- What materials/training aids will be needed?

- When/where will the training be conducted?

- Who will be the trainers?

How will the training be evaluated?

Which tools will be used for:

- employee feedback about the programme;

- employee assessment; and

- programme assessment?

SKILLS NORWAY

BASIC JOB SKILLS

Kindergarten assistant

The profiles for basic job skills describe how reading, writing, numeracy, oral and digital skills are part of the work tasks in various occupations. The profile shows which basic skills the employee should have.

The profiles can be used to give:
- Relevant training in basic skills in the SkillsPlus programme
- Make language teaching work-oriented
- Give a vocational aspect to the common core subjects in the VET (vocational education and training)

Tasks for the kindergarten assistant:

- oivbeedminvplanning, implementing and evaluating the educational activities
- attend meetings in order to implement the pedagogical work
- help to create and maintain close contact with parents
- help to document the work in the department

Reading	Writing

On a daily basis the kindergarten assistant will read:
orkwschedules and vacation plans
- okledlicofilwutin
- forms like week schedule and attendance form
- log and routine log
- messages to and from colleagues or parents
- posted information about tours and other activities
- symbols on food labels, labels on medicines and detergents
- child literature out loud

Regularly the kindergarten assistant will read:
- information letters to parents
- information letters from the management
- term plans and activity plans
- instructions for hygiene and allergies

Occasionally the kindergarten assistant will read:
- specialist literature
- descriptions of procedures
- training materials related to courses and other training activities
- forms and information related to his/her own employment

On a daily basis the kindergarten assistant will:
- fill inn forms on daily routines
- keep a log of the day's activities
- write messages to colleagues and parents
- write notes and memos

Regularly the kindergarten assistant will:
- complete observation forms
- write stories of practice
- write posters and signs with information on bulletin boards
- complete order lists

Occasionally the kindergarten assistant will:
- complete a self-certificate on illness and leave application
- write minutes from meetings
- report discrepancies and incidents
- print posters, bulletins and on boards
- write text to images, online or in photo albums

- receive guidance from the teaching staff
- attend mandatory seminars and training courses
- participate in change- and development achievements
- use digital tools for information retrieval and documentation

Oral skills	Numeracy

On a daily basis the kindergarten assistant will:
- talk with children, colleagues and parents
- give and receive messages and instructions from colleagues and parents
- answer questions from parents and children
- greet and say goodbye to parents and children
- coordinate the daily work with colleagues
- discuss measures if unforeseen situations occur
- report on events in their own shift
- participate in informal conversations with children, colleagues and parents

Regularly the kindergarten assistant will:
- discuss and explain measures and plans with parents
- reassure children and parents if something unexpected happens
- resolve conflicts
- explain special circumstances to parents, peers and superiors
- participate in discussions regarding educational initiatives and workplans
- coordinate the planning and implementation of special activities with colleagues

Occasionally the kindergarten assistant will:
- wehaxperformance review with his/her own supervisor
- collect and disseminate necessary information about
- s hunhdthtit and medication
- obtain information in connection with excursions
- get updates on new procedures
- convey views and discuss professional topics in different situations to different recipients
- discuss and provide input on working conditions, health and training needs

On a daily basis the kindergarten assistant will:
- count and verify the number of children in order to keep track
- keep track of his/her own hours
- orkw with children on math concepts, such as bigger, , txrngelr
- measure quantities of ingredients when cooking
- mix amounts in the correct ratio
- facilitate games and activities that encourage numeracy and mathematical thinking

Regularly the kindergarten assistant will:
- check his/her own paycheck
- fill out the timesheet
- shop and keep list of goods and expenses
- make estimates on the costs of purchasing
- measure the quantities of materials for activities
- estimate material requirements based on the number of participants in an activity
- estimate amounts

Occasionally the kindergarten assistant will:
- orkwon basic math skills with children such as counting, calculating species and geometric shapes
- measure and record amounts of medication given to a child
- plan trips with public transport, calculate time and choose the right tickets
- check their payslip

«Practical applicability motivates adults to participate in training»

Digital skills

On a daily basis the kindergarten assistant will:
- communicate with the employer by e-mail and intranet
- use e-mail to communicate and make appointments with parents
- search the internet for text and images to children's activities
- take digital pictures of activities in the kindergarten
- store and transfer images from the camera to other storage devices
- use and teach children how to use tablets or computers
- use interactive tutorials

Regularly the kindergarten assistant will:
- post updates on the kindergarten's website
- post digital pictures on the kindergarten's website
- fill in electronic working timeschedules
- send and receive text messages to and from parents and peers

Occasionally the kindergarten assistant will:
- finding new recipes to use in the kindergarten
- teach kids how to search and find information and photos online
- use internet resources in educational work
- save reports and folders on activities and children's development

- use presentation tools to parent group meetings
- keep track of activities in electronic calendars
- update and post about activities on social media
- keep up to date and communicate knowledge about web security
- use presentation tools for parent group meetings
- keep track of activities in electronic calendars

The Knowledge Promotion Reform from 2006 has defined five skills that form the basic prerequisites for learning and development in school, work and community life.

The five basic skills are:
- Digital skills
- Oral skills
- Reading
- Writing
- Numeracy

At skillsnorway.no you will find more resources aimed at working with adults and basic skills.

Annexe 3

Reports from interviews with people from the field: Seven Adult Trainers who worked with low-skilled employees on their basic skills. Here's what they shared with us in brief.

For contact him/her contact Ergani Center at ergani@ergani.gr

Report 1: Askitopoulou Vassiliki

She has been a psychologist-psychotherapist since 1993. She holds a postgraduate degree in Social Psychiatry and Adult Education. She has been a scientific associate in Programmes for Counselling and Vocational Guidance since 2002

Counselling (whether individual or group) for acquiring basic skills seeks to develop and/or improve individuals' communication, teamwork and collaboration, adaptability, problem-solving, organisation and time management skills, etc.

While designing a training programme, we should always keep in mind that training participants to improve basic skills in the workplace, also means they will:

- ✓ discover ways to relate with others by creating links;
- ✓ identify difficulties/obstacles in creating links in the workplace or in social life;
- ✓ know themselves better and contact their own "difficult self";
- ✓ dream their future and realise their dream;
- ✓ learn to manage their anxiety; and
- ✓ improve themselves.

Report 2: Athanasios Devetzidis

Career guidance consultant, adult educator and trainer. Master in Sociology and Lifelong Learning. He works at the administration of education and implementation of LLP. His scientific interests are related to social inclusion, inclusion education and social policy, and currently, he is promoting social and solidarity economy initiatives in Greece.

I realise that there are several obstacles to the participation of low-skilled people in training programmes, but, in some cases, they are also characteristic statements of the trainees themselves:

(a) The age factor and the lack of past learning experiences of trainees older than 50 years old.

"Now, at this age, what can we learn now?" Reaction: Failure is only when there is an absence of effort, and in order to achieve "ageing learning", I had to fully energise the participation of all and not leave anyone behind.
b) Discouragement, embarrassment and inability to participate (in spite of physical presence), due to feelings of shame, especially by those over 50 who have not completed their primary education and cannot read or write even simple phrases.
Reaction of trainer: The life experience is more important than diplomas, after realising the kind of inability I avoided any activity requiring these basic skills, and in the context of the principle of full participation, they had the opportunity to participate orally and use narrative ways either in plenary or in their group.
c) The motivation of payments and the obligated physical presence."

Trainee: We came here ... just for the money, so let's finish."

Reaction of Trainer: It was pointed out that for some reason—in addition to the money—they wanted to participate in the training, and their dilemma was to choose whether they would rather "suffer", angered by the waste of time, or become creative by participating and sharing their own experiences.
Finally, my experience as a trainer of low-skilled people, makes me believe that it is important and useful to combine personal consultation with training and always take into consideration the opinion of the trainees during the phase of designing the training programmes.

Report 3: Yannis Gavanidis

Adult trainer, Career Consultant, Sociologist, MSc Criminology, works for the Asylum Regional Office (PGA) of Thrace, Ministry of Immigration Policy.

As an adult trainer in training programmes for low-skilled people, my primary priority is to detect their real educational needs by selecting training techniques that promote the active participation of trainees and the use of their particular attributes. The most appropriate didactic techniques for low-skilled employees are the following:

Teamwork: Teamwork is a key element in achieving trainee engagement and participation. Both the low level of their qualifications and the limited familiarity with the learning process make the members of a particular target group more functional when the elements of teamwork and communication are more powerful.

Brainstorming: It is a very pleasant educational technique and allows the trainees to get to know each other better or come closer to each other when the requested contributions are simple and drawn from everyday life.

Role-Playing: It is an important technique that facilitates the emergence of attitudes that participants would have inhibitions to express directly or would not be able to become aware of. Also, another key goal of this technique is to expand the ways that trainees see social life and their social roles.

Working in subgroups: This is an educational technique that plays an important role in groups of learners who are heterogeneous. As a trainer, my main concern is the organisation of content and material so as to provide different levels of achievement that would produce learning outcomes for each subgroup individually but could ultimately be combined by promoting the training process for the entire trainees' group.

Report 4: Koukidou Anastasia

Psychologist, studied in Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, MSc Clinical and Social Psychology.

Specialisation in Counselling and Professional Orientation. Certified Adult Trainer of EOPPEP, work experience as an adult trainer

She works as an employment consultant and psychologist in psychosocial structures of the public sector and nonprofit organisations. She has also expertise from her work as a career counsellor in Second Chance Schools.

Active learning techniques contribute to the active involvement of the trainees, to the use of existing experiences, reflection and new competencies. Particularly important are the teamwork processes (learning agreement, group exercises) that contribute to the development of a climate of confidence in the group and to the active participation of all. In addition, to improve learners at a cognitive level through group processes and active, experiential learning, basic skills can be enhanced and developed in practice.

From my experience as a career counsellor in Second Chance Schools, and as a mentor and trainer in training programmes for low-skilled employers, learners, through the adult learning education process, should develop skills such as communication and teamwork, problem-solving skills and creativity.

Report 5: Liotas Naoum

A London-based registered psychotherapist, personal and business coach. He is trained in Gestalt psychotherapy and Gestalt coaching, and holds a European Certificate in Psychotherapy, an MBA and a Diploma in Electrical and Computer Engineering. He is a registered member of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy and an executive member of the International Association for Gestalt in Organisations. He was an adult trainer in Thessaloniki for many years.

I have been the trainer for the so-called low-skilled workers in three programmes. These trainees worked either as full-time salesmen or were about to enter sales internship programmes. As a Gestalt practitioner and having a background on coaching, I was specifically intent on not treating my 'audience' as low-skilled. This way of interacting with trainees is empowering in itself. On the contrary, the expectation of having workers with low skills tends to put them in an underdog position that is disempowering for them. By sharing their own experiences of selling, they were able to empower each other by seeing what is possible. Also, I made sure to empower people who shared positive and important work experiences of what they had done well and also to emphasise their strengths in the stories. This allowed the trainees to connect at a human level and be able to see the struggles and coping mechanisms that we all share (without me having to be the expert but a facilitator in this process of holding a dialogue).

I can report very positive results for communication and social skills for the trainees. I still occasionally receive messages from one of the groups of trainees, right after the end of our training 13 months ago. This Viber group was created by one of them for them and was kind enough to include me as well. I imagine that they can still keep empowering each other with their interactions.

Report 6: Vogiatzis Miltiadis

Business counsellor and trainer, with a Master of Business Administration in Marketing and Human Resource Management.

Employees with low skills who participate in training often have more needs to satisfy:

• developing social relationships, especially for women who want to get away from their household duties;

• strengthening self-esteem; and

• enrichment of knowledge and experience.

During the phase of need analysis, we could detect their predominant needs, so they could be assessed, and their further development could be attained:

• Professional career and reorientation

• Personal development

• What are the prospects for long-term employment?

• Which skills to try and improve?

PROPOSAL: Give more and more attention to counselling and mentoring issues to help participants to identify the type of their main needs and how to satisfy them.

Report 7: Zagoumidou Vassiliki

She graduated from the Business Administration Department of the Technical Educational Institute of Thessaloniki. She has a Master's degree in Banking. She is working as an adult trainer for public and private professional training, vocational training centres and professional schools. Her specialisation is in communication, organisation and business administration, management and marketing.
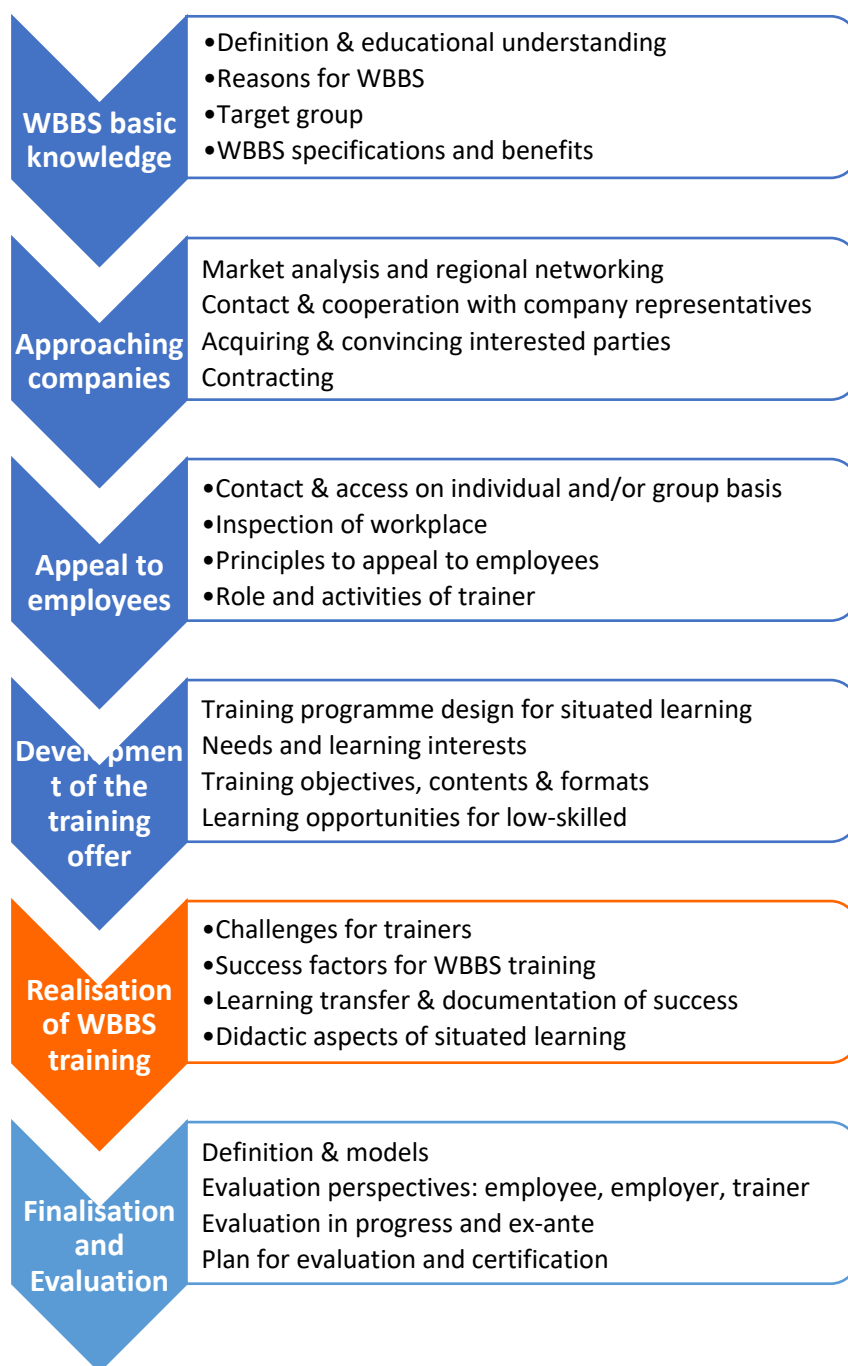
Adults face barriers to learning due to many factors. A trainer should have them in mind. One of them is the low level of education. We face difficulties with people who have left school at an early age because of their living conditions or lack of support from their family environment.

An important factor also seems to be the personal situation of anyone who is negatively affected by the learning process. Increased anxiety, work and fatigue from family obligations cause problems for adult learners.

In addition, it has been observed that adult learners with low educational attainment often experience a feeling of low self-confidence and self-esteem.

An adult's decision to reintegrate into an educational process is an important decision, as it will greatly influence their future at a professional and a personal level.

Module 5 | Realisation of Work-Based Basic Skills Training

WBBS basic knowledge
- Definition & educational understanding
- Reasons for WBBS
- Target group
- WBBS specifications and benefits

Approaching companies
Market analysis and regional networking
Contact & cooperation with company representatives
Acquiring & convincing interested parties
Contracting

Appeal to employees
- Contact & access on individual and/or group basis
- Inspection of workplace
- Principles to appeal to employees
- Role and activities of trainer

Development of the training offer
Training programme design for situated learning
Needs and learning interests
Training objectives, contents & formats
Learning opportunities for low-skilled

Realisation of WBBS training
- Challenges for trainers
- Success factors for WBBS training
- Learning transfer & documentation of success
- Didactic aspects of situated learning

Finalisation and Evaluation
Definition & models
Evaluation perspectives: employee, employer, trainer
Evaluation in progress and ex-ante
Plan for evaluation and certification

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Content

Annexe **_____** Fehler! Textmarke nicht definiert.

Introduction

It is surprising that not enough attention has not been paid to workplace learning rather than to workplace training. Training is an individualised, short-term change effort intended to equip individuals with the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to perform their work successfully and meet or exceed customer expectations. Learning is an internalised change effort that individuals bring about on their own. Life learning helps individuals lead their lives. It is distinguishable from work-place learning, which helps individuals carry out their work successfully and achieve the results desired by co-workers, superiors or subordinates.

(William J. Rothwell, 2002, p. XV).

Since WBBS training takes place in the company as work-based learning, its role and functions are centred on identifying any changing requirements in companies and the special needs for the competence development of employees in their workplaces. This inevitably influences the roles of trainers, the content and the formats of training.

This chapter focuses on the realisation of the WBBS training and explores the different aspects and phases of this process that trainers need to know for the successful and professional realisation of WBBS training.

One of the major challenges in the realisation of WBBS training is that it is not possible to define final and definite WBBS content or training duration because of the constantly changing working environments. This raises the need for recognising new roles and specific competencies in trainers dealing with demanding tasks within WBBS training. This could be achieved through the process of determining their needs from the concrete requirement situations that show up at workplaces, conceptualising learning topics from these needs and enabling the employees to optimise their work activities. For this reason, WBBS training focuses above all on fostering employees into competent and agile learners who experience learning as a gain and are increasingly able to continue learning independently. This is the prerequisite for being able to cope independently with the changing demands of the world of life and work for the rest of one's life.

