

## **Lower Saxony Regional Conference “Skills and their Validation in Basic Education”**

### **Minutes of the presentation Topic-specific Good Practices**

#### **C) Literacy and basic education**

**1) GO Lower Saxony, Andreas Klepp, VHS Braunschweig, and Heike Imbrich & Wiebke Kummetz, Bildungswerk der Niedersächsischen Wirtschaft GmbH**

**2) “My learning paths”: student skills portfolio in literacy, Aurélie Audemar, Lire et Écrire (Belgium)**

##### **1. GO model in Lower Saxony**

The project “GO Lower Saxony” starts out from the threshold of adult education and in-service training, providing an innovative model for supporting low-skilled employees in the workplace. The project focuses on the transfer and adaptation of the “GO – supporting basic skills for adults” model created by the Swiss Federation for Adult Learning (SVEB). The project was funded by the German state of Lower Saxony in 2014. In light of its objectives and the cooperation network with highly innovative content, GO Lower Saxony is completely unique in Germany.

The GO model stands for targeted and practical training, including the basic skills necessary to satisfy requirements at a specific workplace in a company. In Switzerland, the project has already been tested out over a period of 6 years in 10 businesses of all different sizes. In Lower Saxony, the results of 4 further pilot tests are now also available; these projects involved short educational measures lasting around 30 hours in businesses, including the food-processing industry, care of the elderly, childcare and a health clinic.

The starting point is an analysis of requirements and needs within the business, which is then used as a basis for developing educational measures that are tailored to the specific workplace. The project also includes transferring what has been learned in class into operational practice.

The underlying GO model presents the process for promoting basic skills within companies in five key steps.

- Creation of requirements profiles
- Conducting a needs analysis
- Development and implementation of an educational measure
- Transfer into business
- Evaluation of the GO process

The business-oriented GO process requires four key functions along the previously-described process chain that then transform the GO model: door opening, needs analysis, course instructors and process monitoring. It is not necessary for all four functions to be carried out by four different people. It is recommended to use at least two different people from an educational institution, who have been trained to carry out the various functions in the planned GO training sessions. The model for the training of consultants and course instructors indicates functions and interfaces in the operational process.

The GO model is not a tool for recording skills and is also not suitable for describing certain professions.

### **GO as a five-step model**

**Needs analysis:** from the participants' perspective – what do they bring to the table and what do they need to do to be able to better satisfy the requirements of the training course

Transfer is very important in the sense of a continuous improvement process.

**Requirements analysis:** Survey of training courses, explanation of situational circles, recurring situations for employees (e.g. work meetings). Descriptors: detailed description of the requirements with reference to the skills requirements

**Needs analysis:** Interview with line manager, employee. Tests using the requirements profile as a starting point etc.

**Transfer:** Which parts of their knowledge the employees apply to their work is not left to chance, transfer is organised with the company, transfer project/agreement.

**Evaluation:** If key figures such as number of sick days are reduced then GO is deemed to have been successful

**Descriptors:** Competency framework: Brief description of a professional situation, structured determination of skills that are needed in the workplace

### Materials can be ordered

Materials are designed to be very specific educational measures for very specific workplaces/traineeships. They do not make any attempt to describe the skills need for a certain position. Individual working

### Practical example

BNW project "GO with terminology" was very important for employers. GO works well in companies in which it is well-known at all levels that the works council is happy to get involved and join in the dialogue. Everyone is asked what is needed, all levels in the hierarchy, including employees. Operating procedures must be signed, most members of staff do not understand what it is they are signing. The company agreement was rewritten in plain language so that it can easily be understood. The measure's curriculum is continually updated so that it is virtually 'alive' and can be individually customised. Comprehension problems are addressed immediately and teaching materials are developed that are specially designed to suit the group.

## **‘Lire et écrire’ project – an example of good practice from Belgium**

‘Lire et écrire’ is a literacy association from the French-speaking part of Belgium that originated in the socialist and Christian workers’ movement. The group’s main focus is on working towards creating a pedagogical reference framework. The project also exists in Switzerland, although the two projects have set themselves different priorities.

### “My learning paths – portfolio for workers”

The portfolio is based on the pedagogy of liberation. Skills are guided more by general abilities (e.g. ‘critical thinking’) and less based on determined skills based on specific action situations. The European reference framework forms the foundation for the learning paths portfolio. However, it is ‘Lire et écrire’ defining which skills are important in Belgium.

Alphabetisation definition: Anyone who is unable to read and write after completing primary school education (6 years) is deemed to be illiterate and not to have acquired basic education. School teaching methods should only be repeated to a limited extent, since the school teaching methods were what resulted in the person being unable to read and write.

### Pedagogical approaches of ‘Lire et écrire’:

Fundamental question: What is demanded of society and what is needed by them in relation to literacy skills?

Access to education, to work: To understand the world that we are living in and to be able to take part in world affairs and culture, to show solidarity and cooperation.

Alphabetisation: Dynamic and reflexive, no learning programme

Literacy goals: Knowledge and skills, why do we strive to achieve alphabetisation, emancipation, access to basic rights and participation in society

Meta-skills: Development of skills that are necessary for writing and studying

Which meta-skills/objectives are required: Allow yourself to make decisions about your surroundings, take up a position and assess, reflect, question/research/develop critical thinking skills, show solidarity, develop independence and work on projects

What can I learn? What knowledge and what information? Learning interests depend on the learner’s individual interests.

How to promote literacy, which methods? Starting points a) realising wishes, b) changing situations I am in c) dealing with questions and problems (look at a person’s social environment, find out what problems they’ve had and what that has lead to this, teacher is also involved in looking for reasons), d) collective approach/group, e) liberation/emancipation ideology, f) developing thinking and learning skills, because these help promote our understanding of the world, g) basic language skills: to enable oneself to use written language and take part in the world of the written word; to see yourself as a researcher, as an author or as a person who likes to write,



h) skills sheet tool – what has changed in the student's life, i) transfer of knowledge learned into daily life after the learning period has been completed, having the confidence to go to school in the first place and speak to the teachers.

The 'My learning pathways' portfolio is a tool to help students reflect and evaluate themselves, similar to the ProfilePASS project, but for vocational training. Objective: to become aware of what one can do and expand one's horizons, finding the courage to begin a vocational training course and to stick with it. <http://www.lire-et-ecrire.de/>

Other important points:

- Focusing on the learner's personality
- Using personal circumstances as a principle for work
- People involved in the project will be at various points in their live and they are rather different, many have received literacy training and will go on to complete vocational training; career prospects are needed
- It is very important to be able to resolve mental blocks and learning blocks and this happens often

Often forgotten in the learning process – personal support: "I can do it" – without this attitude, it simply doesn't work.

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