



**NETWORK RECOMMENDATIONS  
ON LEARNING GUIDANCE  
IN WORK-BASED LEARNING**



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



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## Level-up! Workplace Tutor goes Europe

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“Level-up! Workplace Tutor goes Europe” project aims at increased professionalization and improved qualification of in-company VET personnel as one of the key actors of vocational education. It works at two levels, a) the practitioners’ level and b) the political level. At the practitioners’ level, it will provide an innovative training concept for in-company training personnel that enables a high-level qualification as well as a peer-to-peer exchange at European level. At the political level, Level up! pursues the establishment of a pan-European multi-stakeholder dialogue on current debates surrounding European vocational education and training (VET) policy.

In a pan-European training course, a group of 14 participants from six European countries (Portugal, Spain, Finland, Hungary, Ireland and Germany) follow the blended-learning programme “European Workplace Tutor” previously developed in the LdV projects it’s time and European Workplace Tutor (EWT). This training has been adapted to meet the needs for more learning process guidance, to include European aspects of VET policy and systems as well as current issues in the respective countries. The course runs over a period of 21 months and provide the participants with the complete learning outcomes of the adapted Learning Process Guide profile.

The second aim of the project is the initiation of a European debate on issues relevant to VET personnel. This debate will be put in action in the framework of the European Workplace Tutor Network. We will pursue this aim by a series of measures:

- a) the implementation of four multipliers’ events gathering stakeholders in order to discuss selected issues of relevance to current VET policy in Europe;
- b) the integration of debate issues and European stakeholders in existing networks and events of project partners;
- c) dissemination activities and
- d) additional expert consultation on results developed.

The events will address aspects of the current European debate on VET issues and bring together VET personnel and stakeholders to discuss these and develop positions and recommendations to contribute to the further debate. This brochure represents one of the subject-specific network recommendations.

## Foreword

by Salpaus Further Education

Interest, need and participation in Work-Based Learning (WBL) has steadily increased in Europe in recent years. It is partly a direct response to policy-level targets and priorities, at national and European levels and partly a natural reflection of the changing nature of the workforce, and the workplace, in which we see an ever increasing use of new technologies, growing internationalisation, changing career patterns and greater recognition of the importance of the knowledge economy. (European Commission (2013): Work-Based Learning in Europe. Practices and Policy Pointers)

In this brochure we bring you the latest national network developments in the partner countries of the Level Up!, and discuss the roles of the key actors in the implementation of WBL at different levels of education and in different types of organisations and workplaces. We also take you to some of themes discussed at the project Multiplier Event in Lahti, Finland on 12 June 2017. Lastly, we provide examples of some good practices in arranging WBL and guidance from our national networks.

Project website: <http://www.workplacetutor.eu>  
Blog: <https://workplacetutorblog.wordpress.com>



## Introduction – Shift Towards Work-Based Learning in Europe

by Corvinus University of Budapest

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In January 2017, 4.017 million young persons under 25 years of age (17.7%) were unemployed in the European Union (EU28). (2.826 million in the euro area, 20.0%). The lowest rate was observed in Germany (6.5%), while the highest were recorded in Greece (45.7% in November 2016), Spain (42.2%) and Italy (37.9%).<sup>1</sup> Despite the decline in youth unemployment over the past 2-3 years, employment rates in this cohort have not yet reached the pre-2008 recession level. In addition to economic reasons, the fact that large numbers of young people between 18-24 leave the school system without having obtained any qualification has a negative impact on youth employment.

Due to social and economic changes, education has gained increasing importance over the past decade in EU policy. The value of highly qualified labour has significantly grown, giving a new social dimension to unemployment, employability, educational attainment and social issues.

The 2008 global financial crisis and the subsequent economic decline has favoured the strengthening of a pragmatic attitude to investing in human capital: the sooner it yields concrete economic return, the better.

In the European Union the organization of education and training systems on national level is left to the member states; EU policy is aimed at finding solutions to common challenges and supporting the efforts of the members, In addition, specific indicators are defined that member states have to meet. One of the most significant issue to be tackled is the improvement of the labour market position and opportunities of young people. To the end of 2020, regarding the youth the Commission proposes the following EU headline targets in 2010:

- 75 % of the population aged 20-64 should be employed.
- The share of early school leavers should be under 10% and at least 40% of the younger generation should have a tertiary degree.