The major advantage of workplace learning is the unique environment for the application of the content learned. At the same time, this unique environment that encourages the immediate application of the learning content is fundamentally

changing how the training takes place. WBBS training is constructed on concrete situations in the workplace and ensures that what has been learned is transferred back into the workplace. It is of utmost importance to ensure that the learning transfer results in better performance at work and integrate the learning transfer into the didactic concept.

The realisation of WBBS training is about training in heterogeneous learning groups, individualised methods for a particular organisation or profession and suitable formats of training, and the evaluation and documentation of the learning process and outcome. A compendium of guiding principles and success factors for the realisation of WBBS training, which were identified by different experienced trainers and practitioners in partner countries, is explored in this chapter.

The main questions the module deals with and encourages further reflection on are:

- What do trainers need to know about workplace environments in order to realise the WBBS training successfully?
- What didactic tools should be used to assist learning in the workplace?
- How can the learning transfer be didactically structured?
- How should the results of the training be documented?

This module, which is about the realisation of WBBS training, deals with the following main areas, which represent the main body of the text. The module starts by discussing the challenges faced by trainers and emphasises their special roles and functions within the changing work environments. The trainers' specific working conditions and success factors, meaning specific didactic approaches that are proven efficient, are taken into account and laid down. The main issue of the following part involves securing the learning transfer of knowledge, skills and attitudes that represent the main body of the WBBS curriculum. Some examples of good practice are also included to describe didactic aspects of learning that helped solve real workplace situations. The module concludes by explaining the procedures of ongoing assessment and of documenting the results of the training.

5.1 Challenges for Trainers

''What the learner does affects the trainer.'

(William J. Rothwell, 2002, p. 23)

In order to understand better the importance of the trainers' professionalisation, the challenges they are faced with when conducting the training and securing the learning transfer in the working environment need to be highlighted. The main areas in which trainers are mercilessly challenged are presented in the picture below:

Fig. 11: Challenges for trainers in WBBS training (Javrh, 2019)

5.1.1 Preparation of Tailor-Made Training

Reconciling the needs of companies and employees in constantly changing working environments

One of the first challenges for trainers in the WBBS field is that the training and learning are organised in a constantly changing working environment. The most important didactic question concerning this issue is: How can one adjust the needs of the company—and the needs of the learners—with the appropriate didactic and instructional principles? Trainers are expected to deal with two demanding dilemmas; how to secure the learning transfer into working situations and how to create new knowledge in innovative ways while taking into account the imperative of reduction.

Learning in the workplace is based on the approach of situated learning (Module 1), where there are action situations in the workplace in which learning is embedded. Situated learning, in this case, is process learning where the trainer needs to identify the potential learning situations in specific workplaces. WBBS training is based on concrete situations from the world of work. Therefore, it is assumed that the positive benefits of learning will result in higher work productivity.

Addressing the employees' essential needs

However, the very central concept in the successful realisation of WBBS training is the identification and address of the employees' essential needs. Alongside the concrete needs and expectations of the company that are taken into account in the preparation phases, it is necessary to assess in a sensitive way the essential and urgent needs of the employees during the realisation phase. It is exactly those needs that drive the employees' readiness and inclination to consider intensive learning and participation in an organised learning process. The essential needs of the individual are crucial for the combination of basic skills and key competencies that the individual needs to acquire during the WBBS training.

5.1.2 Specific Didactic Knowledge

Balance the three levels of WBBS curriculum planning

Balancing the three levels of WBBS curriculum planning (programme level or training offer, group level and individual level) may also prove challenging. Trainers need to know that there are three levels of planning and all three have to be implemented thoroughly. They have to prepare the WBBS curriculum to be implemented at programme level (a training offer), which has to be redesigned and adapted to concrete learning groups of employees in their working environment (there may be several groups of employees with different needs, based on their working situations and requirements). For the training, individual learning plans that take into account the needs of individual employees, as well as the requirements of the concrete workplace and expectations of the company (individual level), have to be prepared.

Learning content at an appropriate level of difficulty

The trainer has to have enough knowledge, skills and competencies on how to choose appropriate learning content and link it to specific workplaces. In this process, the most important aspect is that all the identified content is levelled or tuned into different levels of difficulties according to the needs and existing knowledge of the employees. Balancing the appropriate levels of difficulty in an exact manner could be an important factor of motivation or demotivation if employees are exposed to negative learning experiences (if too easy, learners may be offended, and if too difficult, there is a danger that they may form a negative self-image of themselves

and believe in their inability to learn). At this point, it is crucial that trainers know their learners very well. This involves more than just information about how learners think and learn, and what their habits and routines are. Trainers have to be acquainted with circumstances that influence the learning conditions in the workplace but are not explicitly verbalised. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that trainers have opportunities to observe future participants and conduct in-depth interviews with them. The goals and objectives of learning need to be linked with concrete situations at work.

5.1.3 Securing the Learning Transfer

Learning transfer

Learning during the course is not enough in WBBS training. Ensuring the transfer of learning back to the workplace is key to the success of the training and thus, is an integral part of the training itself. The role of the trainers in enabling transfer is, consequently, very important. They work with the participants on the transfer tasks that shall be implemented in the workplace. The superior/supervisor is informed of the transfer tasks and supports the implementation by providing time and support. Experiences resulting from transfer are then reviewed and reflected upon during the next class.

Motivational model

The accomplishment of the essential needs through training raises the employees' engagement and stimulates the emergence of new educational needs. The positive learning experience that individuals obtain during WBBS training also stimulates engagement. This, in turn, is a long-term benefit, as expressed in higher autonomy, engagement and understanding of challenges, and finally, in the individual's new educational needs (see Fig. 12). Apart from the development of basic skills, the transfer of newly acquired skills in such a contextualised manner, which matches the needs and requirements of concrete working places, is also included.
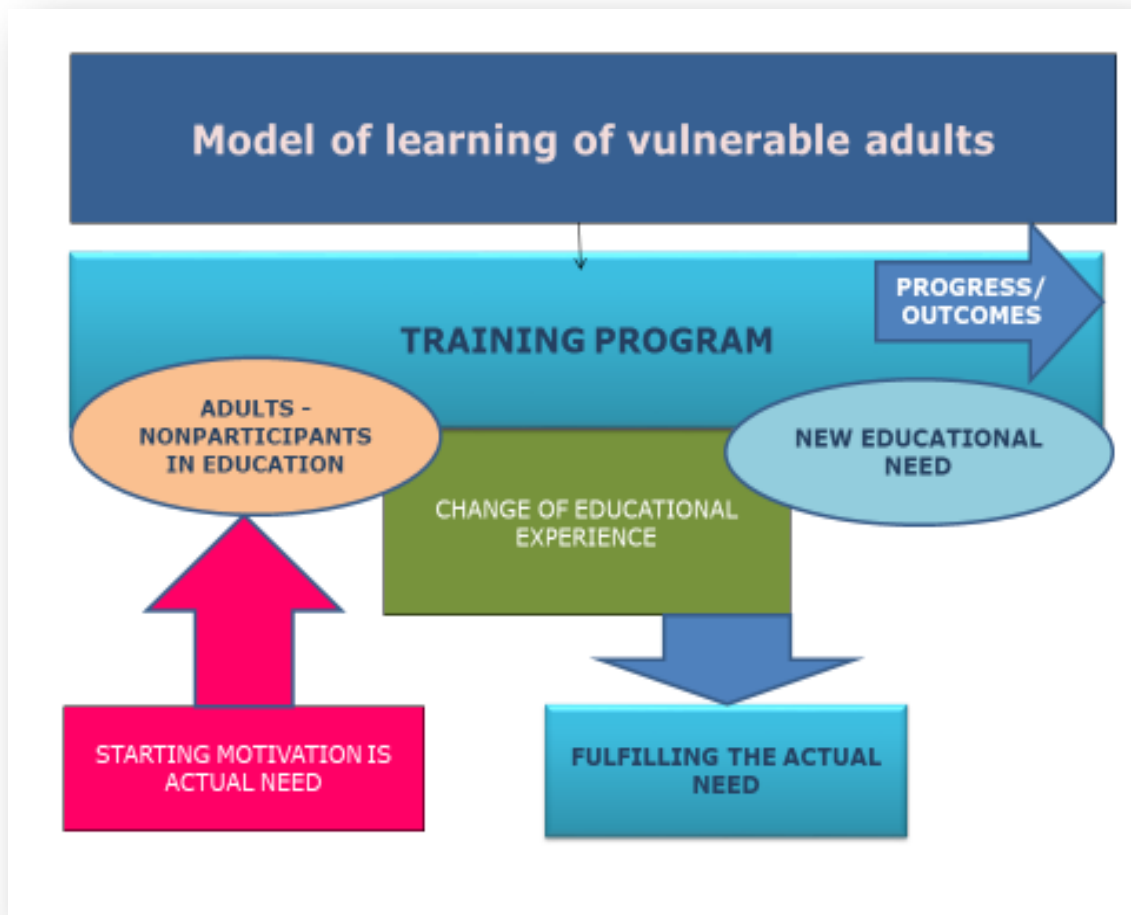
Fig. 12: The motivational model, (Javrh, 2019)

Meaningful learning processes and newly acquired knowledge in relation to requirements in the workplace

General descriptions of goals and contents need to be prepared in such a way that employees will be able to compare them easily with the requirements at work and recognise new learning situations at work. This way, the learning transfer is secured.

5.1.4 Individual Professional Development

Professional growth and learning through fine experimenting

Trainers are also expected to further develop their counselling and coaching roles in WBBS training. One very efficient method is fine experimenting. Trainers are encouraged to constantly trying out new approaches in practice, e.g. fine experimenting in practice. The use of prescribed approaches and final solutions may

not be sufficient in working environments. One is encouraged to try out new approaches, and from the point of view of changing situations at work, this is considered a must.

Strong professional identity

When all these challenges for WBBS trainers are taken into account, their need for appropriate professional qualifications and abilities is evident. This is closely related to a developed and strengthened professional identity. In situations when the trainer is confronted with completely new circumstances, where the security of the classroom is changed into an unknown learning environment in the learners' company or concrete workplace, the trainers' professional identity is of crucial importance. A strengthened professional identity enables the trainer to respond to unpredictable circumstances and demands. In immediate learning situations, trainers will select the right didactic elements and use them in a creative way and in new, genuine forms. Some examples of such creations are included in this module. The trainers' professional identity does not just mean proficiency in the subject area and mastering the didactic elements. Essential parts also include self-image, sense of vocation and the phase of the trainer's current professional development. Due to the acknowledged influence of the trainer's professional identity to the process of the development of WBBS, an integral part of the WBBS approach is specialised training. This training is designed in such a way that apart from considering their competencies for the realisation of WBBS learning, trainers also have an opportunity to reflect on their professional identity, and in doing so strengthening it (see also the **Acquiring competencies for Work Based Basic Skills**).

## 5.1.5 Sufficient Support in the Training Organisation

Clearly defined roles and positions of the trainer

At this stage of the realisation of the training, if not earlier during the stage of the realisation of the training program, the trainers' roles and functions must be very clear to them (see the four functions explained in Modules 1 and 4). If the trainers were not involved in the previous phases, there has to be a meeting where they are informed in detail about all aspects of training, such as needs analysis, workplace specifications, expectations of the company, characteristics of employees, goals and content, and formats of the learning offer. It is important that if other people were involved in previous phases, all the mentioned circumstances and information that were not written down are discussed and analysed.

Since trainers enter companies that are a relatively closed system, they are exposed to extreme working conditions. They have to please the different expectations of the

company management and the training participants, as well as those of their own training organisations. Taking burn-out preventive, protective measures to cope with extreme working conditions is one of the unavoidable challenges faced by the trainer. Special attention needs to be devoted to clarify expectations to trainers and evaluate what can be achieved in the given circumstances. It is important to clarify how they will achieve the goals and expected benefits identified by the employees, employer and themselves, and whether their practicality is measurable.

Take some time for a brief reflection:
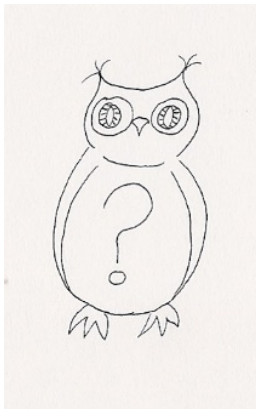
What is the most important and urgent in your opinion: matching the goals of the WBBS training with the goals of the company or adapting the training to the goals of the employees?

At what point did you analyse the way your professional identity has been evolving? Have you recognised any major stages?

Explain how you approached any challenges in the implementation of didactic principles in everyday WBBS training and how successful you were in receiving all the necessary professional, organisational and moral assistance and support from your training company.

5.2 Success Factors in the Realisation of the WBBS Training and Securing the Learning Transfer

This chapter aims to give trainers a simple, but at the same time, exhaustive compendium of identified and extrapolated success factors for the realisation of WBBS training. The objective of this chapter is to help trainers take into account important success factors when they start to plan the realisation of WBBS while simultaneously providing some concrete ideas on how to plan the implementation of WBBS in practice. The main success factors are:

- **Individualisation of learning:**
  - The skills of tailoring the WBBS curriculum in three phases (designing tailor-made training).
  - The skills of recognising the learners' needs (addressing the individual's existing needs/challenges throughout the realisation of WBBS training and continuously adapting the training).

- **Specific didactic knowledge:**
  - The use of techniques for activating learners:
    - o action approach and dialogue;
    - o individualisation of learning;
    - o learning in a social group setting; and
    - o small groups.
  - Stimulating the cognitive twist in learning.
  - Using digital technology in the learning process.
  - Learning to learn.

- **Securing the learning transfer:**
  - Realising training in a quiet and appropriate room.
  - Implementing what was learned in the workplace.
  - Achieving and stimulating the learning atmosphere.
  - Finding innovative ways of linking new and existing knowledge.
  - Integrating basic skills and real work situations (stimulating insights).
  - Choosing authentic resources relevant to the learners and their needs and learning goals.
  - Providing a concrete training title for each session.
  - Identifying a number of concrete working situations where learning transfer is possible.
  - Using a motivational model that allows the long-term benefits of learning.
  - Hosting short learning sessions which have a long-lasting duration.
  - Following up the learners after completing the training (for long-term benefits).

- **Individual professional development of trainers:**
  - Recognising their current stage of personal career development and the burdens associated with it.
  - Reviewing their individual professional development and professional identity.
  - Strengthening the professional identity in preparation for any extreme situations that trainers may be exposed to in the companies.
  - Fine experimenting for the ongoing improvement of individual practice.
  - Having clearly defined roles and expectations in relation to the training organisation.

5.2.1 How to Start?

Some elements are of key importance for the successful realisation of WBBS training from the very start. These include the existing needs of and challenges in the individualisation of learning as well as the choice of an attractive title for the training, which may have a positive influence on the self-image of future participants.

Addressing the individual existing needs and challenges

If the WBBS training is intended to influence and improve the work process, it should always address the individual's needs, as this greatly contributes to raising the employees' learning motivation and the usefulness of the learning outcomes in practice. Chan (2010, p. 22) states that

> *"a thorough, carefully conducted needs assessment is essential to avoid wasting resources."*

When planning WBBS training, it is also important to pay attention to the types of learning in order to address the existing learning needs effectively. Illeris (2009) recognises four types of learning as a process of constructing mental structures (mental organisation of the learning outcomes) that lead to different learning results, as shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Mental structures and types of learning

Cumulative or mechanical learning	Assimilative learning or learning by addition	Accommodative or transcendent learning	Personality changes or changes in the organisation of the self
Learning results in an isolated form that is not a part of anything else	Learning results in additional knowledge to an already existing mental scheme	Learning results in the decay and transformation of an existing mental scheme to fit in with what has just been learned	Simultaneous restructuring of many of the mental schemes established in all the other three learning types

Example:	Example:	Example:	Example:
Learning a PIN number	Learning a new computer function when a person is already familiar with some of the other functions	Learning (that there is) a more efficient way to do a certain task than the currently used approach	Usually triggered by a crisis-like situation

Adapted from Cafarella & Ratcliff Dafron, 2013.

Within the working environment, it is assumed that the assimilative learning type is the most common. On certain occasions, it might be more suitable to focus on other types of learning and plan the learning process according to the learners' pre-knowledge (e.g. accommodative learning, when the learner's knowledge is incorrect or not up-to-date, or cumulative learning, when the learner is faced with completely new learning content).

Individualisation of learning

Although we often think of learning as something that happens in a group setting, learning is primarily "something that happens within the individual" (Illeris, 2003, p. 168). Hence, learning outcomes among learners can be different, even if they participate in the learning process together in a group setting, as learning results are individually structured (internalised), based on the context and energy input (Illeris, 2003; Illeris, 2009). The learners' previous experiences and learning needs can also differ.

When realising the WBBS training, it is necessary to consider that learning takes place by linking newly learned information to an existing mental scheme (Illeris, 2009). However, existing mental schemes among the learners in the same environment can be vastly different, and consequently, their individual processes of assimilative learning may vary as well. Therefore, training or any other organised learning process should be planned from the learner's viewpoint in a way that allows them to link the new information with their pre-knowledge effectively. In training, we try to find common grounds (consensus among learners' existing mental schemes, interests and needs) and work from there, while in an individual learning process we can completely cater for the needs of the individual. The trainer should get to know the experiences, interests, characteristics, skills, attitudes, etc. of each learner in the planning process. Nevertheless, effective planning alone does not guarantee a successful learning process, as the learner must also take responsibility and put effort into trying to

achieve the established learning goals. The trainer is never solely responsible for the learning outcomes.

Concrete training title

Developing an original training title demands time, as it has to reflect the purpose, goals and other key aspects of a particular training. A training title should function as a motivation for the learners by emphasising their strengths and not exposing their weaknesses. Therefore, the training title should not include words that could make the learners feel inferior or insignificant. It is also important that the developed training title is not the same or very similar to that of any other training programme (Žalec, 2018).

Examples of titles for different WBBS training offers[20]:

Offers in care:

- The ABC of care documentation
- Documentation good—everything good.

Offers in English language training:

- English for a good phone call
- Basic Business English.

Offers for team cooperation:

- Appreciative communication in a team
- Fresh air for the working climate.

Offers in a paint and varnish production company:

- The paint's off!
- More colourful, thanks to technology!

A thoughtful training title can help the learners understand what they can expect from the training—what are the benefits of enrolling in the training and the main expected learning outcomes. Choosing an attractive and positive title is especially important when dealing with learners who have less experience with educational programs or

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[20] These examples were provided by students in an extra-occupational Master's programme in Germany (2019) while working on a task dealing with the development of good titles for announcing WBBS training, on the basis of needs analysis as identified by employees and superiors.

have negative experiences of educational participation from their childhood and youth when they attended school. At the same time, a training title should also reflect the current situation and interests of the potential learners (Žalec, 2018).

