



LLP Grundtvig MISSIONGATE



GUIDELINES for research on existing methods

How to find your mission in life

- Book used method in training in your company/organisation (project partner)
- eu project used method in external training other, please specify

1. Summary of the method, Introduction

The skills acquired by workers in a formal way and specially those acquired through life, most of the times in an informal way, rapidly become obsolete making essential the development of new skills, in a technological or organizational level, dictated by economical and organizational development.

Requalification, mostly for those with low skills and qualifications, is the key to enable the full integration in a work market in constant evolution.

The unemployment increase and the reduction of the traditional jobs opportunities, make necessary a new approach to the unemployment problem. "SAPE Project"¹, developed by IAFE, intended to provide solutions to the unemployed adults, capable of generate in them the competences and skills necessary to an effective integration in the work market, most of the times undermined by problems of self-esteem, lack of social integration, low autonomy and capacity of commitment.

The unemployment problem question was approached by the empowerment view, developing new competences that, simultaneously can be able to answer the market needs but also promote the will and the commitment of each one in the resolution of their situation towards employment.

2. Basic assumptions of the method

The main focus of the method is the improvement of the Empowerment on the unemployed, through the responsabilization and promotion of autonomy, assiming that it is up to each one to face the problem and find the way and the path towards employment. This aproach is based on the assumption that there is no change of attitude and behaviour in an effective way and, above all, in a long lasting way, without

¹ SAPE - Soluções de Auto-ajuda Para o Emprego – Self help solutions towards employment

motivation, commitment and effort of the unemployed in the process of change in which he will be guided.

3. Aims of the method

The Project aimed to change attitudes, behaviors, competences and ways of facing life with the main objective of successfully reintegrate those who wanted to be a part of the project

4. What is meant by “finding your mission of life” in your method

Although the method does not specify the “discover of the mission in life” the path in which the target group is guided aims to trace a Life Project. The process involves the awareness that faith is in their hands, considering the pre existing experiences (point of departure) and leading towards the discovery of which changes should be implemented to achieve the objectives traced.

Finding mission in life is, in this case, the awareness, throughout the supported reflection, of who he is, what he wants and can achieve, and what can/must do to succeed.

5. Trainer profile to support (un) employed persons in “finding their mission of life”.

5.1. Skills (of trainers) to apply this method:

The Project team leader must be capable of working with the Key Competences Guide Process. He is assisted by an administrative that will, simultaneously welcome the participants. The administrative is preferable a former unemployed in order to create empathy and facilitate the understanding of the aims of the Project.

The team must also include trainers in Social and Personal Development, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and conciliation work/family life.

5.2. Knowledge (of trainers) to apply this method:

Both coordinator and trainers should preferably have a degree in Human and Social Sciences.

6. Used Method – structure & phases in practical usage

The objective of the Project is to develop in the capacity to formulate informed opinions, take initiative and decide the changes they need to operate, in a personal and professional level. The method is based on helping each one in finding their potential as well as developing learning skills, improving self-motivation and self-esteem in order to enable the re-entry in the labour market.

The development of the entire process was based on the trace of paths of orientation/education/insertion with the following phases:

1. Supporting the unemployed in finding their own preferences for professional life, considering their point of departure;
2. Counselling and integration on the adequate training that is able to answer in a successful way to the expectations and the options made on the 1st phase;
3. Finally, with the new personal and professional competences acquired with the training, the plain integration on the work market, either as employee either by creating his own business.

Essential along the process is a pro-active posture of all the professionals involved in the method, in supporting and orienting the beneficiary.

The initial assessments is the key for defining the initial strategy and engage in a continuous evaluation and monitoring work so, whenever necessary, allows a renegotiation or changes in the strategy.

Steps:

(1) Welcome – the reception is done by a former unemployed, who presents the process, by using a common language without any jargon. It is essential that it is guaranteed the effective transmission of the message, making sure that the participant became aware of the pro-active posture and of the commitment needed, as opposed to the traditional ways of approaching the unemployment problems (job agencies, etc.). It must be clear that the main goal of the project is not simply finding a job. The goal is to prepare the insertion in the labor market through a work of motivation, self-esteem promotion and appropriation of tools required for a more active and effective job search

In this phase a contract is signed, with rights and obligations for both parts. This contract works defines the work commitment for the definition of the Life Project, always in the total respect for the principles of the Empowerment.

(2) The first working session

The second step is the first working session with the Project coordinator. The first session schedule is of huge importance and must be of the participant initiative as part of pro-active posture.

Dialogue must be open and communication easy, in a conversation where any question can be asked and all doubts can be presented

The answers should be presented in a clear way, according to the participant knowledge and in respect for their fundamental principles and values such as human dignity, respect, individuality, autonomy, confidentiality, equity, autonomy and equity.

In this session both Key Competence Guide Process and other activities (Personal and Social Development and ICT training and Conciliation between professional, social and family life activities) is scheduled.

(3) Key Competences Guide Process

The Key Competences Guide process is a self-evaluation and reflection about the past life where, beginning in the actual professional situation one can have the opportunity to reflect on the path followed so far as well as outline future projects.

This process leads the participant in identifying the knowledge and personal competences organizing them in a personal folder, gathering the evidence, with the objective of “visualization” of the social and professional skills.

Engaging in the Key Competences Guide is a tool to define a realistic and sustained life Project that, while helping to outline an action plan for achieving the objectives.