Important institutional settings and public policies influencing youth labour market outcomes are mainly found in four areas:

- a) vocational education and training;
- b) minimum wages and
- c) employment protection; and
- d) activation measures and active labor market policies.

Young people always had been on the agenda of the EU institutions, but it is only after the economic and financial crisis of 2008 that the EU started to discuss youth-specific policy initiatives and measures with greater insistence.

There are two main ways by which the European Union can support the member states in their efforts to improve the labour market situation of young people. On the one hand, it is monitoring and orienting national policies; on the other, it provides funding for national and EU-level interventions within the framework of cohesion policy.

The EU Youth Strategy that set out a framework for cooperation covering the years 2010-2018 was adopted in 2009. The strategy defines three general goals: creating opportunities in education and employment, improving young people's access to these opportunities and strengthening mutual solidarity. The EU Youth Strategy proposes initiatives in eight areas: education and training, employment and entrepreneurship, health and well-being, participation, voluntary activities, social inclusion, youth and the world, and creativity & culture.<sup>2</sup>

The Europe 2020 strategy that was launched in 2010 also focuses on youth and various goals related to their lives, for example: reducing early school leaving, increasing the number of higher education graduates, as well as the development of a set of education and employment policy initiatives.<sup>3</sup>

We have recently witnessed an international trend towards the reappraisal of work-based learning (WBL) in vocational education and training (IVET and CVET) and even in higher education. EU policy documents increasingly emphasise the importance of apprenticeships, traineeships and other forms of WBL, focussing on the need to foster cooperation between education and business.

WBL is particularly emphasized in the following documents:

1. Bruges Communiqué (2010)<sup>4</sup>: 11 strategic objectives for the period 2011-2020 based and 22 short-term deliverables at national level for the first 4 years (2011-2014), with indication of the support at EU level. For making *IVET an attractive learning option and fostering the excellence, quality and relevance of both IVET and CVET it is necessary to maximise work-based learning, including apprenticeships, in order to contribute to increasing the number of apprentices in Europe by 2012 and create opportunities for enhanced cooperation between VET institutions and enterprises (profit and non-profit), for example through traineeships for teachers in enterprises.*
2. Renewed European Adult Learning Agenda (2011)<sup>5</sup>: In order to increase and widen the participation of adults in lifelong learning - in response to the agreed EU target of 15 % adult-learning participation, as well as to help boost to 40 % the proportion of young adults with tertiary and equivalent education qualifications - is necessary to *promote the engagement of employers in workplace-based learning, with a view to develop in both job-specific skills and broader skills, including by means of more flexible work schedules.*
3. Rethinking Education (2012)<sup>6</sup>: At EU level, immediate focus gave to the key action *Accelerate improvements in work-based learning, in particular by establishing an EU-level Alliance for Apprenticeships (see also forthcoming Youth Employment Package). As the first step, the Commission will support a Memorandum on European cooperation in vocational education and training, bringing together a number of Member States to learn from successful approaches and schemes*
4. European Alliance for Apprenticeships (2013)<sup>7</sup>: The common goal of EAfA is to strengthen the quality, supply and image of apprenticeships in Europe. The Action Plan focused to raise awareness of the benefits of apprenticeships to employers and to young people; spread experience and good practice in their own organisations; motivate and advise their member organisations on developing quality apprenticeships attuned to the skills needs of the labour market.

5. Riga Conclusions (2015)<sup>8</sup>: The implementation of the short-term deliverables defined in the Bruges Communiqué were continuously monitored by CEDEFOP. The 2015 report concluded the following: In countries with less developed VET system the Bruges Communiqué inspired national reforms, while countries with strong VET chose the most relevant deliverable to suit their specific challenges. Alternate learning schemes in a VET school and in an enterprise, various forms of work-based learning and dual training systems were on the rise; however, in most cases these trends were initiated by the state, the contribution of social partners were not significant.<sup>9</sup> Based on the findings of this report the five medium-term deliverables of the Riga Conclusions were formulated that form the basis of the agenda for modernising VET over the 2015-2020 period. Similarly to the Bruges Communiqué, the Riga Conclusions emphasises that *it is necessary to promote work-based learning in all its forms, with special attention to apprenticeships, by involving social partners, companies, chambers and VET providers, as well as by stimulating innovation and entrepreneurship for developing high quality and labour market relevant vocational skills and qualifications, based on the learning outcomes approach.*

Since 2009, Working Group experts have been exchanging good practices and working on common tools inter alia the field of vocational education and training. There have been 3 generations of Working Groups:

- Between 2011 and 2013 eleven Thematic Working Groups <sup>10</sup>
- Between 2014 and 2015 six ET 2020 Working Groups
- A new generation was launched on 22 February 2016 set to last until June 2018 with six Working Groups.