5.2.2 Meaningful Use of Didactic Approaches in the Main Part of the Realisation of WBBS Training

During the main part of the WBBS training, when the learning process is running smoothly, and the transformation of knowledge takes part, it is vital to maintain the learning atmosphere, action approach and group dialogue. Small groups and short learning sessions that leave a long-lasting effect and an increased will to learn, are preferable.

Learning atmosphere

Although the learners are mostly in control of their own learning, the environment in which the training takes place can greatly influence the learning outcomes. The learning atmosphere can either support the learners in their progress or make learning more challenging. Rothwell (2002) states that the learning climate is determined by an individual's perception of the learning conditions in the workplace, and it can be measured with surveys, focus groups, interviews and observations.

Rothwell (2002) proposes that raising awareness about the ubiquity of learning is a possible strategy for improving the learning climate. When thinking about learning, people often think only of school and training experiences, and those are frequently negative memories. By teaching members of a certain organisation through learning which happens mostly in real-time as informal learning (e.g. trying to solve a problem or following a specific goal), they may realise that they are largely in control of their own learning (Rothwell, 2002). Only when they are aware of these informal learning situations can they analyse and improve them. This way, the learning atmosphere can gradually change.

Action approach and group dialogue

Action approach follows the action research methodology, which focuses on the modification of current practices. French (2009, p. 187) states that the process of action research "starts with a notion in the practitioner's mind that a change in practice is justified" and focuses on the "empowerment of participants" (French, 2009, p. 189). In contrast to daily practices, action research is "a systematic and deliberate process where it is vitally important to plan, act, observe, and reflect with more care, with a

more systematic approach, and with more rigour than would be evident in a normal day-to-day business practice" (French, 2009, p. 189). Zuber-Skerritt and Perry (2002) argue that when it comes to improving practice, professional learning and organisational learning, action research is more appropriate than traditional research.

The action approach develops as a spiral of cycles, each consisting of four phases (Altrichter, Kemmis, McTaggart and Zuber-Skerritt, 2002): planning, acting, observing and reflecting. Reflection is followed by re-planning, and thus, the beginning of another cycle. These phases can be adapted to most workplace situations and repeated until a satisfactory outcome is achieved.

Another important aspect of the action approach is group work (Zuber-Skerritt and Perry, 2002; French, 2009). A practitioner (e.g. trainer) usually triggers the action research process that is then carried out by a group of people in a certain environment (French, 2009). Together, this group discusses the practitioner's idea, identifies and clarifies possible concerns, and works through the spiral (repetition of phases) until the projected goal is reached (French, 2009). Throughout this process, group dialogue is of great importance, so that everyone can actively participate and contribute to the development of the new practice. Group dialogue can also be beneficial for participants to establish a new and deeper understanding of the situation they are dealing with and increase their motivation (Serrano, Mirceva & Larena, 2010).

Small groups

Adult learners are not very keen on somebody else telling them what they should learn. They want to decide for themselves, and it must be something that they feel an urge to learn about (Illeris, 2003). Therefore, whenever working with a group of adult learners, an agreement between everybody involved has to be made. Small groups are especially suitable for this kind of concurrence so that every learner can truly have a say and personally shape the group's learning process.

Illeris (2003) writes that people working in a certain field or in a certain position for a long time, connect their identity strongly with their job. Therefore, they are more open to developing competencies that are more general and develop personally when it comes to learning in relation to their work (in contrast with people who do not identify with their job and are prepared to learn only about how to address their currently experienced needs or very narrow interests). For this reason, members of a specific learning group should have strong common interests and experience in a similar professional field. Nevertheless, some differences among group members can also be beneficial, as they can engage the learners by sparking discussions, challenging different point of views and introducing new information to the group.

Small groups are also very useful in training, especially when it comes to engaging the learners through group activities and different learning methods (such as circles, circle interviews, buzz groups, etc.).

Short learning sessions but long-lasting benefits

One way of providing long-lasting effects through short learning sessions is by following specific phases of the learning process, as was already mentioned in some of the previous sections ("Learning to learn" and "Securing learning transfer"). In this way, knowledge can be effectively internalised through a complete learning event, despite its shortness. This means that we must make sure that the learners are truly curious about the content; that they perceive the learning experience as important and sensible; that they find relevant information, which they understand and apply in practice; that they reflect on the learning outcomes and that they evaluate the learning process as a whole. This approach can be used for training sessions or for improving informal learning in daily work activities.

For any learning session to be efficient, the learners must recognise its meaning and perceive it is a positive experience. Illeris (2003) emphasises that for a learning session to be effective, it must be seen as sensible. Only when the learners perceive a session as meaningful, as well as exciting and challenging, will they mobilise their mental energy. Therefore, the trainer should design the session from the perspective of the learners and ensure that it addresses their views, mindset, needs, interests, pre-knowledge and past experiences.

Learning to learn

The inclination to learn is largely influenced by experiences from primary family life and formal education. People with more positive learning experiences are more likely to learn in various ways in the future. The results of an adult education survey in Slovenia, conducted by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SURS) (2010), showed that people who completed tertiary education programmes were the ones who learned the most in informal contexts, followed by people who completed their upper secondary education. Informal learning was the least present in the lives of people who completed basic or lower education programmes (SURS, 2010). Due to their rejection of various learning opportunities, people who had negative learning experiences during their childhood should be provided with many interesting learning opportunities later in life (e.g. in the workplace). If done correctly, this could soften their negative attitude towards learning.

Rothwell (2002) states that many people do not recognise informal learning as actual learning, as it is quite different from the organised learning experience in a group

setting. If more learners become aware of their informal learning, they could analyse and improve it. Hence, they would experience positive learning events often and gradually develop an attitude that is more inclined to learning (either in an organised way or informally).

5.2.3 The Fusion of New Knowledge with the Needs of the Workplace

The importance of ongoing attention to the transfer of learning throughout all the phases of the realisation of WBBS training has been pointed out already. Alongside an appropriate motivational approach, WBBS training needs to use a learning process that is meaningful for the learners, and that helps them realise the links and usefulness of the training for their work. This part explains some aspects including the importance of planning and securing the learning transfer, situated learning in a social group setting, integrating basic skills and real work situations, and why a concrete training title and a concrete working situation are so important.

The importance of planning and securing the learning transfer in WBBS training

One of the basic tenets of WBBS training is that what has been learned is something learners can use during and after the programme is completed. The transfer of learning is the effective application by learners of what they learned as a result of attending an educational program. There is a number of reasons identified in educational practice to explain why learners do or do not apply what they have learned when attending the program. Examples include, among others, the learners' perceptions of the value and practicality of the programme's content, the presence or absence of follow-up strategies as a part of the programme's design, and supervisory and organisational attitudes towards the changes required to apply what has been learned (Caffarella & Daffron, 2013). For WBBS trainers, it is important to be aware that in order to achieve an optimal transfer of learning because of WBBS training, they need to plan the learning transfer as a part of the process of designing and conducting the WBBS training. When planning the learning transfer, three elements need to be addressed: when the transfer strategies should be used, the key players who need to be involved and what strategies will be used for different players to secure the learning transfer. These elements will be explained in the next part of this module.

Concrete working situation

Ileris (2003) writes that learning activities in training

> must be regarded as immediately relevant in relation to the current job or development possibilities in the work lying within the subjective horizon, i.e. typically changes in work content or organization or personal re-deployment, of which one already is aware or for which one personally wishes to qualify. (p. 175).

In order to achieve this immediate relevance in the workplace, most training should be based on real or possible concrete working situations, as this produces the most directly useful learning outcomes, is usually closer to the learners, and contributes to longer lasting learning effects. However, in more complex work environments that demand divergent thinking and innovation, a more general and theoretical approach could be the more effective option. It is up to the trainer (in agreement with the learners) to determine the most suitable learning path.

To ensure that conscious learning occurs, the learners have to be truly present and aware of their surroundings; otherwise, the planned learning experience can lead to participants not learning (Jarvis, 2003; Jarvis, 2006). Therefore, training should be organised when the employees are not overwhelmed with their work obligations and are not under too much pressure for any other reason. The learners should also have enough time to reflect on their work experiences or the working situation activities that happen during the training.

Integrating basic skills and real work situations

Basic skills are needed and must be improved constantly in all working environments that use and process any kind of information—basically everywhere. Workplace professionals daily "plan a search, locate and apply new information within a workplace context" (Forster, 2018, pp. 2–3). Therefore, employees' literacy should be of great importance to their employer and organisation as a whole.

Ivančič and Gnidovec (2006) state that the workplace is one of the most important environments when it comes to literacy development through the practice of basic skills. Literacy is not only skills of reading, writing and calculating, but also of information management, decision making, communication, problem-solving and the ability to learn (Ivančič, 2004). Among the factors that have the strongest influence on an individual's literacy are age, employment status, work position and formal education (Ivančič and Gnidovec, 2006). People with high educational attainment levels and demanding work responsibilities score the most points on literacy tests (Ivančič and Gnidovec, 2006). These people also have to deal with the most difficult work challenges, and they develop their skills further by solving them. Thus, the

literacy gap between employees in more demanding positions and employees in less demanding positions only increases (and reinforces the literacy stratification of formal education).

The PIAAC survey (2013, 2016) has confirmed that higher proficiency in literacy and numeracy has a positive impact on labour force participation and wages in all participating OECD countries. Wages are more strongly affected by proficiency in information-processing skills than employment. In all participating countries and economies, adults with higher levels of proficiency in literacy, numeracy and problem-solving in technology-rich environments are more likely to participate in the labour market and be employed, and are less likely to be unemployed than adults with lower levels of proficiency, on average.

Situated learning and use of authentic learning materials

In the previous modules, the situational learning approach, in which real situations in the workplace are used as opportunities to build a learning approach, was pointed out (Module 1). Practical situations identified in a concrete working environment act as a starting and reference point for learning (Module 4). It was further elaborated that the real learning environment makes it possible to work on realistic problems and authentic situations. However, despite the harsh statements of trainers dealing with the daily routines of employees and the requirements of workplaces, trainers must not forget that learning has three dimensions, all operating at the same time (Appleby & Barton, 2008):

a. it is a cognitive or mental process and involves thinking;
b. it is an emotional process and involves feeling; and
c. it is also a social process and involves doing.

Learning encompasses these three dimensions as people live in social worlds, where they think, feel and respond as individuals and as a part of groups. The situated learning pedagogy has five principles that are easily applicable into workplace learning situations: research everyday practices, take into account the learners' lives, encourage participative learning by using authentic work materials, provide learning in a safe and supportive environment, and expand learning in other forms of meaning-making that include communication through oral, visual, individual and group means (Appleby & Barton, 2008).

A situated learning approach in WBBS training brings about the use of real work-related sources of learning. As a rule, tutors should always encourage learners to bring along resources from their working environment, such as texts, forms, calculations and tasks that they want to tackle themselves. Resources should include a range of learning preferences, such as visual (photographs, mind mapping, videos), kinesthetic

(concrete resources, role-playing) and auditory (video, speakers, discussion) learning preferences. When collecting the resources, it is important that the trainers take care that these:

- reflect the learners' own use;
- are relevant to the learners' interests and the working requirements;
- are appropriate to the learners' age and skill levels;
- promote respect for diversity, difference, and self-determination;
- use a variety of learning media; and
- are well produced.

Learning in a social group setting

Our daily activities in different environments have a bigger impact on us than we are usually aware of, as we are constantly learning informally through them. Most of these activities and environments are filled with other people who, therefore, also affect us and our learning. Lave (2009, p. 201) writes that people in these (learning) activities are skilful at "helping each other to participate in changing ways in a changing world." This means that we support each other in learning and in personal development. Through their research, Berg and Chyung (2008) found that relationships with colleagues are the fifth biggest factor that affects someone's informal learning in the workplace (preceded by professional capability, personality, computer access and current interest). People in our social groups shape our learning, and we should keep this in mind when we are reflecting on our own learning or planning learning experiences for others.

Wenger (2010) states that activities in social groups do not influence solely our learning strategies and content, but also our identity (who we are). By giving us a sense of belonging, social communities affect our interpretations of events, as we interpret experiences through their lens. Wenger (2010) advises minimising social group regulations since they might discourage group innovation, which makes practices effective. Organisations must make sure that their environment is one in which communities of practice can prosper (Wenger, 2010). Similarly, Illeris (2003, p. 169) states that it "seems that the relevant learning simply takes place only if a person is part of a community of practice."
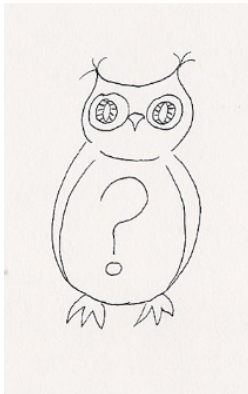
5.3 How to Approach Workplace Learning and Secure a Learning Transfer?

5.3.1 How to Secure a Learning Transfer

Learning transfer—what is it?

In short, learning transfer means transferring learned skills to other, comparable situations. Within WBBS training, the learning transfer is inevitably a part of the training since it is expected that employees are able to succeed in situations which were challenging for them before. Daily practice can be changed to fulfil what is needed in the workplace by involving who is needed to make it happen. The trainer facilitates this process by defining the transfer tasks together with the participant and involving the partners needed. A concrete example is when participants are expected to learn to locate their daily working instructions using a company-based IT system.

Participants are trained on the system during the course. The transfer task would be to fulfil this task on the job, with available time and support, and see if what was learned may now be part of the everyday activities without insecurity while involving colleagues or superiors or establishing workarounds. When learning is situated, the learning transfer evolves naturally somehow. It intends to ensure via transfer tasks, that the learning is being implemented successfully in the work environment. What

was challenging before becomes part of the everyday tasks that are successfully and easily fulfilled (impact).

Situated learning

Nevertheless, the term "transfer" is actually not sufficient for the learning context because there is no simple "transfer" of knowledge from the learning field to the function field. Rather, it is a context-based transformation of knowledge, since it changes in two contexts—the learning and the functional field—at the same time, depending on the frame of reference. Therefore, we speak of a learning transfer when transformations in the functional field are facilitated by the (newly acquired) resources of the learning field (Gessler, 2012).

Secure the learning transfer—the challenge

There are a number of strategies to secure the learning transfer, but there is definitely still a need for development here. However, our practices show that hurdles have to be overcome in companies. The learning transfer can only work well if the system "company" knows and practices a feedback culture; invites behaviour changes; encourages, or at least, facilitates the transformation of old role patterns and creates space or opportunities for changing employee behaviours. Such a feedback culture is underdeveloped in many companies and cannot be developed everywhere. However, it is worth taking the challenge and systematically organising the obtainment of the learning transfer.

The preparation of the learning transfer to help learners and programme sponsors to systematically think of how programme participants can apply what they have learned in their work or personal lives has been a neglected part of the programme's planning and implementation. It had been assumed, and this is still the case in a major part of adult education, that the application of what was learned during the education process would somehow just happen, and that the proposed changes brought by this training were the worry of someone other than those responsible for teaching (Caffarella & Daffron, 2013).

Without an efficient learning transfer, all the effort put into learning would be meaningless. The internalisation of the acquired knowledge and its subsequent application in different practical situations in order to improve current practices or develop new ones is vital in the workplace learning process. Therefore, the learner and/or the trainer should spend some time planning activities for the successful use of the newly acquired knowledge in practice. In his model of the workplace learning process, Rothwell (2002) suggests that these activities are planned in accordance to the following three key steps: information conversion, knowledge application and

learning reflection. The WBBS training should take into account the following steps that learners have to take:
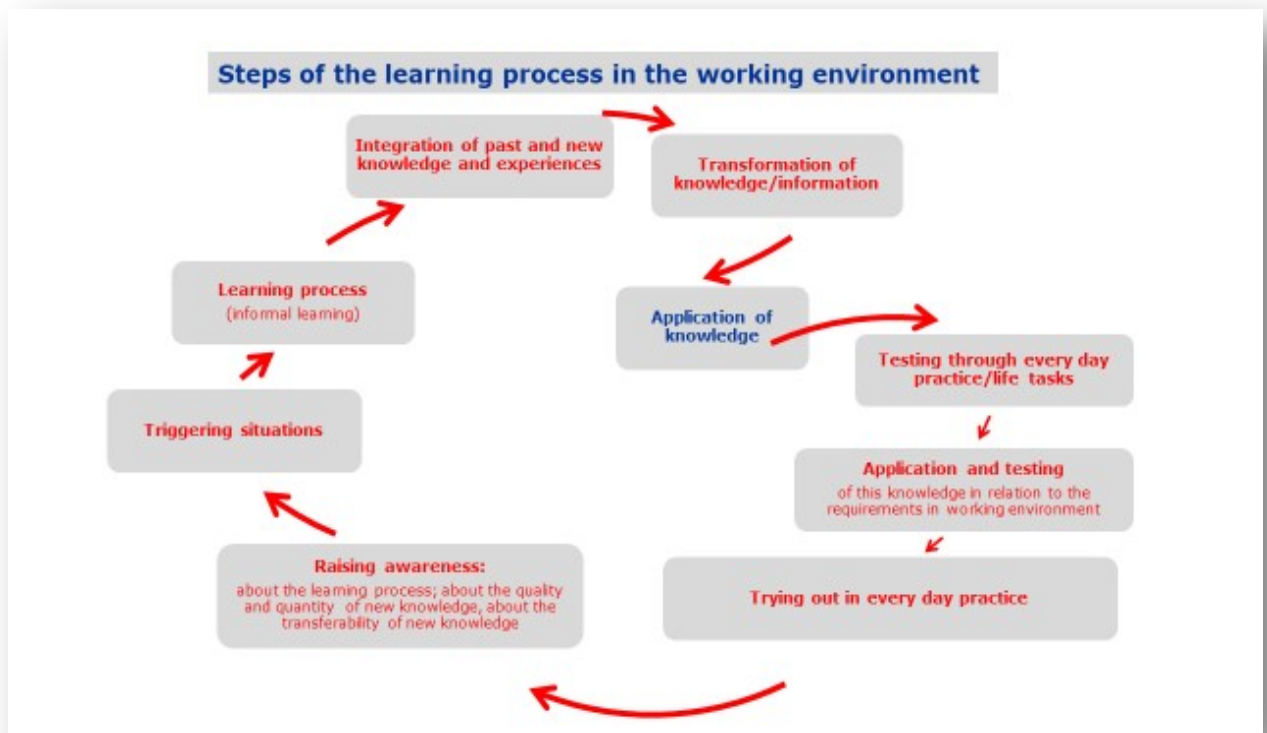

Fig. 13: Steps of the learning process identified in the working environment (Javrh, 2019)

In the *information conversion step*, the learner develops a holistic understanding of the learned matter and thinks about its possible benefits and applications (e.g. identifying the necessary resources for the application, drawing new conclusions from past work experiences, creating a presentation or writing a paper to present new findings to colleagues). The next step, *applying the knowledge*, is meant to consolidate the learned information through practice so that it stays in the learner's mind for a longer period. Testing the new knowledge in a concrete situation also provides the learner with feedback about the effectiveness of the application and any possible readjustments (e.g. analysing the possible differences between what was learned and what happens in practice, mentoring colleagues based on the newly acquired knowledge, preventing inefficient workflow or improving current practices). Knowledge application is often followed (could also be preceded or not present at all) by *reflection on the learning process and its outcomes*. The learner thinks about specific areas where they can look for feedback on the learning outcomes, ponders about possible applications of the knowledge in other situations and/or looks for

additional room for improvement in a current situation. This involves, for example, reviewing the results of their own work or getting feedback about it from colleagues, discovering new solutions for current work challenges, and evaluating the similarities between the learning expectations and outcomes (Rothwell, 2002).

