

2 Case study DE2

Title: EMPOWERMENT 25+ Training centre for methodological skills



Introduction

The Empowerment course was a course drawn especially for long-term unemployed people with different kinds of placement handicaps like low education, bad physical constitution, problems with alcohol and drugs, Several of them had a mixture of handicaps. The course consists of two parts a 7,5 month course including a broad variety of topics and a n individual internship. The aim of the course is to empower people that have very little future perspectives, search for alternative careers and strengthen their self-esteem.

Setting

The Empowerment course was held in Göttingen with a broad variety of topics:

- Empowering the participants and helping them to find new perspectives
- Support the participants to have more self-esteem
- Analysis of skills and competences to find new directions in their professional life
- Basic Knowledge in several job related topics (ICT, Project management, communication, teamwork, service, Office related topics)
- Knowledge concerning to healthcare issues at job (Ergonomy, Fitness, relaxing techniques)
- Knowledge about application strategies (application interview, application letter, CV, presenting themselves and their skills,...)
- Basic Knowledge about Marketing and Event organisation

Project Activities

During the course the participants had whole-class-teaching and on some days excursions (Outdoor Training, cooking and geo caching)

LEVEL 5 Evaluation Scheme Applied to the Project

For us it was very interesting to observe some participants regarding special competences we hoped that there will be a development and others to see if there happened something.

So the project coordinator, Ines Polzin, and the evaluation team (Sabine Wiemann and Tanja Wehr) discussed which topics should be chosen and then started to create the reference system.

One challenge was to find five levels that are all nearly reachable for the participants and also to find a starting point (level 1).

The first draft went really well but we had to change level 1 because we recognised that some participants were even below level 1.

So we decided to choose these topics:

Selection of topics/competences

Categories and relevant topics	Pls select	Individual Definition Learning objective
Knowledge related topics/Specific knowledge		
Knowledge about life and situation of others	x	
Activity related topics or competences (Key competences/soft skills)		
Communication	x	
Management	x	Project management
Conflict solving	X	Conflict solving behaviour
Topics related to Affective Competences and Attitudes		
Willingness to interact with people from other groups	X	

Table 3: competences selected

Results: Project Impact

Some participants had a really good development in the course and recognised some new professional directions. E.g. one that was used and well experienced in gastronomy changed her career into elderly care with a specialisation towards demencia and is now really looking into the future positively.

Some participants got out of their social isolation and found contact to people that have to deal with similar problems and they recognised that they have a better life if there is some daily routine and some structure in their planning.

Some participants had more self-esteem at the end of the course. But of course others failed and there was nearly no development or they stopped the course. All together their were some surprises: one participant who doesn't want to participate at all in the beginning changed his mind and his behaviour and become really positive, took more care about himself and started to think of a new career as a taxi driver. The labour market agency paid him the fee for this taxi driving license after the course.

Discussion & Perspectives

Conclusion:

The course was a start into a new professional direction. Some participants really used it for the creation of new ideas and paths also they were forced to participate in this course by the labour market agency.

Impact of the LEVEL5 evaluation

There was a big impact of the Level 5 evaluation.

First you have to think really clearly what should be the outcomes of the course and in which direction could the development of the individual participant go. Especially to think about the three dimensions was really helpful because often learning is something that is mainly connected to a cognitive development, affective and active is lost somewhere.

So through this really complex and broad approach of Level 5 the course developer and the trainer have to think more into detail about learning outcomes and possible developments. Even the project description helps to clarify aims and it make especially side effects visible.