The main aim of the group is to prepare policy guidance to help policy-makers and other stakeholders design policies and practices to enable teachers and trainers to reach their full potential and to contribute to improving apprenticeships and work-based learning. Policy pointers related to teachers and trainers in the field of governance and partnerships and continuing professional development will be the output of this VET WG. <sup>11</sup>

The VET WG is committed to contribute to two of the Riga Medium-Term Deliverables:

- Promoting work-based learning (WBL) in all its forms with special attention to apprenticeships,
- Supporting initial and continuous professional development of VET T&T. It also responds to the needs recognised in bringing forward national policies/ approaches and European cooperation.

The scope of activity of the VET WG is very specific, focusing on one particular theme only. In the first period, the focus of this working group was on VET trainers at the workplace in both initial and continuing VET. <sup>12</sup> In the second period, the aim was to support effective implementation of national VET reforms, which set up or strengthen work-based learning and apprenticeship-type schemes.<sup>13</sup> The third generation of the Working Group on Vocational Education and Training (VET WG) covers the theme: “Teachers and trainers in work-based learning/ apprenticeships” and is committed to contribute to two of the Riga Medium-Term Deliverables, namely promoting WBL and support initial and continuous professional development of VET teachers and trainers.



- <sup>1</sup> Eurostat, 2017: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/7895735/3-02032017-AP-EN.pdf/8a73cf73-2bb5-44e4-9494-3dfa39427469>
- <sup>2</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52009DC0200&from=EN>
- <sup>3</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/eu2020/pdf/COMPLET EN BARROSO 007 - Europe 2020 - EN version.pdf>
- <sup>4</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/repository/education/policy/vocational-policy/doc/brugescom\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/policy/vocational-policy/doc/brugescom_en.pdf)
- <sup>5</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:372:0001:0006:en:PDF>
- <sup>6</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52012DC0669&from=EN>
- <sup>7</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1147>
- <sup>8</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/repository/education/policy/vocational-policy/doc/2015-riga-conclusions\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/policy/vocational-policy/doc/2015-riga-conclusions_en.pdf)
- <sup>9</sup> Mártonfi György (2016):
- <sup>10</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/expert-groups\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/expert-groups_en)
- <sup>11</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/expert-groups/vocational-education-training\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/expert-groups/vocational-education-training_en)
- <sup>12</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/expert-groups-2011-2013\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/expert-groups-2011-2013_en)
- <sup>13</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/expert-groups-2014-2015\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/expert-groups-2014-2015_en)

## **Abbreviations**

WBL = Work-Based Learning

IVET = Initial Vocational Education and Training

CVET = Continuing Education and Training

T&T = Teachers and Trainers

VET = Vocational Education and Training

WG = Working Group

ET = Education and Training

# Supporting Skill Development in SMEs: Inter-company VET, Collaborative training in Germany

by bfw



Photo: Sanna Henttonen

Large, international companies scarcely require assistance when designing and implementing HR strategies or training schemes. Smaller and medium enterprises (SME) however, are often highly specialized in their branch of work and usually do not have a systematic approach to training their staff and therefore have difficulties evaluating the efficiency of their training programmes and identifying deficiencies. They are mainly busy with day-to-day processes or simply lack access to information about new trends and sector developments, also they rarely have the means to send their staff on longer training courses. It is therefore essential to raise awareness, inform and offer guidance on training to SMEs. To make sure that SMEs cover all elements of vocational education and training it is necessary to provide additional programmes at educational centres. This is an important contribution to safeguarding the supply of skilled labour.

Inter-company vocational training centres have emerged to fulfill that need. These centres provide the part of training that the company cannot (Article 5 Section 2 No. 6 BBiG – German Vocational Training Act), for example in skilled arts and crafts highly specialized companies often do not possess all the equipment and machinery a trainee needs to learn all the skills necessary for his occupation. This also means that trainees get a chance to get to know the latest technical developments in their respective field. Depending on what the training company is not able to teach, the trainee spends a suitable amount of time in this “third learning environment” which combines practical and theoretical knowledge.