Trainers may or may not have control over the many factors that enhance or inhibit the transfer of learning (for example, the background and experience of learners, the content, the organisation and the community). However, they may have a major influence on the design and execution of the programme. Therefore, it is important that programme planners consider planning for the transfer of learning as an integral part of their responsibilities. When preparing plans for the learning transfer, teachers must address the following tasks: decide when the transfer of learning strategies should be employed, determine the key players who need to be part of the learning transfer process (learners, instructors, work supervisors) and decide on which transfer strategies would be the most useful in assisting participants with the application of what they have learned in practice. Such examples of transfer strategies could include: providing mentors or peer coaches with individualised learning plans, involving people when conducting the training, using application exercises and simulations, using self-assessment for what has been learned, giving assignments that need to be done after the training, and supplying and using job aids and other resource materials, model skills and attitudes needed for learning transfer.

A transfer of learning grid may offer useful help with its design and execution (see also Caffarella, 2013):

Table 6: Transfer of learning grid

The three steps of a learning transfer	Plans, people and strategies that enhance learning transfer		
	Employees/Learners	Trainers	Other key personnel in the company
Information conversion (resources, new conclusions, new findings)	Individualised learning plans	Use application exercises and simulations	Provide mentors or peer coaches
Apply the knowledge (consolidate through practice)	Learning diary	Supply and use job aids and other resource materials Model skills and attitudes needed for learning transfer	Involve people when conducting the programme
Reflect on the learning process and outcomes (review, new solutions, compare expectations and outcomes).	Use self-assessment for what has been learned Review the results of your own work	Give assignments that need to be done after the programme	Get feedback about results of work from colleagues Discover new solutions to current work challenges

Adapted from Cafarella & Ratcliff Dafron, 2013.

Shaping the learning transfer—strategies and ways

In some countries, there are already rich experiences in work-related training that follow procedures and strategies that assist learners in applying what they have learned from WBBS training. Selected examples of these approaches are described below.

- **Accompanying the training and further education**

As already clarified, in the WBBS training, the needs and interests of learners have to be initially and continuously raised because this highlights what should be learned and then applied in concrete situations in the workplace. In order to make it clear to the participants that they can shape the further education themselves with their individual interests and needs, an orientation framework is set in the presentation of the content

(see Fig. 14). A space for self-defined topics is thus revealed. The training is presented as a learning offer to be developed and not as a fixed programme or curriculum.
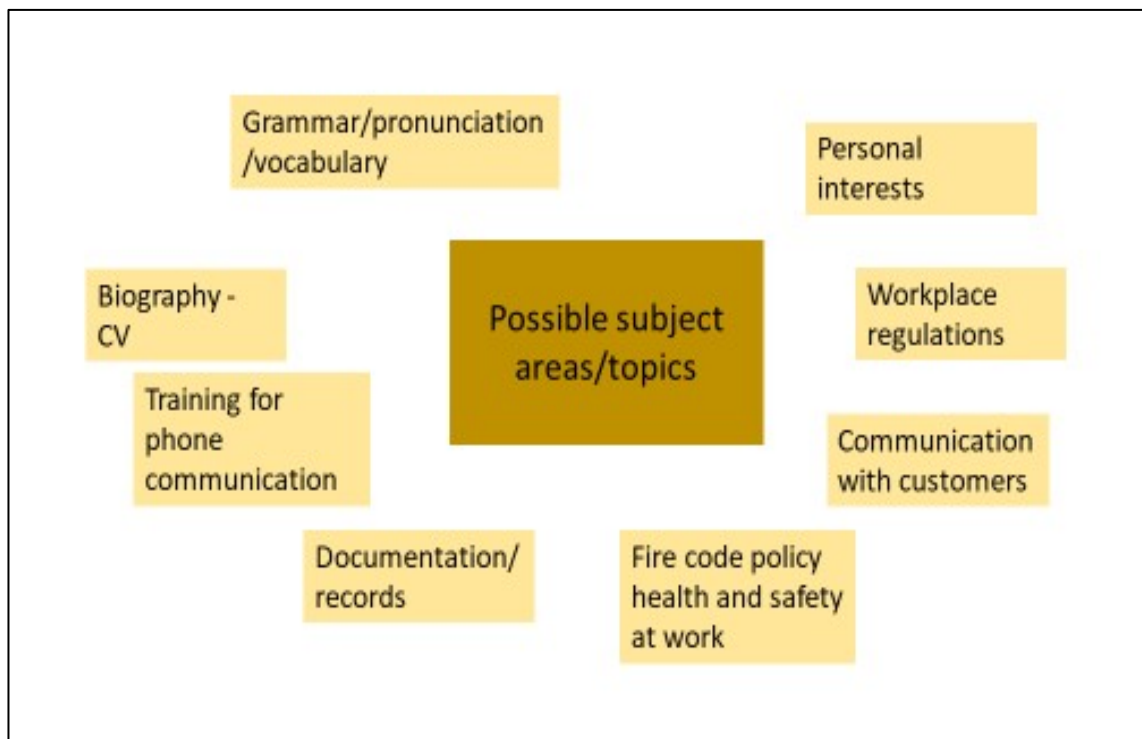

Fig. 14: Possible subject areas and topics

The structure element "News" continuously collects topics and situations. The element "News" is the initial ritual of each advanced training date. Participants have the opportunity to ask questions about work or life at any time, for example, about meeting the requirements for nursing documentation, terminating insurance, etc. These situation occasions can either be finalised or trigger further steps for upcoming learning topics.

Example: The following topics were already brought forward by real participants filling the section "News":

- *How do I write to my landlord?*
- *How do you properly inform others that a resident has been taken to hospital?*
- *How do you condole relatives properly?*
- *How can I describe how I found a resident after a fall and how the accident happened according to the person? (an accident report)*
- *What does "child bonus" and "one-time payment" mean and who gets them?*
- *When do I use "in" and when do I use "at" in geographic terms?*

- *I would like to take up a second job. I have to have this approved by my employer. How can I formulate this application?*
- *What can be deducted for tax purposes?*
- *I am sick (catching a cold). How can I explain my symptoms to the doctor?*
- *Can I order a book in the bookstore and look at it first and then decide if I want to buy it? Or do I always have to buy it? How can I ask for it?*

In the training

When the didactic element transfer of learning is included as an integral part of WBBS training, it can be included as a weekly or fortnightly retrospective. This would account for the work situations that were concretely a subject matter in the learning process. Thus, learners can assure themselves of the outcome and their success with learning about specific concerns, and they can document such results in a collective training book or in individual learning journals.

Example: Questions that address concrete situations at work could be:

- *What have I tried from what has been learned?*
- *What did I do well? When/Where/How?*
- *Where do I want to become even safer/better?*
- *How satisfied am I with myself?*
- *Did it cost me much courage?*
- *Who noticed that I acted differently?*
- *How did the others (colleagues, boss) react?*

In organising the training

The learning contract is an example of commitment between the actors who are responsible for the learning success: employee, lecturer, supervisor or even manager. The written or verbally agreed learning contract has no legal function. However, in the sense of a responsibility-sharing agreement, it clarifies some important conditions of the continuing education, such as the beginning and end of the further education offer, learning times, learning modalities, scope, aims and financing. Furthermore, other procedures to secure the transfer of learning may include the documentation of the results of the learning transfer, an agreement to conduct a feedback discussion between the supervisor and the employee(s), a survey of the learners, a survey of the superiors and internships.

In the clarifications with management

Just as supervisors and management are involved in determining needs, they are also responsible for securing the learning transfer. In WBBS training, supervisors, employee representatives, and partly, the companies' management are informed about the process of the educational offer, and evaluation forms are agreed upon. In addition, apart from being offered ample information about the learning topics, the supervisors and possibly the employee representatives, are sensitized and encouraged to pay attention to changes in the employees' work activities and to give feedback (see learning contract). Knowing more about the WBBS training outcomes would affect the perceptions of the superiors.

After the training

As a result of feedback discussions between supervisors and employees, there may be forms of job enrichment that provide employees with new demands or that officially accept changed tasks. However, practice shows that this has to be dealt with care to avoid causing unnecessary anxiety among employees that would require counselling intervention.

New forms of involving the employees

Employee participation in departmental discussions or in the development of quality management systems, etc., can help secure the transfer of learning since fields of application can be introduced by the participants.

Effects—capture the subjective perspective

It is also very important to make sure what learning transfer effects show up immediately after the training. Training organisations or employers may also want to capture the long-term effect of WBBS training. The trainer needs to accomplish this task in a valid and consistent way.

Example: There was a case when about 10 months after the WBBS training, employees in the area of geriatric care were asked: How do you know that you have learned something? Their answers were the following:

- *I read more.*

- *I write more often, including at work.*

- *Words are often correct, unlike before.*

- *I ask colleagues more often if that is right. I have more courage.*

- *I get feedback from colleagues and family that I have improved.*

- *I notice when I write a word that something is wrong, and then check with the dictionary. I have more language feeling.*

- *When I do practical tasks, such as documentation, I notice that I now know words that I did not know before.and now can write correctly*

- *I am more open to colleagues; I like talking to them.*

- *I can now contribute to clarification or correction. I had no confidence in that before. I communicate understandably. I can contradict now.*

- *I understand home residents better with their concerns and have less need to ask.*
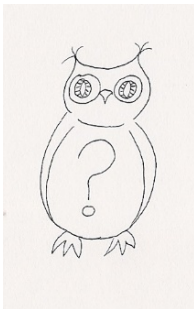
__Take some time for a brief reflection:__

Which steps of workplace learning are new to you, or you have not been developing systematically?

Bearing in mind your experiences, which of the steps is the most challenging to implement with learners? Why?

5.3.2 Specific Didactic and Methodical Hints for WBBS Training and Examples of Good Practices

This chapter contains valuable concrete experiences in delivering WBBS training. In addition, some cases of how experienced practitioners realised the training phases are described, with focus on teaching work-based basic skills.

Didactic reduction: what is it?

Didactic reduction is the transformation or simplification of complex or difficult issues into understandable and manageable learning content for learners. It takes place when a selection is made from a large volume of learning content or when a complex or difficult topic is simplified. Didactic reduction takes place quantitatively and qualitatively.

Quantitative reduction means reducing the amount of material to be imparted. Not everything that I know as a teacher about the topic is important for the learner, but everything that the learner should or has to know should be taught. Qualitative reduction is the simplification of the content. In qualitative reduction, the material is adapted to the respective learning requirements (competencies, knowledge, skills, and abilities) of the participants.

Didactic reduction: how does it work?

A basic prerequisite is the ability of the trainer to put himself in the perspective of the WBBS participant. It is usually the case that the expert 'employee' and the expert 'trainer' come together. Both bring along competencies in terms of learning to improve in the workplace. Didactic reduction then means choosing a learning situation from the complexity of work and starting with it.

Even when it comes to new basic skills, e.g. an employee had nothing to do with digital skills but should be able to do so in the future, didactic reduction plays a role. It's a method of simplification; reducing a complex reality. The didactic reduction leads complex facts back to their essential elements in order to make them easier to understand and comprehensible for learners.

Table 7: Four ways to make the language understandable for learners

SIMPLICITY	COMPLEXITY
• Simple presentation • Short, simple sentences • Common and short words • Explain technical terms • Concrete and clear	• Complicated presentation • Long, nested sentences • Unfamiliar, composed words • Terms not explained • Abstract and unimaginative
OUTLINE, ORDER	**UNORGANISED, INCOHERENT**
• Structured • Building on each other; red thread • Clear • The essential is distinguishable from the insignificant	• Unstructured • Corrupt; confused • Confusing • The essential is not distinguishable from the insignificant
BREVITY, CONCISENESS	**LONG-WINDED**
• Short and sweet • Limited to the essentials • Focused on the learning goal	• Long and winded • Much of it is insignificant • Rambling
STIMULATING ADDITIONS	**NO STIMULATING ADDITIONS**
• Stimulating and interesting • Diversified • Personal • Examples, stories, anecdotes, analogies, metaphors, curiosities	• Sober and colourless • Monotonous • Impersonal • Facts, numbers, definitions

Connect to existing competencies

Existing knowledge clarifies what learners can do, and which professional and personal competencies they bring to a learning situation. The identification of individual existing knowledge is usually made by observation. Targeted assessment is also possible, either orally before or during training, or specifically with the aid of good practices and tools. A WBBS trainer may consider the following key areas when looking for learning prerequisites and include the following areas of expertise:

a. **Areas of expertise,** such as knowledge, understanding, skills related to the respective content and objectives of the WBBS training.
b. **Scope of cognitive skills**, including intelligence, ability to plan and act, memory, ability to learn, problem-solving skills, ability to recognise relations.

c. **Learning behaviour**, such as independence, concentration, willingness to perform, endurance, care/accuracy, motivation, use of tools.
d. **Language skills**, verbal, writing, listening.
e. **Social competence,** which may include teamwork, communication skills, ability to solve conflicts, responsible behaviour, helpfulness.
f. **Emotional competence**, including learning and performance anxiety, self-esteem, frustration tolerance, emotional stability, expectations of success or failure.

The course of learning units

It is very common that learning units in WBBS follow the three-phase scheme (see Annexe 1).

Introduction to the topic: There are several ways to get involved in a topic. An important question is: How can motivation, interest or curiosity be aroused? This can happen through, for example, a joint visit to the workplace to identify current issues or by getting into the training with the questions: What do I like about my work? What are my challenges at the moment? Or the questions: What was important for me last time? What did I test in the workplace?

Development of the content/implementation: There is also a variety of possibilities on how to develop topics. An important question here is: How can the learners successfully deal with the topic in as independent a manner as possible? Since training takes place in the workplace, there are many ways to connect learning directly to work:

a. observation of the trainer, followed by a discussion with an impulse question from the trainer;
b. observation of the trainer with direct feedback;
c. working on real documents in the classroom; and
d. simulating communication situations in role-plays or on a fictitious telephone.

Assurance of results/Conclusion: Successful conclusions give orientation; what has been learned can be arranged and applied by the learner in an overall context (competence to act). Assurance of results means that dealing with the topic has led to an increase in learning. This increased learning can be visualised through appropriate methods (e.g. application, transmission). The transfer of what has been learned is of fundamental importance in WBBS.

Creating learning opportunities for employees that are not used to learning

Learners who are not used to learning have negative learning experiences, find it difficult to learn or have insufficient (written) linguistic knowledge, need special methodical and strategic approaches for a successful learning process. They need:

a. reasonable, manageable learning units and learning steps;
b. an overall small-step approach;
c. a clear and transparent procedure, e.g. by giving an overview of the overall topic and the respective learning unit;
d. learning unit repetitions or summaries of what has been worked out at the end and/or at the beginning of the following session, either by the trainer repeating the material or having the participants repeat it (even better);
e. tools for insufficient (written) linguistic skills; and
f. motivational and encouraging learning experiences, e.g. through appropriate praise (concrete, immediate and genuine/authentic), a generally appreciative and benevolent attitude, and by facilitating successful learning.

The work environment as an opportunity structure for learning

For learners in WBBS training, the expectation of learning is particularly high when learning is combined with work, learning events result from the concrete demands of gainful employment, and the learning can then be implemented at work. However, not every job offers learning incentives or learning requirements. There are still jobs that make or keep you uninformed. In their large study "The Unequal Battle for Life-Span Learning" (2004), Baethge & Baethge-Kinsky elaborate in detail on what promotes learning in work environments. The promotion of learning at work is becoming evident in:

a. The occupational development opportunities: It is necessary to acquire new knowledge while working, and there are opportunities to develop oneself professionally. Learning is seen as a matter of course in the company and not as an expression of deficits. "Anyone who has to learn obviously needs it."
b. The holistic nature of the task: The work can be divided independently, and the employee does not only execute the task but also plan, correct and test it. The work tasks are not specified in detail, and there is the possibility to make independent decisions in the work execution.
c. The intensity of communication and cooperation increases the learning competence when the work requires cooperation with others and knowledge about the work processes in the department and in the company.
d. The opportunities for participation in work: Many arrangements can be made without the involvement of superiors, and when changes are made, employees are involved in important decisions, and their ideas are taken up.

Easy language—what's that?

"Have you ever considered what happens to your assets when you are no longer?" This is how the information brochure on inheritance law begins in Lower Saxony. This brochure is also available in easy language, which contains the same information: "Every human being can die once. Then the question is: who gets the money?" Easy language expresses information as easily as possible. Short sentences, simple and familiar words and only one statement per sentence are indicative of easy language.

Easy language, in the sense of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, targets people with learning difficulties, people with literacy problems and people who do not speak so well to enable their participation in society and politics.

Barrier-free communication is the principle. Linguistic hurdles should be reduced so that as many people as possible can overcome this hurdle.

Easy language has its origins in the American organisation "People First", which has been working for the rights of people with learning difficulties since 1974 and developed the idea of Easy Read in 1996. This idea was also taken up, for example, in Germany[21]. In 2001, the association "Mensch zuerst" ("Human First") was founded, which published two dictionaries in easy language. At European level, the international organisation "Inclusion Europe" created a comprehensive set of rules on easy language in 2009. In addition to rules for words, phrases and texts, this set of rules also deals with the design of print and audio media, websites and videos.

Inclusion Europe has developed a seal of approval for easy language. This seal of approval is now very common in Germany and features texts that are written in easy language.

The terms easy and simple language are often used interchangeably, but they are not the same. Simple language is more complex than easy language. In simple language, foreign and specialist words are also allowed. The sentence construction may also be more complex.

Easy language looks easy, but easy language writing or speaking is not as easy as it seems. Easy language follows certain rules. The most important rules of easy language are the following:

  a. Use simple and familiar words.
  b. It is best to explain difficult words immediately.

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[21] In Germany, the association "Netzwerk Leichte Sprache"("Network Easy Language") develops rules for easy language.

c. Use verbs. Avoid nouns. For example, instead of "In case of detainment, please cancel," it is better to say, "Please let us know if you cannot attend the appointment."
d. The sentences should be short and simple.
e. Make only one statement per sentence.
f. The font should be large and clear.
g. Photos and pictures are good because they explain the text.
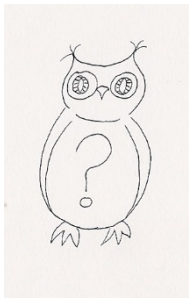
Take some time for a brief reflection:

Up to now, how have you been assessing the existing skills, knowledge and competencies of your learners?