The objective of the Key Competences Guide is:

- Determine and evaluate the previous knowledge connected to work, training and social life;
- Better identify knowledge, competences and attitudes;
- Finding unexploited potential;
- Collect and update elements that can be useful in drawing a professional and/or personal objective;
- Manager personal resources;
- Organize professional and personal priorities.

The process of the Key Competence Guide has 12 steps (The commitment, Information of the participant, One day in the life of..., My picture, The learning map of my life, Personal and professional self-diagnose, My network, Who am I, What I want to achieve/where I want to be in 7 years..., The chart of my life, Synthesis document of the Key Competences Guide) whose schedule is agreed between the participant and the tutors so that, in parallel, the participant can start their training in Personal Development and ICT training and Conciliation between professional, social and family life activities. These training, most of the time, may extend beyond the final of the Key Competences Guide process.

The process is confidential and all its content is stored in the participant personal file.

(4) Personal and Social development training

In addition to the Key Competences Guide process, the participant must attend a Personal and Social development training of 28 hours. This training aims to develop communication and interpersonal skills that support a positive, determined and reliant posture to meet the challenges and opportunities of reintegration.

The training consists of 4 moduls:

1. Citizenship skills, in order to fit the individual in society;
2. Communication techniques, in order to identify the different styles of communication and their impact in the behavior;
3. Motivation, from the perspective of self-awareness and identifying attitudes and behaviors to adopt in certain everyday life situations, in order to enhance their personal and professional posture, establish short, medium and long term objectives and adopt a pro-active posture in improving their life (both personal and professional) project.
4. Job search techniques in order to provide the skills to write applications letters, ads response, curricula development and job interview techniques.

(5) ICT's Training

The improvement in ICT's knowledge plays a central role in modern life and has a clear added value in improving employability.

The ICT training has 12 hours and is focused on the use of the internet, one of the main and most important sources of information nowadays. The training exercises the curriculum vitae preparation, job offers research and ads answering as well as research of other important information.

(6) Training on conciliation between professional, social and family life

The increasing participation of women in the labour market had not, in the Portuguese case, the necessary increase in the infra structure of family support facilities and services, such as childcare services - in particular, nurseries for children under 2 years old – and elderly support services.

Portuguese society still relies in a traditional family model, where, despite high rates of female employment, women's role in family support is still seen in a very traditional. In most cases, children or the elderly and sick care is the women responsibility.

Equal opportunities between men and women is a hot topic as is the rethinking of work organization in order to provide a conciliation between family and professional responsibilities for workers of both sex.

The training sessions are oriented into a reflection, together with the spouses, about the conciliation between work and family life theme, what are the obstacles and how to overcome them and what strategies or activities can be developed to ease this problem.

This activity has the following objectives:

- Guidance for change and personal development, given the current situation of employment of the participant;
- Social, professional and family welfare promotion, through concerted solutions and compromises considering personal and professional responsibilities;
- Contribute to professional integration and maintenance, based on a more conscious and positive attitude, adjusted to the needs of family and work life;

- Facilitate communication between family members and their awareness to the needs of each one and of the family as a whole.
- Facilitate the share of experiences, opinions, desires and feelings between the spouses as well as with other family members, in order to face the problems related to the conciliation between work and family life, looking for consensus solutions;
- Enhance and support the personal and professional projects of each participant in relation to current and future constraints;
- Promote a overview global view of employment situation, contextualized in a national and European reality, taking into account the changes in family dynamics and expectations, emphasizing the active participation in society and personal interests importance;
- Promoting interpersonal relationships between the group of participants;
- Creating a network of contacts and support within the group and outside it, providing a possible link between institutions and technicians to face critical situations;

The thematic approach used in these training sessions is very simple and practical in order to motivate participants to the proposed exercises, covering the following points:

- Work organization in order to improve time management;
- Measures of social support that facilitate conciliation and respond to the family needs
- Equal distribution of tasks and family responsibilities
- Equal rights and duty both in work and family life;
- Male and female roles

7. Motivation tools applied during the training to find the mission in life

All the method is based on the empowerment, which, per se, is a motivation

In the 1st phase, the welcome, is delivered to the participant a "Competences Passport", in a clear allusion to a journey with several steps, where all the activities, whether mandatory or those dependant on his Life Project, are registered. This passport can be seen as a motivational instrument towards achieving the "destination".

Each activity, each step of the way, is registered in the passport giving, at all time, to the participant, the idea of how much he has done, motivating to continue and increasing self-esteem and confidence levels.

The main motivational tool is the Key Competences Guide Process that leads to the self awareness of the pre-existing professional and social skills, as a starting point for the definition of a realistic and sustained life project. It is the base for the construction of the action plan towards the outlined objectives as well as a guideline for its execution.

Finally, the Key Competences Guide Process can be looked as a motivational tool for the activity “conciliation work/family life”, by promoting the reflection, together with the spouses, about these problems: identify the obstacles, outdo them and finding the strategies to solve the problem.

8. Target Group: (just mention which categories)

Qualification:

Lower qualified people

Middle vocational/general educated qualified people

Higher vocational/general qualified people and

University level

Age:

Age 30-39

Age 40-49

Age 50-59

Age 60-66

Work:

Employed

Unemployed

Does not matter

9. applicability in European context

The method was developed considering the Portuguese reality.

Initially designed to help 350 female workers with low qualifications, facing the closure of a textile industry, the project was opened for those who wanted to commit in changing their life. Being a method preferably directed to low skilled unemployed it is not only applicable to the Portuguese and can be used in any country.

10. References

Project developed in partnership with a Sector Business Association and a Union federation, with the institutional support of Maia Municipality (where IAFE is located).