These centres have now developed another side to training skilled labour and are for example increasingly active in the field of further training and continued education.

The costs are covered by enterprises, chambers and the German government. These bodies usually also govern the inter-company vocational training centres sometimes together with affiliated organisations such as independent legal entities or non-profit legal bodies, which have accepted an educational mandate.

## Partnership approaches to training in SMEs

Another form of partnership for training purposes is collaborative training. Companies team up to train an apprentice. This has proven to be an interesting option for companies that are unable to provide all the training necessary for a fully-rounded education in one profession.

The following models can be used to ensure that the vocational training provided is complete:

- In the majority of cases, one company assumes the role of the primary provider of in-house vocational training. The second partner only steps in when the first one is unable to teach certain aspects of the profession. For example, while a small gardener can provide the majority of training, the apprentice may switch to a larger florist to learn decorating large-scale events. In this case the florist and the gardener exchange a written agreement about the training scale and the gardener as main provider of training signs a contract with the trainee.
- A three-fold approach has proven rather effective: An education provider works together with several firms and also signs a contract with the trainee. The trainee then spends time at the company, at a school for gaining theoretical knowledge and at the education provider itself.
- Another option turns one of several partnering firms into the lead enterprise. This is called a training association. The association signs a contract with the trainee and teaches training content. The lead enterprise takes on trainees from several other companies for a defined amount of time.

As described there are numerous possibilities for shared training in Germany. Generally though, there is always a contract between the participating firms that states clearly who is responsible for which amount of training and what exactly was agreed on. In cases of dispute, Chambers of Industry and Commerce as well as Chambers of Skilled Crafts provide assistance in mediating these ventures.

## Partnership approaches to training in SMEs

In most cases, further training in SMEs is not (well) documented. It usually takes place as on-the-job leaning or mentoring by experienced staff members but is rarely ever formalized or recorded in a contract or agreement<sup>14</sup>.

However, there is a need for SMEs to change somewhat in this respect if they want to stay competitive and be prepared for fast-evolving market changes. Training networks present to be a powerful tool to meet that need. It is also crucial to involve other players in skill development. Chambers and trade unions can be useful partners when it comes to raising awareness of the benefits of further training and can even help SMEs venture off the beaten path when it comes to their training structures within the enterprise<sup>15</sup>. Even though these smaller companies are hardly ever represented by unions, the social partners still realise their training needs, the sectoral changes they need to face up to and their (often shorter) resources for training.

<sup>14</sup> European Commission, 2009c: The role of the Public Employment Services related to Flexibility in the European Labour Markets. Available from Internet: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=105&langId=en>

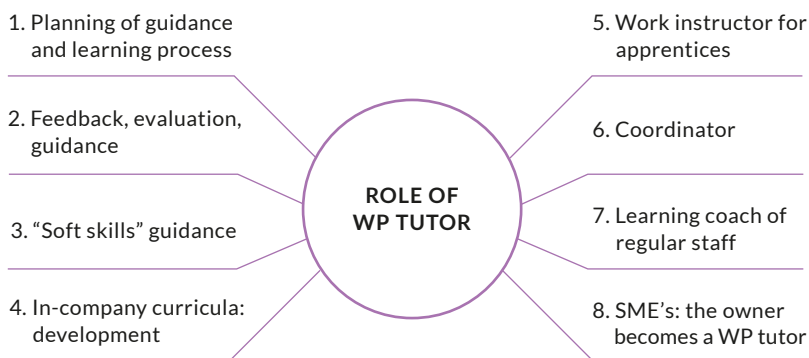
<sup>15</sup> European Commission, 2009c: The role of the Public Employment Services related to Flexibility in the European Labour Markets. Available from Internet: The role of the Public Employment

# What different roles do the workplace tutors have in their organisations and how can a VET provider address them in Finland?

by Salpaus Further Education

At the Level Up project Multiplier Event held in Lahti Finland in June 2017, the question of the roles of the workplace tutors in their organisations was brought up. In this discussion we realized that the term ‘workplace tutor’ refers to drastically different roles in the partner countries. During the learning café the following tasks were identified:

Graph 1: ME activity defining the tasks of workplace tutor



The discussion reflected the findings of our previous project EWT – European Workplace Tutor. In the project we distinguished two different roles or positions at the workplaces: that of a Workplace Tutor and that of a Learning Process Guide. In fact, the training programme implemented on European Level in the Level Up project is one of the results achieved in the EWT project.