Do you think can you apply those methods in WBBS training? Do you foresee any difficulties?

5.4 Ongoing Assessment and Documentation of Learning Achievements

This part of the module deals with the process of the ongoing assessment and documentation of WBBS learning. The focus is on the ongoing review and formative assessment because of the fact that part of the learning takes places in the secure environment of the classroom, and part of the process in lively working relationships and in a concrete workplace. Therefore, the learning transfer and impacts of WBBS training are more difficult to measure and require more phases. The trainer needs to create a strategy in order to perform the assessment evaluation and decide when to do it. In this way, the learning transfer during the training as well as the success of learning is documented. At a minimum, this entails an individual learning plan, part of which is also a learning diary, and in the final phase, a certificate of achievements (see Fig. 15). The assessment and documentation of the learning outcomes is a joint activity between learner and trainer.
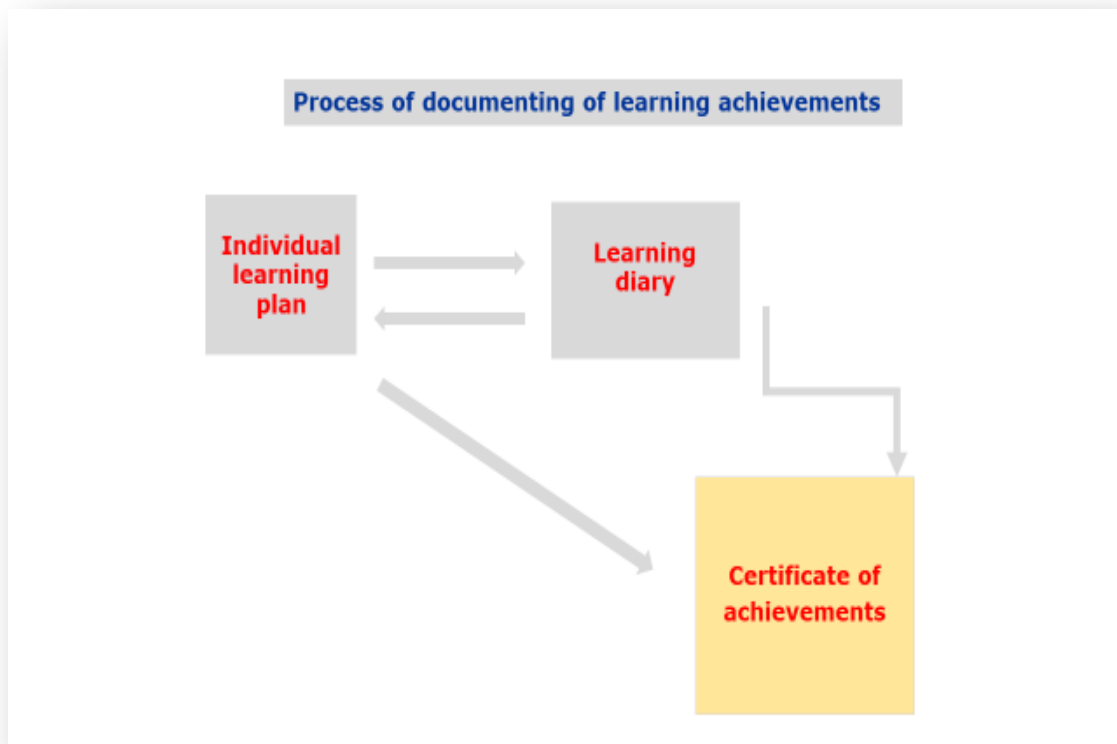
Fig. 15: The process of documenting learning achievements, (Možina, 2019)

Individual learning plan

An individual learning plan is a written record of the planning process and ongoing and exit reviews drafted by the learner and usually the trainer. It is a record of the learner's context, goals that they want to learn, and how they want to learn. The learning plan is recorded in the learners' own words where possible, and since it is their property, they take it with them after the training is completed. The learning plan can be prepared for both individual learners and for groups of learners. Within WBBS training, the individual or group learning plans assist the trainer in taking into account the learners' needs and interests, as well as the requirements of the company. On the other hand, it stimulates the learner to take control and responsibility and to put effort into trying to achieve the agreed learning goals. Individual learning plans may act as a written record of the planning process or as a form of a written or oral learning contract (usually with no legal consequences).In any case, the individual learning plan should outline:

a. the agreed and measurable learning goals;
b. the steps needed to achieve them;
c. how progress towards these will be measured;

d. the nature of learning (group, individual, learning style); and

e. the suggested activities and resources.

When reviewing, the trainer and learner may look over the individual learning plans to remind themselves of the learner's context, the motivations that drove their learning, and the goals the learner had set, and to discuss the work done. The trainer may assist the learner in reflecting on the learning by asking them what the most significant thing they learned was, how they learned it, what they enjoyed the most, what was most useful, or the most difficult. Together, they may assess progress by asking whether the goals have been reached, how the learner knows it and what is the evidence for this, asking the learner to demonstrate their skills and knowledge and asking what difference the learning has made in their work and private life, etc. In WBBS training, it is crucial to set and follow measurable goals and objectives. When assessing their progress in knowledge, trainers may write down what the learner knows and understands. The assessment of skills is based on what the learner is able to use, do, carry out, read, write, calculate, etc. When observing the attitudes of the learner, the development of their attitude towards new learning, awareness about a healthy diet or strengthening their motivation are useful hints. Trainers and learners can also discuss what is left for the latter to achieve their goals. In addition, it is never too early to talk about long-term goals and note down what the learner might do next and where.

It is important that the learners understand the purpose of the learning plan and that it is used throughout the training programme for planning, learning, reflecting, reviewing progress against goals, setting new goals or adapting existing ones. WBBS trainers need to take into account that at the beginning, learners might not be aware of what they don't know and might covertly observe others to see what is available for learning. It takes some time for learners who do not often participate in education and training to be able to articulate what they want to learn. Nevertheless, despite the short WBBS training, the individual learning plans need to be manageable in terms of time, content and outputs (see an example of an individual learning plan in Annexe 2).


Learning diary

While the individual or group learning plans set the contexts and goals of learning for the entire training program, the learning diary is a method and tool for the day-to-day recording of personal learning results (see Annexe to Module 3 and Subsection 3.2.7). For WBBS training, it is very crucial that the learners' personal impressions and insights, as well as feedback from other employees or from the trainer, are very well documented during the training. This enables the assurance of the expected learning achievements, makes learning meaningful for learners because the learning

transfer is traceable to their working contexts, and finally, raises motivation for learning in the long run since it fosters positive experiences with learning. However, as was already pointed out, effective planning alone does not yet guarantee a successful learning process; the learner must also take responsibility and put effort into trying to achieve the established learning goals.

Certificate of achievements

When the learner and the trainer have been regularly reviewing progress against the learning goals (using the individual learning plan or learning diary), the final or summative assessment is a natural culmination of the learning process. Based on the work produced by the learner, the learner and trainer agree whether the learning goals have been achieved. The WBBS certificate of achievements is, in most cases, a non-formal document and is awarded to learners that achieved most or part of the learning goals set by the training program. The WBBS training differs in the duration, content and areas of basic competencies it develops as well as in the skills and knowledge individual learners can acquire. Many past WBBS training practices proved that when a certificate of achievements includes an exhaustive and individualised list of acquired skills and competencies, learners feel more encouraged to use them for further learning at work and outside work. When measurable objectives are set during the WBBS training, and are later on recorded and assessed in the individual learning plan, it is easier to list them in the certificate of achievements. Trainers should be able (and trained) to write down the skills and knowledge acquired during training in a way that can be easily validated by validating bodies.
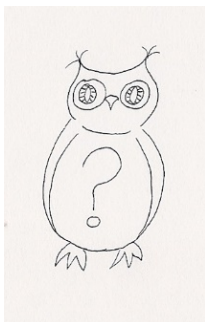
Take some time for a brief reflection:

From your experiences, what are the best approaches for assessing and documenting the learning achievements of your learners' new knowledge and skills?

What is the best way to link this process with the processes at work?

How do you normally assess your professional development?

5.5 Two Cases of Good Practices: A Presentation of General Didactic and Methodical Principles through the Elaboration of Cases of Good Practices in WBBS Training

In this section, two cases of good practice are presented where the reader can implement the elements described in this module that are of key importance for the effective and professional realisation of WBBS training, by following two different approaches. The first case describes the realisation of WBBS training in the area of care for the elderly in Germany and brings about very concrete and practical approaches towards working with this target group. The second case exactly illustrates most of the specific didactic and methodical principles for WBBS training included in this module, with special attention to strengthening positive learning experiences and defining new knowledge.

5.5.1 Good Practice 1: Didactic Principles in WBBS Training in the Care of the Elderly[22]

This example is about the promotion of workplace-oriented communication skills with employees who care for the elderly. Here, examples of communication with residents, with their relatives, with colleagues and with superiors play a central role. In this WBBS training, special emphasis was devoted to the following guiding principles:

  a. shared responsibility;
  b. participation orientation;
  c. reflective orientation;
  d. biography orientation;
  e. competence orientation;
  f. process orientation;
  g. interest and needs orientation; and
  h. practice and benefits orientation.

The participants were very heterogeneous. Heterogeneity is not a disruptive factor in any training, and it can be regarded as diversity and opportunity at the same time. This means that the trainer has to work with every employee in the training and

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[22] This case of good practice was investigated by Karin Behlke, Germany, cooperation partner of bbb.

encourage people to benefit from each other's competencies. The learning biographical reflections and encouragement to try new learning methods are useful approaches through which the trainer can promote the learning of competencies to the participants.

The focus is on high competence orientation. It starts with the trainer! The trainer has to make sure to learn a lot about the work of the trainees through internships and discussions. There has to be space for learners to describe what they do, where they feel safe, and where they don't. The employees' needs and interests are key, and they can always be used as learning topics. The learners' needs and interests also include their skills. The employees themselves know best which of their everyday work requirements they want to improve.

Employees are jointly responsible for identifying and describing their learning concerns. They bring in real situations they want to work on. The trainer is involved significantly not only in the choice of content but also in methodological issues. As a learning consultant, the trainer brings in methodical offers, moderates discussions, provides learning materials, makes sure that all examples of communicative handling of real situations are recorded, repeatedly offers exercise possibilities and encourages employees to use their learning in real work/life situations after the training.

Proven elements of WBBS training in geriatric care

The following structural elements have been proven to work in WBBS training in the area of geriatric care:

1. Current concerns: At the beginning of a training session, the trainer invites the learners to talk about everyday situations in the workplace, where they explain when they are able to work well in terms of language and when they reach their limits. The trainer writes down these situations. They engage in a role-play later on in the training.
2. Change between working together on communicative topics and internal differentiation: There are always common learning phases in training, which is important for the group. However, even if the group is small, issues related to learning or to the current situation come up again and again. For example, two participants want to work on telephone communication during a critical situation, while others want to work on their vocabulary for a real work situation. Others still want to exchange experiences about the learning transfer. The trainers' role is to act as a "jumper" between the groups. The compulsion to control is usually not necessary; the employees use their learning time meaningfully.
3. Workplace visits/meet at work: They are worth gold! Trainers can carry out small learning situations with the employees directly at their workplace. For example, in the kitchen, the trainer may ask what they are doing and then listen well when

communication takes place. Trainers may prepare feedback. Attention: Visits to the workplace are not always appropriate or allowed everywhere (this was the case with geriatric care).

4. *Learning Source Pool:* Learning materials, such as dictionaries, nursing books, toolboxes, pencils and paper, can be made available to the employees as sources of learning.

5. *Learning diary:* In a learning diary, the participants can determine for themselves what was important for them during a training session, what they took with them, what they want to try, and also what disturbed them. They can also note down what they have tried (learning transfer).

6. *Photo documentation:* Trainers can capture the communicative speech patterns on a flipchart. Sometimes, they can also prepare handouts. The trainees do not receive these patterns as recipes but as a memory.

7. *Feedback sessions:* Trainers should provide feedback at the end of a training session where participants can indicate what was useful to them in that session, or what is causing them difficulties when putting their learning into practice.

8. *Dialogue for learning transfer:* The trainer needs to discuss repeatedly the transfer of learning with the trainees. What are their experiences? What works well? What works less? Who supports them? Who or what hinders the learning transfer? How can the trainer support the learner as a consultant?

WBBS trainers have to be aware that they work in and with a company, which means in and with a system. Discussions with supervisors, work councils or other company representatives play a central role in WBBS training. They usually show interest and want to know more about the training topic. They are a valuable source and may contribute to what they think is an important topic. These conversations can also be used to involve supervisors when it comes to the learning transfer.

5.5.2 Good Practice 2: Approach to WBBS Training in the Production of Power Train and Steering Technologies[23]

Preparation of tailor-made training

In the second case of good practice, the reader is guided through different elements, which are described very practically. For a period of six months, WBBS training was realised in a company that deals with the development of innovative technology and product solutions for the automotive industry and the heating, ventilation and air-conditioning industry. The concrete implementation of the training demonstrates how the didactic elements were tailored to the concrete needs of the company.

Taking into account the concrete working environment

The timeline of the WBBS training was planned to satisfy the interests of the learners and of the company. For instance, the work in the company was organised in more shifts, where employees alternately worked different shifts. The training took place at the company's premises during the last part of the morning shift and the early part of the afternoon shift so that learners did not lose additional time on transport. For this purpose, the company reorganised the work on certain work lines for those employees who participated in the training. Some workshops were also carried out at the training company's headquarters in the Soča valley development centre and other locations.

Before the start of the training, the content and the implementation plan were disclosed to the company's management in the following areas: "communication in Slovenian language", "communication in foreign language", "mathematics", "human, environment, science and technology", "ICT technology", "interpersonal skills and social skills", "active citizenship" and "learning how to learn". The training aimed to achieve the goal of developing basic skills within those areas. It also aimed to build on the necessary competencies that are required for the independent preparation of a paper (an essay) related to the area of the participant's work and the defence of the paper (my work and my views about the company before and after training). The paper and the defence of the paper verified that the skills and knowledge were acquired during the training. The learners chose the seminar topics from a list of topics suggested by the company or suggested their own topics, which were previously approved by the company. The company also provided mentoring—expert assistance—in specific areas.

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[23] This case of good practice was investigated by trainer Nataša Klobučar Štrancar. The WBBS training was realised in a period of six months in the company Hidra that deals with the production of power train and steering technologies. The training organisation was The Soča Valley Development Centre, Tolmin, Slovenia.

Peer learning—generators and motivators of learning

During a one-day professional field excursion, the learners visited several of the business units of the respective company in order to get acquainted with how the work is being done in partner units, what are the work conditions, which machinery is used, where their calibrating precision measuring instruments are calibrated and where the necessary repair or finishing is done. For example, in one of the units (the Hidria Rotomatika), the employee presented the production process to the learners of the WBBS training.

Learning atmosphere

One of the learners reported: "Training in the company Hidria Rotomatika was a unique opportunity for learners. All the learners were production employees and have observed the production facilities and work processes in the production through the eyes of a production worker, and therefore, immediately felt the 'atmosphere' among the employees. It was noticeable that where the work was performed mostly by hand, the co-workers cooperated with each other, which was also reflected in the positive communication between employees and superiors. The relaxed atmosphere was noticeable. We compared the work between our and their production, and assessed positive and negative factors: noise, the tidiness of departments, safety at work, scrap. Rotors are used for ventilators or for the cooling of various heating units. We were able to visit the laboratories where the calibration is performed. Their lab is highly sophisticated, and it is certified."

Use of specific didactic knowledge in the realisation of the learning process

The company suggested the broad topics of the papers and listed them in the document "Topics of the papers", which roughly defined the topics. These were based on the characteristics of the learners' work positions as well as more general topics, such as tidiness of the work environment and communication. Learners had the opportunity to choose the topic among the proposed topics but were encouraged to define their own topics based on the list of topics provided. Despite the fact that the company proposed some topics, the employees were not limited in the selection and suggestion of their own topics. On the contrary, the employees were desired to search for a topic to present their work or any possible problems and to suggest improvements or solutions.

Integrating basic skills and real working situations; the application of learning content at appropriate levels of difficulty and its link with the general aims of the WBBS training

One of the learners decided to study the nutrition of employees in the company. Another one described the problem of heating in winter and cooling in summer in the production facilities and wanted to explore whether something could be done to improve the situation. Another learner wanted to create an English/Slovene dictionary of professional terms. One learner was interested in the history of the company.

Based on the selected topics, the company instructed competent employees (managers/superiors) to provide professional advice to learners during the search and the collection of the necessary information. The WBBS trainer also offered advice in the field of healthy nutrition (the trainer was a nutritionist by profession).

In addition, the trainer examined the seminar papers in terms of content and design and presented the necessary corrections to the learners individually.

The papers were the result of continuous cooperation both with the company and with the trainer. During the realisation of the training goals, the training was adapted to the learners' wishes and needs. The support of the company's management, their responsiveness and their maintaining good communication with the participating employees were crucial for the successful implementation of the training.

Individualisation of learning

The contents of the implementation plan were adjusted to the learners by conducting a group interview and individual interviews in order to find out the potential obstacles, concerns and problems and help them eliminate them, as well as to consider the learners' wishes and educational or learning needs. As part of the implementation plan, some time was devoted to adapting the content to the real-time learning/training needs and wishes of the learners.

Motivational model; strengthening the positive learning experience and definition of new knowledge

Regarding this, special reference is made (in particular) to collaborative learning. Collaborative learning stimulates interactions, complements the trainers' teaching role, and gives the learners the opportunity to discuss the learning content or to sophisticate different skills.

One of the possible forms of collaborative learning includes team-based problem-solving tasks. In this process, the individual is able to engage actively in the process of solving a problem with other individuals through shared understanding and by

seeking to find the solution of the problem by combining power, knowledge and skills. With the increasing independence of the world population, more cooperation is needed to be able to live and work successfully in a world where cooperation between people is extremely important.

One of the concrete exercises used to build awareness was The "Munchmell Challenge" Exercise. The exercise helps improve communication and build relationships, provides a meaningful explanation of why conflicts arise and improves teamwork. Learners had to build a tower as a group and present the strategy used. They were challenged with questions. Why did you choose this type of construction? Who in the group gave the most ideas? Who in the group talked the most? Who performed most of the work? Did you appoint a group leader?

The emergence of new educational/learning needs

At first, the learners were afraid of using English; especially of speaking in English in front of their colleagues. As already mentioned, English was organised for 12 learners in two groups for three levels of pre-knowledge. The advanced group was led by a teacher who established good contact with the learners through her energetic ability to attract and motivate adult learners. Learning English meant a positive learning experience for the learners and triggered a change in their beliefs. Subsequently,after the training's conclusion, several learners joined another English course in the frame of other projects and activities.

Shaping the learning transfer; clarifying it for the management

Prior to the implementation of the WBBS training, the company was introduced to the training and told that the training envisages that the company will cover part of the training (60 hours) with professional content of its own choice. Thus, after deliberation and its own assessment, the following topics were proposed, which were distributed evenly over the entire period of the realisation of WBBS training:

Product Safety: "Product Safety"

Production: "Control Plan, PAPP"

Prevention: "Basic PP and resuscitation procedures"

Safe work: "Safety at work" (May, October)

Procurement, Logistics: "Order realisation"

Quality: "Basics of lean production and VSM"

Maintenance: "Maintenance system. The process of constructing and manufacturing devices"

Communication: "NLP lecture or 5 thinking hats."

In doing so, they were based on the needs of the work; on useful and important knowledge that is needed to perform the tasks well. The training was done by the representatives of the company from specific fields that, at the discretion of the company, were competent for the above-mentioned topics.

In addition, the company organised and implemented a "professional part" of professional filed excursions in order to familiarise the learners with the production lines, methods and conditions of work in other business units.

The emergence of new educational/learning needs

For the purpose of preparing a paper, the learners had to contact their superiors, their mentors or the head of organisational units. For most learners, this was a challenge with a bunch of obstacles. They chose and turned words doubtfully, they were uncertain on how to approach and speak to their boss, and they worried about the most appropriate moment. They were also concerned with what other colleagues and superiors would think of them.

This sprang from their need for skills and knowledge on how to contact and maintain good worker-superior relations. Some learners did not want to communicate any more than necessary with the head of organisational units. The problem was also that the head of organisational units was often unable to communicate properly, and their behaviour in communication was often unpredictable. Therefore, unnecessary conflicts emerged, which frustrated workers in subordinate positions. They wanted to get additional skills to understand how correct communication should take place, to minimise unnecessary conflicts as much as possible, and to avoid having too much workload or feeling frustrated because of a "problematic foreman."

In order to empower learners from this field, several workshops were organised on the topic of internal communication and the values and challenges of cooperation. It turned out that by establishing contact, learners formed a good relationship with their superiors and increased mutual trust and confidence in themselves.

Learners had been given a short lecture on providing basic first aid by the company. Since they felt responsible for providing first aid, and therefore, felt the need for additional skills, especially practical ones, learners asked if the programme could conduct more practice-oriented training in providing basic first aid. At their request and in agreement with the company, additional first aid was included in the training

set. With the knowledge they gained in the course of their education, they could take an exam and obtain The First Aid for Work Organisations certificate.

Learning transfer after the training—documentation of the results and long-lasting impact

Learners also expressed their fears frankly. They did not believe in their own capacities to write papers and create PowerPoint presentations, but they were the most afraid of their appearance before their superiors. At first, they suffered from stage fright. They individually apologised and explained their fears. Some made excuses about an inaccurate computer at home, lack of computer knowledge, or feeling afraid of searching for information. Others were afraid of what their colleagues would think of them or whether they would mock them. Some could not decide on the topic and were gripped by panic. In individual conversations, the WBBS trainer talked to them about their fears, promised to help them, offered support and helped them find solutions. They only had to select the topic of the research.

When they settled for the task, which happened soon enough, the group became very closely connected. They helped each other look for ideas on topics, they encouraged each other to make the first step on the way to research, and they were interested in each other and really helped each other out (they did not know each other well before the program). They did a lot for the breakthrough themselves.

Since they had been "living" for several months with the task and eventually investing a lot of effort and time in it, without realising it, they ultimately became capable of presenting their tasks sovereignly to the company management. In the end, they were relieved, and they said they feel personal satisfaction. The company's management was also pleased with the fact that learners who had the role of lecturers were not accustomed to their duties and were surprised by many of them. The presentations were heard carefully, and at the end of the presentations, they were asked questions, and the essential things were recorded. The contents of the tasks and presentations were evaluated and awarded with high marks, on average. The training has unexpectedly connected the workers with the head of organisational units/management in a new, genuine way.

Individual learning plan

At the beginning of the training, the trainer presents the learners with their personal folder to collect and document their learning achievements.

Based on the conscious, thoughtful, more or less structured decision of the individual to learn, the trainer also presents the learners with an individual learning plan, which

consists of the knowledge, skills, habits, values and experiences which the learners will acquire, and which will help them achieve the set goals.

Throughout the training and sometimes even at the beginning, the training institution educational guidance workers provide individual counselling to each learner in order to record any educational needs or obstacles. When the learner is prepared and demonstrates a need, the trainer carries out an individual learning plan.

The individuals' educational and learning needs are assessed regularly in between different training modules, but mainly verbally through interviews or through intermediate questionnaires, where the learners have the opportunity to express their needs and wishes through the evaluation of the training.

Motivational model—emphasis on the empowerments of participants

The effects of the training are neither presented to learners nor discussed with them, especially not at the beginning of the training.

The aim is to provide a positive learning experience during the training process, to establish a good atmosphere among the learners in the group, and to make them feel accepted and respected.

We wish that the learners themselves would recognise the effects of learning during the learning process so that the trainer can discuss them with each individual learner during the training process.

Most learners experience changes that are reflected in the change of one's own beliefs, an improved self-image, the creation of new plans for the future and the improvement of core literacy, as they need a lot of incentives to participate before joining the training.

On the one hand, they are attracted to learning, but on the other hand, they have concerns, mainly because of their bad experiences with learning from youth and the attitude of their environment towards learning.

During the training, they changed their beliefs about learning. With the information about opportunities and encouragement, the trainer helped them to start planning and informing themselves about the possibilities of enrolment in some other training programme and to begin transferring positive learning experiences to others and encouraging others to learn.

Further Readings

It is always useful to consult the original sources to deepen and expand your knowledge about the realisation of WBBS training in practice.

One of these sources is W. Rothwell's book T*he Workplace Learner*. This book explains how work organisations can create a workplace climate that encourages real-time, on-the-job learning and the development of competent workplace learners who are willing and able to seize the initiative for identifying their own learning experiences and evaluating the results. The following are among the topics discussed: the need to focus on more than training; trends affecting organisations, training, and learning; learning processes and theories; the process of workplace learning; the learners' roles, competencies, and outputs in the workplace, etc. As a recognised "workplace learning and performance" guru and author, this text features Rothwell at his finest in converting the seemingly complex into an easy-to-read living blueprint for building your working knowledge on the workplace learner...complete with all the tools to use on your own.

See: Rothwell, W. J. (2002). *The workplace learner: how to align training initiatives with individual learning competencies*. New York: American Management Association.
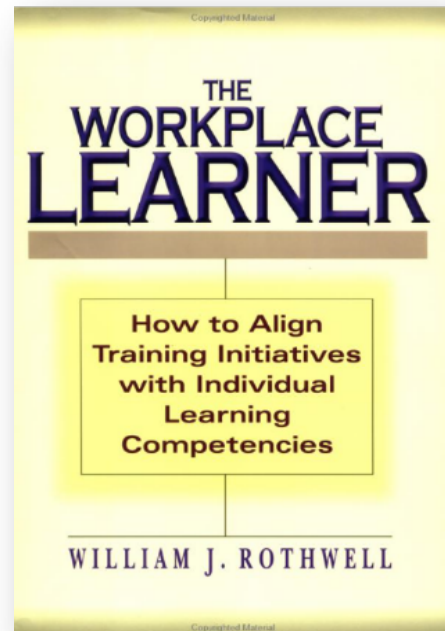
A bible for planning in adult education that also serves those who implement training programs. The book covers the development of adult education programs in clear, specific detail. This popular step-by-step guide contains information on every area of programme planning for adult learners, from understanding the purpose of educational programs to obtaining suitable facilities to incorporating technology appropriately. Educators and practitioners for whom planning programs is a full-time responsibility or only a part of their jobs, as well as volunteers in a variety of organisations, will find this book to be an essential tool. Grounded in a variety of programme planning models, the new edition includes new refinements to the 11-component interactive model, updated exercises and examples from new settings, new material on the practical application of technology, discussions on instructional and programme evaluation, a focus on critical managerial tasks, a new chapter on exploring the foundational knowledge of programme planning and a new section on the ethical issues related to programme planning.
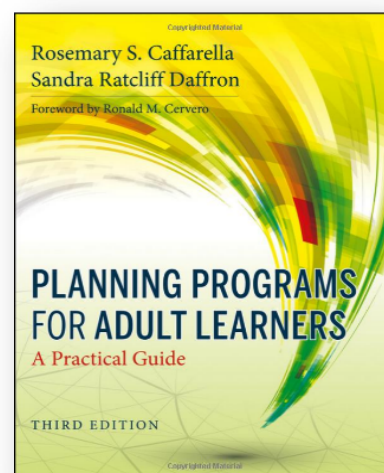
See: Caffarella, R. S., & Daffron, S. R. (2013). *Planning Programs for Adult Learners: A practical guide* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, United States of America: Josey Bass.

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Annexe

Annexe 1: Planning the Realisation of WBBS Training

Planning the realisation of WBBS training FORM

The following form is meant as an aid for planning the realisation of WBBS training to help trainers get started. These steps are not exhaustive, but rather, are a reminder that trainers can follow and adapt them to their own needs and situations.

Step 1: Start with the learners

As a WBBS trainer, before you enter the training, you have to consider many aspects and deal with many challenges that are different from those faced when teaching adults in a classroom. You can start with the learners.

What do you know about your participants in the WBBS training? Take a few notes. If you have not learned much, make a note of what information might be important for your training. You can then discuss this with the participants in the entry situation.

I know…
I will talk about this in the first unit…

Step 2: Learn about workplaces situations and requirements

What do you know about your learners' workplace? You may take two perspectives; the employees' and your own as a trainer.

Employee perspective:	*Trainer perspective:*
The place of work as a place of learning offers good opportunities for this! ➢ You can let them describe specific situations. ➢ You can pick up real documents, phrases or problem situations. ➢ You can look around in the workplace while the employees are working and find potential learning	Therefore: Important for your planning ➢ Always assume that your participants are competent employees who have a lot of work experience! ➢ Let them describe their knowledge and experience. ➢ Do not assume deficits; neither in terms of the subject matter nor in terms of learning competencies.

content or partially work on the learning topics.	➢ Use the participants' competencies for learning.
➢ You can accompany participants in completing a task (coordinated with supervisors).	➢ Respect the fact that employees learn differently. See it as a challenge for didactic action.
➢ Observe safety at work!	➢ WBBS groups demand all our educational know-how. This includes our flexibility when considering the participants with their previous experiences, wishes and needs.

Step 3: Use the learning site company as a resource

Please make sure that you are already well-equipped for carrying out the training in the workplace with a job-related focus and with the involvement of your participants' competencies.

Where can/should my training take place? Spaces that can be used include a training room without interruptions, a workshop and a real communication situation, such as the shift transfer...

Which work situations do I already know, which will I turn into learning topics?

What real materials do I have to turn working situations into learning topics? Examples include documents, case descriptions about the learning site company's problem, descriptions of the learning, site photos...

How can I take the participants' expertise into account and use them in training?

Who, besides the participants, is an important contact person for me at the company?

Step 4: Prioritise learning topics

There are many important aspects to consider when planning how to start the first session. A clear structure will do well to explain again what the trainer's role looks like. Use informal opportunities in the workplace, such as workshop talks, observations and feedback.

Examples of questions:
How do you get into training?
What should be the first experiences of the participants with you and with each other?

What should you take with you?
What do you want to know for yourself?
What do the participants need to know about you and the WBBS training?
What is the first learning topic?

Aspects of clear structure to consider:
Welcome, ask what the day was like.
Name the topic.
Name the goal of the training and the training session.
Give an overview.
Have concrete work situations described and ask, for example: What works well?
What areas need improvement?
Practise, practise, practise.
Training encourages workers to try things out in the workplace; ask what has succeeded and how.
Offer feedback on learning and self-assessment by giving feedback and praise sometimes.
Always encourage.
Visualise as much as possible.
Operate various learning channels.

Step 5: Make your own 'typical' structure of WBBS training sessions

Experienced WBBS trainers follow the typical structure of learning units described below, from which you can benefit. However, you may want to make your own on the basis of concrete situations and your own teaching style.

Aim	Ways
To pick up the participants from their current work situation	How are you? How's work going? What are you working on right now?
Refer to the last meeting	What can you remember from our last meeting? Did anything bother you in particular? What was that? What do you want to repeat or enhance?
Secure the transfer of what was learnt	In which situations could you deal with the topic of last time? Did your new knowledge help anywhere?

	Could you use it?
Coordination of topics/contents	What wishes do you have for today's meeting? Do you have a new topic that we should include in our list of topics/edit next time?
Repetition of contents	
Introduction of a new content	Provide a real work situation as an example. • Impulse through image, quotation, real document, situation description • Identify the challenge through brainstorming or problematisation
Common practice	Depends on group and subject...
Promote concentration	Break, fresh air, movement exercixes
Individual practice	Depends on group and subject...
Evaluate	What have we reached?
Transfer	What do you want to take with you and give a try? What do you need to try it out?
Reflection	What was important/useful to me today? What went well or less well today? What should continue to work as before? What should we change?
Outlook	Which situation will we take next time?
Transparency	Notes on balancing discussions with supervisors, if that is pending. Include the participants' wishes: What support do I need in my workplace or from my colleagues and supervisors?

Adapted from, Input, *AoG-Weiterbildung für Trainer/innen*, by R. Klein & M. Rudolph, 2017, Dortmund

Annexe 2: Individual Learning Plan

LEARNING PLAN

Name: _____

Company: _____

Programme title: _____

Period: _____

Trainer: _____

This form is for you to make a record of what you are aiming for. We will ask you to look at this again at the end of the course to see if the course has worked for you.

1. What are you hoping to gain from doing this course?
2. What (knowledge, skills) would you like to improve during this course?
3. Why?
4. How will you do this?
5. What would you like to achieve by the end of the course?

What does the learner want to learn?

Learner's contexts and motivation

How the learner wants to learn

Measurable goals so that progress can be assessed

1. What have you gained from doing the course?	Learner's goals

2. What knowledge and skills did you want to improve upon during this course?	Assessment in relation to goals

3. Have they improved? Give some details.	

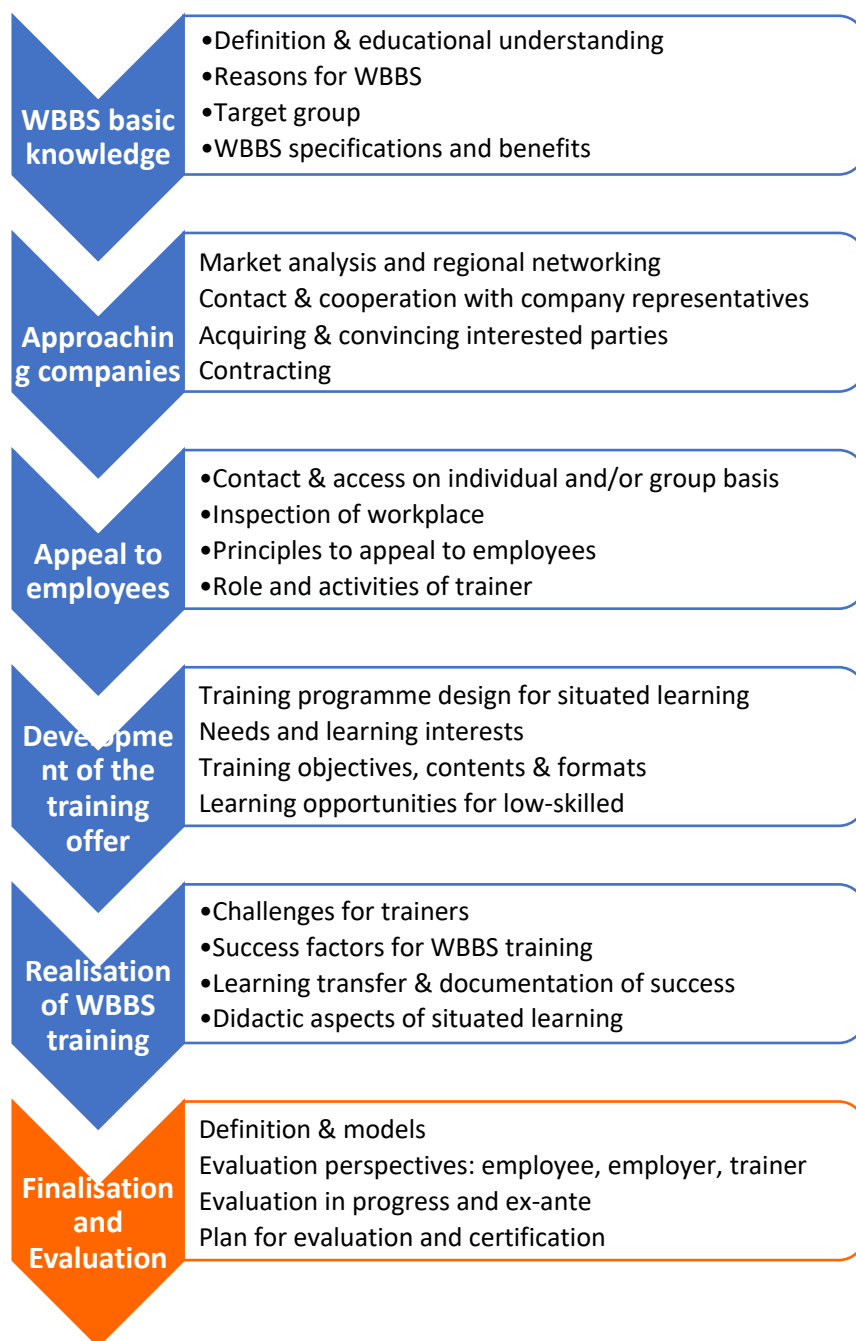| 4. What difference will this make to you?	Learning transfer to working situations

5. What will you do now?	Ongoing planning

Date: _____

Adapted from *An Adult Literacy and Numeracy Curriculum Framework for Scotland*, p.128-129, by Learning Connections/Communities Scotland (2003). Edinburgh, Scotland: Scottish Executive.

Module 6 | Finalisation and Evaluation of WBBS Training

WBBS basic knowledge
- Definition & educational understanding
- Reasons for WBBS
- Target group
- WBBS specifications and benefits

Approaching companies
Market analysis and regional networking
Contact & cooperation with company representatives
Acquiring & convincing interested parties
Contracting

Appeal to employees
- Contact & access on individual and/or group basis
- Inspection of workplace
- Principles to appeal to employees
- Role and activities of trainer

Development of the training offer
Training programme design for situated learning
Needs and learning interests
Training objectives, contents & formats
Learning opportunities for low-skilled

Realisation of WBBS training
- Challenges for trainers
- Success factors for WBBS training
- Learning transfer & documentation of success
- Didactic aspects of situated learning

Finalisation and Evaluation
Definition & models
Evaluation perspectives: employee, employer, trainer
Evaluation in progress and ex-ante
Plan for evaluation and certification

Author: Dr Joseph Vancell

The Directorate for Research Lifelong Learning and Employability, Malta

MINISTRY FOR EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Content

Introduction

Our Self-Learning Manual is aimed at trainers for work-based basic skills (WBBS) as well as designers, content developers, assessors and evaluators of training units. For this reason, as a trainer, you were familiarised with the WBBS concept in the first module. In the second and third modules, you got to know about efficient approaches to win companies and employees for WBBS training. Furthermore, you were able to find four ways as to how to plan and develop WBBS training in the fourth module and suggestions and experiences for implementing WBBS training in the fifth module.