The topic was further discussed in the Finnish network meeting and workshop in September 2017. Finnish apprenticeship training providers gathered to brainstorm on the effects of the VET reform on the tutoring and guidance processes at the workplaces. Considering the different roles at the workplaces the network realized that there is an imminent need to redefine all the roles of players involved in work-based learning in Finland. The various roles of a VET provider are at least a teacher, coach and a trainer, where as in companies you can recognize roles such as an in-company trainer, a workplace instructor or a learning guide.

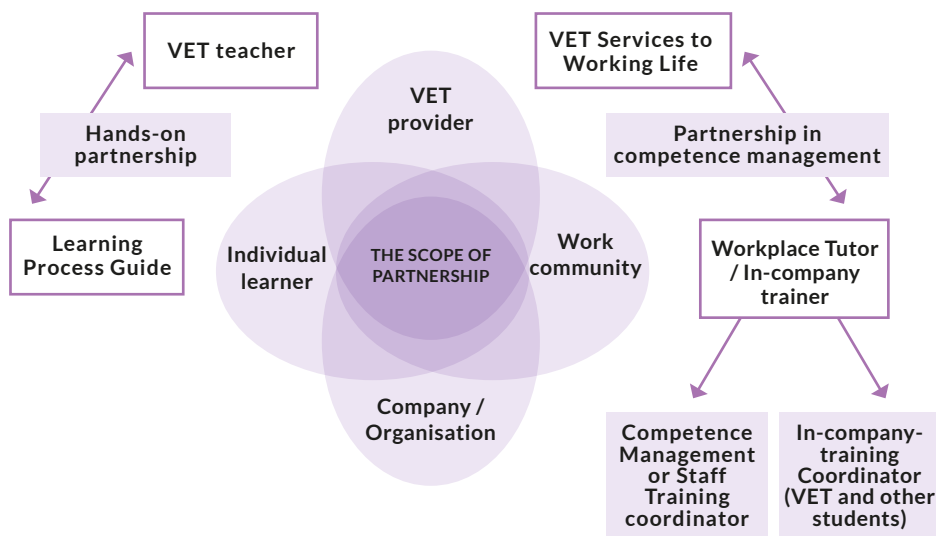
According to the definition made in the previous EWT project, the **Workplace Tutor** is a role held by a person in a company who has the responsibility to **guide and coordinate in-company training processes**, and independently plan, implement and evaluate in-company education processes as well as advise individuals regarding training and guide. In other

words, the Workplace Tutor has a specialized biography and a qualification in his area and is very often in a managerial position.

The Learning Process Guide is a role with a very hands-on approach to practical learning guidance at the workplace. The Learning Process Guide accompanies learning processes of staff or learners (VET students) in the company and this typically involves non-formal training programmes. The learning process guide acts as a specialist for learning processes with the aim of enabling learners to independently create and reflect learning processes. These are not necessarily full-time roles/positions but can be held by staff members appointed to these roles alongside their normal tasks.

In Finland, so far we have not had any formal qualification requirement to act as workplace tutor, only recommendations. Within the VET system short training programmes are offered to organisations to give the learning process guides the basic skills of in-company training and related knowledge of the VET system. The network realized that in Finland we have not made a clear distinction between the different roles, and being so, neither do have we any customized training to offer for these roles or competence profiles. The network identified four key players in the learning process: the individual learner, the (immediate) work community, the company and the VET provider. See the graph below.

Graph 2: In-company training processes, the key players and the scope of partnership.



The graph shows that in an organization there can be two types of learning processes; staff training and students' in-company learning. The actors and methods of co-operation vary according to whether it is a VET teacher's partnership with a learning process guide or a more strategic partnership between the VET provider and the organization in competence management of the organization. The scope of the partnership varies according to the individual learner and his needs, the aims and needs of the organization and the role of the work community (immediate or in general). Accordingly, the competence needs of the workplace tutors and the learning process guides are different.

In the opinion of the network members, The European Workplace Tutor and Learning Process Guide competence profiles can be considered the answers to the Finnish need to renew the concept of training for the workplace tutors and process guides. We have to identify and address the competence needs of the workplace tutors and the learning process guides bearing in mind the aims and needs of the organization in question.

In general, the training programme of the Level Up project forms a basis from which European VET providers can form their own programmes and schemes suitable for different learning cultures and education systems. Each country or VET provider can emphasize topics according to cultural and organizational diversity.