This last module provides guidance to trainers on how to conclude WBBS training, with particular attention to the evaluation methods. It will allow the trainer to understand:

- the evaluation;
- the presentation and discussion of the evaluation results with company representatives and learners;
- the derivation of potential follow-up training or other further training; and
- the production and delivery of a meaningful certificate to the employees who have participated in the WBBS training.

The literature agrees that evaluation, when done well, improves learning and development (L&D) programmes. However, Thackeray (2016) notes that very few organisations actually evaluate training. Of those that do, just 12% measure the impact on results (Scourtoudis & Dyke, 2007). Unfortunately, most providers do not know what difference their training makes despite the high expectations placed on it. There is evidence that much training, for a variety of reasons, may be wasted (Griffin, 2010, p. 221). Indeed, studies show that just 10 to 15% of what employees learn through training (excluding informal and incidental learning) is actually translated into improved job performance (Velda et al., 2007). One of the

barriers to effective training evaluation is the failure to ground approaches in a contemporary and comprehensive model of workplace learning.

Therefore, this module first tries to address this gap by reviewing the literature about evaluation. Then it attempts to develop a working process of evaluation for WBBS.

Reflection: *Based on a true story!*
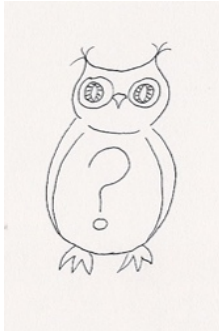
It was his last day at the shipyard. The trainer packed the participating workers' learning diaries (see Annexe of Module 3). In the "Notes" section of his diary, one student, Angelo, wrote: "I'm not sure I can say that this was a good training. I know the trainer worked hard, but I always felt that I did not fit in. I could hardly cope with the demands of the training, and the commitments at home. I will not participate in such a training again." The trainer was not happy with this comment. What did he do wrong? Was it the pedagogy he used? Was it the design of the training? Was it the assessment process? Did he give this student enough time and space within the training to express his feelings? Were the worker's experiences and lifeworld valued during the training?

Situations such as this happen to the best of us, even to those who do work intensely either on their own or with other educational and HR experts to plan, design, develop and implement a training programme. **How can we ensure that the training is adequate to the requirements of the key stakeholders? How can we ensure that if the training did not reach the expectations of all those involved it can be improved for future delivery?**

6.1 Defining Evaluation

Evaluation, as the authors of the previous modules noted, is essential because it can help reduce uncertainties in decision making and improve the design and implementation of future interventions, while ensuring the effective use of available resources. Therefore, evaluation is important for decision makers, at company and, possibly, higher levels, including national and supranational policymaking.

This module, as with the rest of this self-study manual, does not delve into the evaluation process at national and supranational levels. Although conscious that evaluation at the micro-level can and should enhance macro-level decision making, we will only look at the evaluation of WBBS programmes that are required to improve the overall experiences of the key stakeholders—the provider, trainer, employers and employees. However, this module will hopefully contribute to the debate on appropriate evaluation methods.

This module thus builds on both the knowledge provided in the previous five modules, as well as the systematic literature review about the evaluation process in WBBS. It offers a conceptual framework as well as a practitioner-friendly evaluation process for trainers and WBBS providers.

6.1.1 The Context

Before discussing the evaluation process, it is important to provide a sketch to the context in which WBBS programmes are implemented and the function they are expected to fulfil.

In its 2018 edition of the *Employment and Social Developments in Europe* (ESDE) review, the European Commission (EC) confirms "a favourable macroeconomic environment" marked by an increase in the number of gainfully employed citizens, and consequentially, less unemployment and lower levels of poverty (European Commission, 2018a, p. 23). However, the review also carries a strong warning: Technological developments, in the form of automation and digitalisation, are accelerating the demand for skills and creating uncertainties in the increasingly ageing labour force, and the low-skilled sectors of the European labour markets. To counter these developments, and thereby increase inclusivity, the EC has, once again, encouraged further upskilling and reskilling in all its member states, so that no one is left behind.

Those who are unable to improve on skills and qualifications are at risk of being crowded out of the labour market, both by better-

However, the educational capital of adult European citizens is not encouraging. The most recent PISA survey—that of 2015—revealed, like its predecessors, that too many young Europeans lack basic skills, such as reading or maths (European Commission, 2016). The OECD's (2013) PIAAC survey, which assessed adult competencies produced similar results: In many EU countries, about one in five adults aged 16–65 only had basic skills in literacy and numeracy. In addition, one in four adults lacked the digital skills needed to use ICT effectively.

The *Malta National Strategy for Lifelong Learning* argues that the underskilled and less-educated workers need to be offered opportunities to upskill and learn basic skills "through alternative pathways in education and training" and identifies the workplace—where adults spend a large share of their day—as an important educational space (MEDE, 2015, p. 25). The workplace is also envisaged as the space where employees can best cultivate not only job-related skills but also essential and transversal competencies that make people more resilient and adaptable to changes in their career and life. Similarly, the recent report of the ET 2020 Working Group 2016–2018 on Adult Learning places great value on the workplace in stimulating adult learning (European Commission, 2018b, p. 16). Moreover, Cedefop (2013) notes that it is the low-skilled workers who will likely benefit the most from adult learning in the workplace. These workers do not perform well in traditional classroom-based educational or training programmes because they often carry with them a history of failure and negative experiences of schooling.

WBL offers a way of learning which is more attractive, relevant and suitable than "traditional" school-based forms for low-qualified adults. (Cedefop, 2013).

Workplace learning is also important because small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), the pillars of European economies, cannot release employees for school-based training programmes (Vancell, 2018). Moreover, many low-skilled workers cannot attend a training programme while also coping with a second job, family and social commitments (Vancell & Patala, 2018).

6.1.2 Evaluation Models

Although no specific framework was mentioned in the previous modules, the reader should have noticed a common instructional design process that starts with the analysis of the key stakeholders' needs, then goes on to the design, development and implementation of a WBBS programme. The process, as argued in Subsections 2.4.5 and 3.2.6, also involves the evaluation of the training throughout and at the end of the training intervention. This is intended to improve various facets of the training programme, including student motivation. In addition, the timing of the evaluation is very important and should be integrated within the planning of a WBBS training.

Formative and Summative Evaluation issues

Formative evaluation occurs throughout the planning, design, development and implementation phases of a programme (Plewis & Preston, 2001, p. 10). It is mainly intended to improve aspects of the educational effort, including the trainer's performance during the training, the designer's pedagogic decisions and the students' active and effective participation in learning activities. The evaluation methods are mainly qualitative, such as students' complaints and constructive criticism, classroom assessment techniques (such as the minute papers) and online discussions. They may also be quantitative through, for example, short surveys or quizzes. Trainers can also use continuous assessment techniques for formative evaluative purposes. In HR practices and literature, this kind of evaluation is also called *ex-ante evaluation.* Such practices are frequently used for making changes in the educational effort, increasing motivation and overcoming resistance. If conducted by persons other than the trainer, they also serve for quality assurance purposes (McNamara, Joyce & O'Hara, 2010, p. 550).

Summative, or *ex-post* evaluation is carried out after the training is completed. The most common method is the end-of-training survey, often through 'happy sheets' but qualitative methodologies, such as focus group sessions and in-depth interviews are also used, particularly in SMEs. Summative evaluation is mainly used to judge the outcomes, effects and impact of a training effort and to transfer this knowledge to the planning of future programmes. According to Plewis and Preston (2001, p. 10), summative evaluations are important to help decide whether, for example, a WBBS training should be repeated or not, whether it should be replaced by something different or better and whether its success merits extension to a wider population. *Ex-post* evaluations are also carried out to inform policymakers.

Evaluations should include both formative and summative aspects depending on their adequacy for the various stages (Rossi et al., 1999). The partners in PROFI-TRAIN also agreed that the results of the evaluation process should be presented to the trainer/process manager and company representatives.
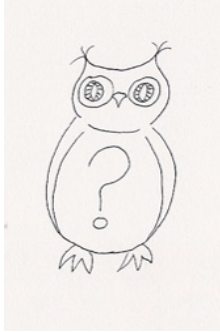
Take some time for a brief reflection:

Think of an evaluative strategy for your WBBS programme.

Will you use formative or summative evaluation approaches? Or both?

How will you use the formative and/or summative evaluations?

What will they assess: the training design, the teacher's competencies, the students' satisfaction, or something else?
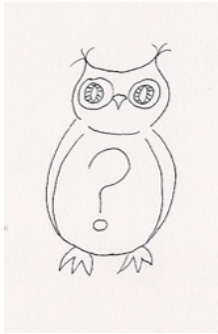
6.1.3 Key Questions

Griffin (2010, p. 43) notes that, regardless of the chosen evaluation approach, a number of key questions need to be addressed when developing an evaluation plan. These include:

- What is the **scope** of the evaluation?
- What are the **objects** of the evaluation?
- What are the **key evaluation questions**?
- What kinds of **information** should be collected regarding each object?
- What criteria should be used to **judge the merit of an evaluation object**?
- Whose **interests** should be served by the evaluation?
- What **methods** of enquiry should be used?
- **Who should do** the evaluation?
- What **costs** (if any) will be incurred?
- By what **standards** should the evaluation be judged?
- How and when should the **results** be presented?

Cedefop (2013), for example, has integrated questions similar to the above into an evaluation plan template for learning providers in the VET toolkit for tackling early school leaving. This template is available at:
http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/revised-evaluation-plan-for-policy-makers.docx

Take some time for a brief reflection:

What other question/s would you add to the list of key questions above?

How would you adapt the Cedefop (2013) evaluation plan for your WBBS initiative? Is it a good plan?

6.1.4 Evaluation Models

While there are many training evaluation tools available to practitioners, in reality, most of them are based on Kirkpatrick's (1979) 'four-level model' (developed in 1959) or its variants.
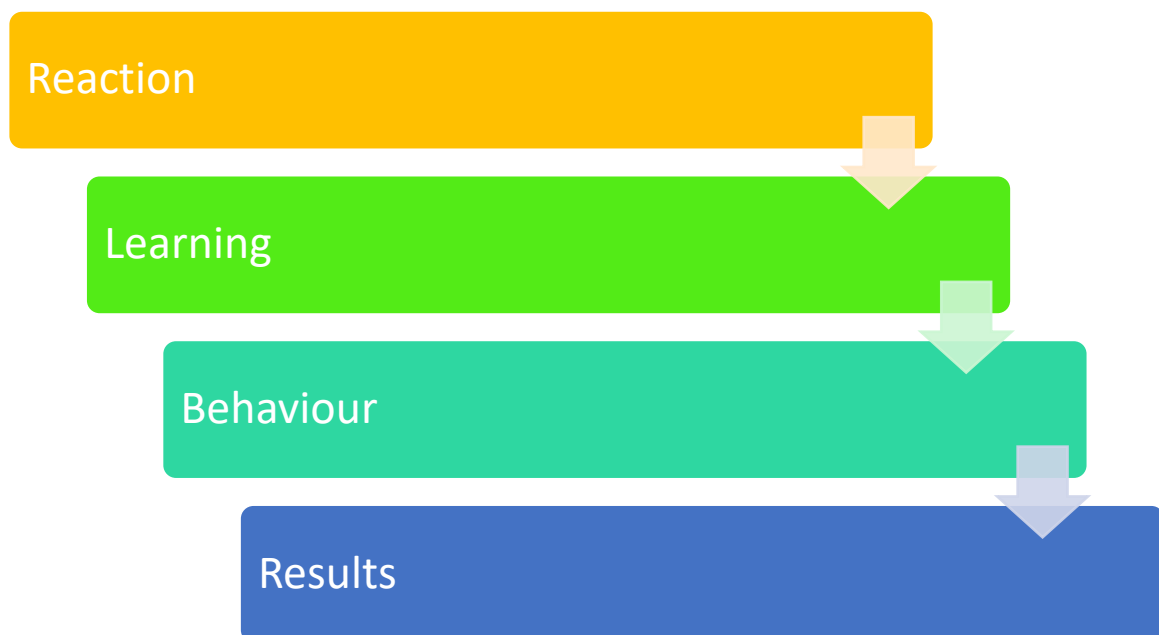
Reaction

Learning

Behaviour

Results

Fig. 16: The Kirkpatrick Model (1959)

The evaluation process used in Gruwe, for example, uses four stages and is probably adapted from the Kirkpatrick model.
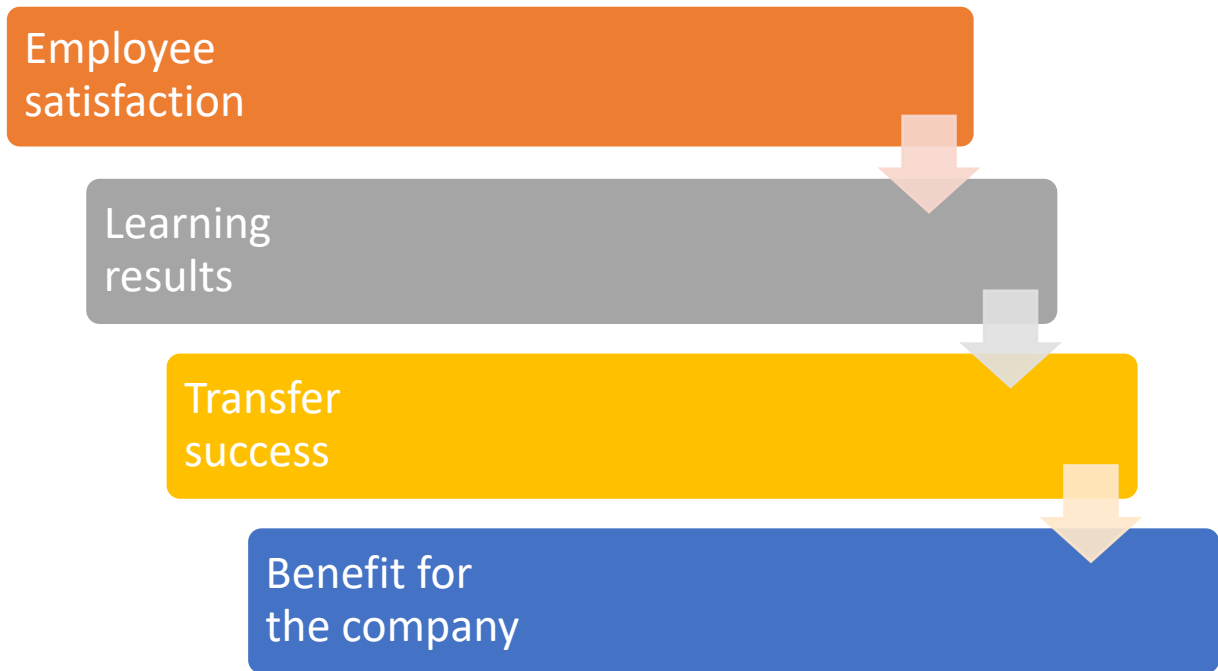
Fig. 17: The Gruwe Evaluation Approach

However, there is a growing convincing body of evidence to suggest that this approach and its more modern variants provide poor indicators of a training's effectiveness. It has been shown, for example, that the reaction (level 1) and learning (level 2) measures in Kirkpatrick's model—which assess the trainees' satisfaction and their level of acquisition of the intended knowledge through a learning project (Kirkpatrick, 1979), respectively—are not linked to future performance (Xerri, 2013).

Moreover, Kirkpatrick's model and its variants represent an evaluation process that involves judgements made by an external evaluator (McNamara, Joyce & O'Hara, 2010, p. 552) and thereby, ignore the importance of the trainer's role in evaluation.

Empower trainers to evaluate.

For this reason, and given that the primary intention of this Self-Study Manual is to enrich the trainer with a tool for evaluation that incorporates self-evaluation, the author is proposing another more pragmatic approach which, as shall be shown below, is more relevant and adaptable to the WBBS process presented in this study guide. This is the ADDIE model, in which a number of insights and practices of other models, such as Stephen Brookfield's four-lens model, have been incorporated. The

proposed approach is more cost-effective, robust and rapid. However, it can create outcomes at the same levels of accuracy as the most rigorous and summative evaluation processes. Above all, the evaluation approach combines educational theory which considers learning to be much more than the simple acquisition of knowledge.

6.1.5 The ADDIE Model

The ADDIE framework or model is not *exclusively* an **evaluative** logical and/or practical tool like Kirkpatrick's model or its variants. However, evaluation is a key element in this framework. It informs every stage of the training initiative. The ADDIE framework, or rather approach, was created for the US Army during the 1970s by the Florida State University's Centre for Educational Technology. ADDIE is an acronym for Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation and Evaluation, and at first, it was used as a sequential process; that is, each step has an outcome that feeds into the next step in the sequence (see Fig. 18).

Evaluation informs every stage of the training initiative.
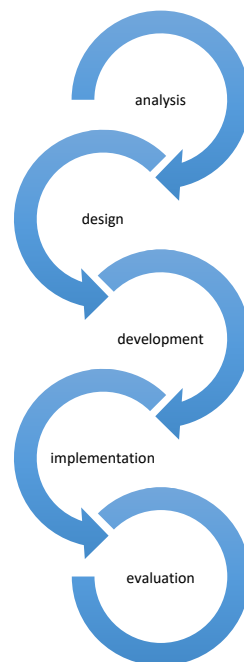

Fig. 18: The original ADDIE approach

In the analysis phase, educators identify the trainees and other key stakeholders as well as their needs as was done in Modules 2 and 3. This phase includes crafting educational objectives and determining what needs to be taught to accomplish the educational goals through targeted market analysis.

In the design phase, educators/trainers conduct a mapping exercise of the particular situation within the company to describe how the training will be delivered to meet the set objectives identified during the analysis phase, as shown in Modules 4 and 5. In the development phase, each element is planned in as much practical detail as possible to make it easy and feasible to meet the blueprint created during the design phase. In the implementation phase, educators then deliver the instruction.

In the original ADDIE model, **evaluation was mainly summative**. In more recent adaptations, the evaluation process assesses and enhances all the other phases. The process has become iterative[24] rather than sequential (see Fig. 19). For this evaluation process, the trainer is very important.

Evaluation is an iterative approach.

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[24] An iterative approach is a "process for arriving at a decision or a desired result by repeating rounds of analysis or a cycle of operations. The objective is to bring the desired decision or result closer to discovery with each repetition (iteration)." From an online Business Dictionary available at:
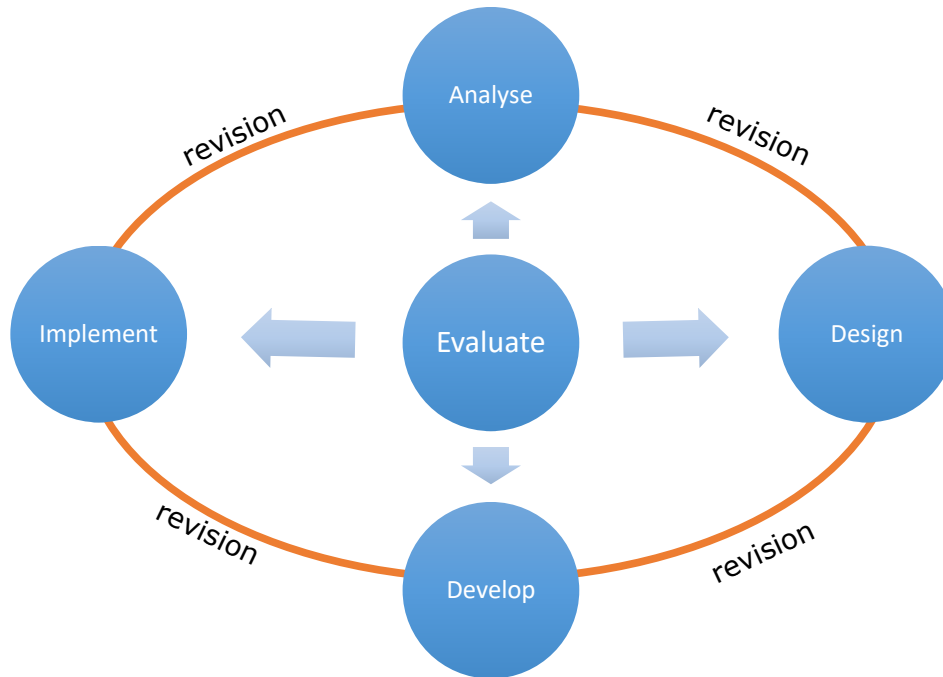http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/iterative-process.html

Fig. 19: The ADDIE concept (Branch, 2009, p. 2)

6.1.6 An Approach for the Evaluation of WBBS Initiatives

The evaluation of an educational initiative can be a complex task because different training initiatives and contexts, and the needs and aspirations of the different stakeholders, may require different evaluation processes. Recent literature also agrees that an evaluation process cannot be informed or inspired by a single model because limitations exist in every model. For example, most models, including Kirkpatrick's model, do not question the value-laden values, beliefs and assumptions that motivate the evaluator (including the trainer acting as evaluator). Therefore, the intentions of an evaluator may possibly contaminate the evaluation methodology, the data gathered, their analysis and the results produced. This is also true of an ADDIE-inspired evaluation framework. Therefore, when acting as evaluators, trainers must tread with care. An audited process of reflexivity, perhaps through a personal reflective journal, in which decisions and conclusions are recorded and justified, is recommended (as recommended by, for example, Draanen, 2016).

The trainer-as-evaluator must be engaged in a continuous process of reflexivity.

In such a journal, the intentions of the trainer must also be recorded. These may indeed be different from the 'agreed' objectives of the training. For example, a trainer may agree to deliver training as a means for increasing the illiterate workers' motivation towards their job and the enterprise. However, the trainer's primary intention was to provide literacy training for "reading the world" (Freire, 1970). The trainers' bias must be clearly stated at the start of the evaluation process.

Brookfield (2017) identifies another important problem in the evaluation of a training programme—the students' involvement in the research process. In both formative and summative evaluations, students must provide their own knowledge and perceptions of the learning and teaching process, as well as other matters, including its design, resources and support. Like their trainers, the trainees do not exist in a vacuum and their needs and aspirations, as well as their lifeworld, will affect the conclusions reached by the evaluation. For example, if the workers had only experienced traditional school-based pedagogies, they might consider the transition to WBBS as a daunting task, perhaps contrary to the beliefs of the educator and external evaluators. Indeed, Brookfield (2017) insists that students must not be treated as objects of the evaluation project, and the evaluation process must be integrated into their learning activities rather than treated as a separate process. He offers some examples that can be used to solicit information from students, including the Critical Incident Questionnaire (CIQ). The CIQ is a single-page form that is handed out to the participants, often at the end of the last training session each week. It comprises questions that ask students to write down some details about events which happened during the WBBS session/s. It gets them to focus on specific, concrete happenings that were significant to them. The trainer then analyses the responses by looking for common themes and for comments that indicate problems or confusion. Responses gathered through this technique or other approaches, such as anonymous online formative surveys and Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATs) (Angelo & Cross, 1993; Walker, 2011), are then analysed and used for applying changes to the ongoing programme, and for informing designers and providers when a new iteration of the programme is being developed or delivered.

In Subsection 3.2.6, it was mentioned how the employees´ satisfaction is an important criterion that helps maintain or even increase the employees' motivation and their willingness to participate and learn during WBBS training. This fact is further highlighted in this module.

6.2 A Plan for Evaluation

What follows is the rationale for a working plan for the evaluation of a WBBS learning initiative. This is not a one-size-fits-all plan—it should be adapted to the specific context and variables of each WBBS programme. The most important questions to answer in any evaluation are: **What is the purpose of the evaluation? What resources are available? Who is the evaluation for?** Before we move on, another important observation must be made. In their book *Real World Evaluation: Working Under Budget, Time, Data, and Political Constraints*, Bamberger, Rugh and Mabry (2012) contend that evaluations are often under-budgeted, if budgeted at all. Therefore, trainers, who at times work on their own to avoid the burden of extra work for evaluation, must adapt the learning materials and activities, such as the assessment techniques, for evaluation purposes.

6.2.1 Evaluation During the Analysis Phase

Griffin (2011) argues that the evaluation process should start at the **pre-teaching/learning phase.** This corresponds to the **analysis phase** of the ADDIE model. Hujer, Caliendo and Radic (2005) insist that the evaluation process should be part and parcel of the early stages of the creation of the training initiative. This "a priori fixing of criteria ensures that the evaluation is not done in an *ad hoc* manner but transparently and comprehensibly" (Hujer, Caliendo & Radic, 2005). Therefore, at this phase, the evaluator must establish the **purpose** of the evaluation plan. Questions that should be asked at this stage include:

- Is the evaluation intended to improve the training?
- Is it intended to justify the costs of the training; that is, the return on investment (RoI)?
- Is it intended to measure the impact on the business/workplace? How to measure it?
- Is it intended to be part of a larger impact research process for national and supranational policymaking or funding?

The answer to these questions will drive the actual design, implementation and presentation of an evaluation process.

In the **pre-teaching and learning** phase, as indicated in Modules 1 to 4, a **market analysis** first needs to determine the necessity of a WBBS initiative within the labour market, as well as its design, development and implementation. Specific requests from HR departments in large firms or owners of SMEs may also identify the need for a specific WBBS initiative. Moreover, the need for a programme may be identified by the workers, their representatives or even an NGO (for example, a

human rights group). The evaluation process must, therefore, establish the efficiency of this market analysis, or the methods used to identify the workers', HR's, the firm's owners' or external agency's call for a WBBS initiative. In this phase, which corresponds to the 'analysis phase' of the ADDIE framework, the evaluation should employ qualitative methodologies, such as interviews with the persons involved. 'Happy sheets' are not deemed as appropriate measures of analysis at this stage (Hauser, Weisweiler & Frey, 2018). Sample questions include: Was the strategy used to motivate the employees to join the training (see Module 3) effective? Were the needs and aspirations of the key stakeholders identified and included in the training design? (see Module 4, Subsection 4.1.1.).

At this stage, it is also important to determine **who will act as the evaluator/s**. Who is authorised to conduct the evaluation? Will the evaluator be the trainer? Will the trainer be engaged in critical discussion and reflection with other trainers? (Brookfield, 1997/2017). Will external evaluators, for example, independent consultants or researchers be involved? Hujer, Caliendo & Radic (2005) note that apart from the lower costs involved, an internal evaluation process has other advantages. These include the evaluator's familiarity with the programme and their free access to all necessary information. However, Hujer, Caliendo & Radic (2005) also identify the potential bias problem; that is, the "incentive to find results that correspond to the aims and objectives of the programme" (p. 102). External evaluators reduce this bias, and they can also "bring in new views and ideas." Therefore, Hujer, Caliendo & Radic (2005, p. 141) recommend that an evaluation is carried out jointly by internal and external evaluators.

> *Even if the evaluation is done by internal staff, the transparency and accountability can be increased if there is some kind of cooperation with external institutions in certain areas, or if the material underlying the evaluation, for example datasets, etc., are made available to the scientific community. (Hujer, Caliendo & Radic, 2005, p. 141).*

In the pre-teaching and learning phase, another evaluation decision must be made: What will the data gathering methodology/ies be? Will they be quantitative (such as surveys) or qualitative (such as focus groups), or will the process adopt a mixed-method methodology? The evaluator can also use data collected by the enterprise, such as the data for absenteeism. Moreover, the trainer may be involved in action research during the implementation phase. Another important decision that must be taken at this stage involves which data analysis process will be used to make sense

of the data. As with any investigation in education and social behaviours, the choice of methodological approach is very important here (Patton, 2002, p. 72).

Above all, research studies from Germany and Switzerland agree that any evaluation process must use information obtained from the trainees, company representatives and trainers.

6.2.2 Evaluating the Design Phase

The key objective in this second phase of the plan is to assess whether the training was built around the needs and aspirations of the key stakeholders. The following are questions that can be asked about the design process (perhaps, even during the design process itself): Was the training designed to satisfy the needs of the employers and employees as identified in the needs analysis? Were the data gathered through questionnaires and other research approaches consulted during the design process? Did the designer integrate the right knowledge, skills and attitudes in the training? Did the designer anticipate any potential obstacles?

6.2.3 Evaluating the Development Phase

During this phase, the evaluator must assess the appropriateness of the teaching and learning material against the intended learning objectives of the training. The evaluator must also assess whether the decisions taken in the previous phases correspond with the development of the training material. Questions that can be asked include: Is the training well paced? Are the assessment rubrics well defined? Is there enough time to cover all the topics?

6.2.4 Evaluating the Implementation Phase

Evaluation during the implementation phase should happen through formative approaches which are intended to identify and address potential shortcomings during the training. They are also used to identify good practices, for example, pedagogies that work well with low-skilled adults.

6.2.5 Evaluating the Training After Completion

This often happens through a summative evaluative method, such as the end-of-training survey in which the workers are mainly asked about their "satisfaction" regarding the learning content, pedagogy and teacher's performance. They are also asked whether they feel that the learning objectives of the training have been reached.

The main objective of this phase in the evaluation process is to determine whether the WBBS training (or series of trainings) has helped the participants change their performance at work and/or their social competencies. In Module 5, it was also suggested that the evaluation process should assess whether the training promoted a "motivation and willingness to learn" in the low-skilled employees. The same module also implied that WBBS training has produced many benefits to the employees and the enterprises that employed it. These benefits include increased employee satisfaction, less employee turnover, fewer mistakes in production, greater interaction with customers, guests and patients, and better group dynamics. The evaluation process should thereby assess whether such benefits have been attained. The literature suggests that this should be carried out mainly through quantitative investigations, and not by the trainer involved. Qualitative methods may also be used in any social science research. Obviously, the choice of the methodology depends on both the epistemological and ontological beliefs of the evaluator[25].

The results gathered and conceptual conclusions made can help policymakers and providers decide on whether or not to re-offer the training. The ideas can also be transferred to similar social programmes. In this case, the evaluation will take on a formative role.

Evaluation is also a developmental process that enlightens specific policies, processes and practices for its stakeholders. It contributes to collective learning and to knowledge production. It reduces uncertainties in decision-making, helps to improve design and implementation of social interventions, while ensuring effective allocation of resources. A characteristic of evaluation compared with other fields of social research, is its direct links to policy- and decision-making. (Descy & Tessaring, 2005, p. 5).

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[25] In this module, due to the limitations of space and scope, the philosophical foundations of evaluative research were not explored. A good introductory chapter about the philosophies that shape evaluation in practice is Stern's (2005) 'Philosophies of evaluation research' in Descy and Tessaring (eds.) (2005).

6.3 Conclusion

In this module, we addressed the main phases of an evaluation process inspired by both the ADDIE process as well as the experiences and internal discussions of the partnership as reported in the previous modules of this self-study manual. Each phase requires different evaluation methodologies which may range from action research approaches to mini quizzes or surveys.

The first phase of any WBBS programme—the 'analysis phase'—involves the identification, formulation, planning and preparation of a training evaluation process through market research and needs analysis. At this stage, evaluation should be formative, using mainly qualitative investigative approaches to determine whether the *raison d'être* of the training is justifiable for the employees, the enterprises and the economic and democratic macro needs of society. The evaluator, at this initial phase, should also lay the ground for the evaluation interventions in the next phases.

During the design, development and implementation phases of the training, the evaluation process has to assess whether the training content, pedagogy and resources are appropriate for the learning group. It must also determine whether the whole target group is being reached, whether the learning objectives set in the planning phase are suitable, and whether the expected learning progress and change in behaviour are taking place. This entails qualitative—but where appropriate also quantitative—feedback from stakeholders, programme administrators, staff and the participants. Formative or *ex-ante* evaluation is used here with the purpose of improving and, if necessary, redirecting or redefining the programme implementation strategy. A well-thought-out and applied evaluation process serves to improve the quality of the training while it is being offered to low-skilled employees and also help the key stakeholders decide whether or not it should be continued.

At the end of the WBBS training, the evaluation results must be presented and the careful evaluation of its impact upon the company, specifically its benefits (cf. Module 1), is to be carried out in its entirety to capture and record the learning transfer at all levels across the company.

Management in large companies and small and medium-sized enterprises have a vested interest and right to the results of the evaluation to quantify the commitment and achievement of the employees who have participated in the WBBS training.

Evaluation results would give management a better understanding of the pool of employees; whether further training is necessary or a completely different methodological approach is required in the implementation of the WBBS training to make it more meaningful for the employee(s).

Awarding certificates at the end of the training as a recognition of the WBBS training has proved to be successful. The format of the certificate should be agreed upon by the training facilitator and the company management to reflect the components covered during the training and to recognise the achievements.

Template for an Evaluation Plan

The template presented here should not be considered as the ideal evaluation plan. It is not intended for trainers to implement it in total, or as it is being presented. It should also be noted that, like any other evaluation plan, the results of the assessment of one phase may help the trainer to improve the training while it is still ongoing. The choice of the data gathering process is also in the hands of the trainer. For example, the trainer acting as an evaluator might decide to use a qualitative research approach using interviews with employees rather than a Likert-scale end-of-training survey. It is strongly recommended that the trainer-evaluator refers to the previous modules when creating the evaluation questions.

Stage 1: Evaluation at the Analysis phase

Key Objectives

Establish:

1. the **intended purpose** of the evaluation plan;

2. who will evaluate the WBBS initiative (see below);

3. the evaluation **methodology/ies** (quantitative, qualitative or both) that should be used;

4. the effectiveness of the **market analysis**;

5. the **'trigger'** (need) for learning; and

6. the costs that will be incurred (if any) for the evaluation of the programme.

Sample Questions

- Who is the key audience for the evaluation?

- **Was the training triggered by an authentic learning need** or was the training created before a need was established and then sold to the business/owners/learners?

- Who determined the need for the WBBS initiative?

- Was the **market analysis** (see Module 2) effective?

- Will the trainer be the evaluator?

Stage 2: Evaluating the Design phase

Key Objectives

Determine whether:

1. the needs and aspirations of the key stakeholders were addressed when designing the training;
2. the design of the training is pedagogically strong; and
3. enough resources were dedicated to the training.

Sample Questions

- Were the needs and aspirations of *all* the employees addressed in the design process?
- Who determined the need for the WBBS initiative?
- Was the **market analysis** (see Module 2) effective?
- Will the trainer be the evaluator?

Your Evaluation Questions

1.

Stage 3: Evaluating the Development phase

Key Objectives

Determine whether:

- the teaching and learning material are well suited to reach the learning outcomes of the programme;
- the technological resources in the workplace are good enough for the WBBS programme; and
- the learning process is inspired by adult learning theories and methods of good practice.

Sample Questions

- Is the training well paced?
- Are the assessment rubrics well defined?

Your Evaluation Questions

1.

Stage 4: Evaluating the Implementation Phase

Key Objectives

Determine whether:

- all the students are satisfied with the training content and pedagogy;
- the strategy to motivate students is successful;
- the activities undertaken during the training had an impact on the enrolment in the training;
- the selection process of the trainer/s was effective; and
- the programme has laid the ground for more effective work or job seeking by the unemployed or for an increase in productivity.

Sample Questions

- Were the needs and aspirations of **all** the employees addressed in the design process?
- Who determined the need for the WBBS initiative?
- Did the trainer clarify the expectations, objectives and criteria of assessment as early as possible in the training?

Your Evaluation Questions

1.

Stage 5: Ex-post Evaluation

Key Objectives

Determine that:
- the needs and aspirations of the key stakeholders were addressed by the training;
- the design of the training was pedagogically strong;
- enough resources were dedicated to the training;
- the training was effective for the employees and enterprise; and
- the intended outcomes of the programme were reached.

Sample Questions

- Do the key stakeholders consider the training to be successful?
- How much learning was transferred into the workplace?
- What (if any) barriers and/or enablers were there in the workplace to stimulate teaching and learning?
- How much learning is maintained over time?
- What changes should be applied to the training?
- What could have happened if the training was not implemented?
- Are the gathered data robust and ethically acceptable?
- Is the data analysis rigorous and free from bias?
- Were there any unintended outcomes?

Your Evaluation Questions

1.

Further Readings

The Education and Training Working Group on Adult Learning 2016-2018 identifies policies that promote and support workplace learning for adults to help adults struggling with reading, writing, making simple calculations and using digital tools. The report *Promoting adult learning in the workplace*, which presents the outcomes of the working group*,* is available at: https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/3064b20b-7b47-11e8-ac6a-01aa75ed71a1

Cedefop, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, has published many reports on evaluation in VET. One of its most extensive is Descy P. & Tessaring M. (Eds.) (2004). *The foundations of evaluation and impact research - Third report on vocational training research in Europe: background report* (Vol. 58). European Community. This report provides a comprehensive review of research on evaluation and the impact of education training on individuals, enterprises, society and economy in general. The report is available in three publications: a Background Report is available at http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/3040_en.pdf, a Synthesis Report is available at http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/fr/node/11214, and an Executive Summary is available at http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/4042_en.pdf

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