# How Does Organisational Strategy Benefit from Work-Based Learning?

by Noreside Resource Centre

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## Introduction

Every organisation is different. They each adopt a specific structure and a culture that they believe will deliver their objective. The structure and culture can be described as the strategy to be used to achieve the objective. In this article, we are going to refer to all entities as Organisations instead of companies or businesses. The reason is because to refer to companies or business is to exclude state sector, voluntary and community organisations.

The term “Work Based Learning” is often seen as an extension of school or college courses where the learner spends a portion of their learning time within a workplace. In the context of this project and this article Workplace Learning is training that is devised by staff of the organisation, normally Workplace Tutors, and delivered to other staff of the same organisation to meet identified strategic objectives.

## Why do we need to know this?

The answer is simple. The structure of the organisation will determine the culture of the organisation to a large extent and the culture that exists will determine the extent to which management and learners are receptive to training suggestions and to the training itself. Understanding Structure, Culture and Strategy allows the Workplace Tutor – Learning Process Guide to intervene in a situation with the greatest possible chance of success.

## Structure and Culture

At the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, factories were small, often employing less than five people. In those circumstances, the owner made all the decisions. Over time the size of the factory grew and as these were mainly manufacturing facilities some structure was needed to manage the day to day, short term and long-term objectives of the owners. There was very little history to use as a model except the civil service and the army. Both were hierarchical systems where power came from the top and everyone below was expected to carry out the instructions of those above them. This system has its advantages, however, there are two major disadvantages:

The first is that while accurate and important information and instruction flowed down from the top there was no guarantee that accurate information flowed back up the system. After all, who is going to admit to their superior that they made a mistake or that things were going wrong?

The second was that workers when they came to work were expected to leave their brains at home. General workers were not seen as having the ability to notice when things were not quite correct. This is clear from the autobiographical book “Road to Nab End”<sup>16</sup> by William Woodruff where we can see how his family and their fellow workers could see the collapse of their industry and the Industrial Revolution long before the owners of the firms.

Over time various systems of organisation emerged and these are very well described by Charles Handy in his book "Gods of Management"<sup>17</sup> in which he describes four types of structure and he links these to a specific culture. Handy's combination of structure and culture can be summarised as:

- Hierarchy Structure leads to a Role Culture
- Web Structure leads to a Club Culture
- Project Structure leads to a Task Culture
- Professionals Structure leads to a Person Centred Culture

**Hierarchy:** In this system instruction flows from the top, but little information flows back up. Usually the biggest section is that controlled by the Production Director and it is here that we also see training of staff. The culture to be found in these type of organisations is "Role" culture where each person has a role or function and there is little or no flexibility. Training is based on the role of the worker.

**Web Structure:** Is where one person has the power to make all the decisions and others carry out the tasks. For a structure like this to work the culture must be that of a club but all staff must show support for the owner, the source of the power. It is possible to find "Web Structures" within a Hierarchical Structure where a Department Manager might run his/her department as a web with a club culture. This is something that the Workplace Tutor needs to keep in mind.

**Job or Project Structure:** This is where people are brought together to complete a task or project. They may come from various parts of the organisation and are chosen because of the knowledge or skills they have. Once the task is completed the group disbands. It might be replaced with one or more project groups set up to implement the recommendations of the initial group. The culture of the group is "Task". There is a job to be done and everyone works together to get it done. Workplace Tutors – Learning Process Guides would be part of one of these project groups. Their function is to advise on training and development or indeed to develop training courses.

**Person Structure:** The Person Structure is found in organisations like doctors practice, accountants, solicitors. The individual believes they are more important than the organisation and become responsible for their own professional development. It is unlikely that a Workplace Tutor will be involved.

Culture is often described as "the way we do things around here". Organisational culture is a system of shared assumptions, values, and beliefs, which governs how people behave in organisations. These shared values have a strong influence on the people in the organisation and dictate how they dress, act, perform their jobs and are receptive to training and development strategies. As seen above the structure will determine the type of culture. Work Based Trainers need to be aware of this.

## **Strategy**

Strategic planning is an organisational management activity that is used to set priorities, focus energy and resources, strengthen operations, ensure that employees and other stakeholders are working toward common goals, establish agreement around intended



outcomes/results, and assess and adjust the organisation's direction in response to a changing environment. This includes decisions on training and development of staff.

### **Structure, Culture and Strategy**

As we can see from the above if organisations choose a structure and implement the correct culture then they are most likely to be successful but what specifically is strategy? The definition of business strategy is a long-term plan of action designed to achieve a goal or set of goals or objectives. Strategy is management's game plan for strengthening the performance of the enterprise. It states how business should be conducted to achieve the desired goals. Without a strategy management has no roadmap to guide them.<sup>18</sup>

After the Second World War changes in product availability arising from the regeneration of the economies of Japan and Germany together with studies in motivation and organisational behaviour resulted in the creation, in the 1980's, of the position of Human Resource Manager and later a new position on the board of the company of Human Resource Director.<sup>19</sup>

Now for the first time the training and development of employees became part of organisational strategy. Now workers when they came to work were expected to bring their brains with them.

### **Strategic Human Resources Planning**

Human resource planning is a process that identifies current and future human resources needs for an organisation to achieve its goals. Human resource planning should serve as a link between human resource management and the overall strategic plan of an organisation. The strategic plan should plan for known changes that will take place such as the launch of a new product or the introduction of new legislation. It should also create a flexibility to deal with unknown changes such as the decision of an employee to leave, maternity and paternity leave etc.

### **How can the Workplace Tutor – Learning Process Guide contribute to strategy?**

Training and development is a term covering various kinds of learning in the workplace. Training helps employees learn specific knowledge or skills to improve their performance in their current positions.

Development is broader and focuses on employee growth and on their future performance, rather than an immediate job role. It is often associated with employees enrolling in long term part time courses at Universities and Colleges of Technology to achieve a third level qualification.

Traditionally the Workplace Tutor delivered predetermined training courses. This project sees the expansion of the role to include guidance in the learning process.

Good training and development helps to retain employees and this is good for both the company and the individual themselves. It also helps with succession planning. This is where the Workplace Tutor can help by:

- a) Identifying individuals who need training
- b) Identifying individuals who have the potential to take on greater responsibility if given the correct training.
- c) Well trained staff will perform better, reach full performance level more quickly, are less likely to underperform or have accidents or create waste/poor quality work.
- d) An organisation with an active approach to training and development is likely to attract a higher calibre employee and thus give the organisation an edge in the employment market.
- e) It can also be motivational for employees to train others – they become aware of the work at another level and it can give longer-serving employees an opportunity to go beyond simply “doing the job”.

<sup>16</sup> Road to Nab End. William Woodruff. Abacus (Eland Books), 2000 (first published as Billy Boy, Ryburn Publishing Ltd., 1993)

<sup>17</sup> Gods of Management. Charles Handy. Macmillan (12 Oct. 1979)

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.rapid-business-intelligence-success.com/definition-of-business-strategy.html>

<sup>19</sup> The Workplace Tutor – Professional Training in the Modern Workplace. Patrick Coughlan. LuLu.com 2016.



## Good practices on work-based learning from the national networks

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### Case Germany: Learning guidance at the workplace in the context of Industry4.0 – How digitalisation makes qualification move even closer to the workplace at Daimler

Digitalisation is radically changing the automotive industry. Autonomous vehicles, networked cars, human-machine-cooperation and Industry4.0 are but a few trends of these fundamental changes. Aside from innovative technology, qualification of employees is the key to coping: New skills, knowledge and competence are required; at the same time, digital learning formats open up new possibilities of training.

#### What is changing in the context of Industry4.0?

Professional biographies become more diverse and dynamic. The decreased half-life period of knowledge necessitates new ways of acquiring and retaining knowledge. In manufacturing, the concept of the smart factory fundamentally changes the working environment of employees and places IT at the centre of work instead of mechanics. Complex production processes and working in interdependent structures results in new qualification requirements. There is an increasing need for knowledge-intensive tasks and less routine work. Interdisciplinarity and cooperation are vital.

New qualification requirements thus include: big data, data analysis and data security; systems of decentralised intelligence; holistic process thinking; handling of new products



Photo: Sanna Henttonen

and machines, ability to adapt to increasingly individualised products and production processes; self-organisation and ability to work in teams. Daimler expects that the handling of machines will become less important while the relevance of process development, monitoring and maintenance grows.

### **What is the response?**

Daimler counts on a solid basic qualification through initial training and the promotion of further specialisation thereafter. For example, Daimler is one of the first industrial enterprises in Germany to offer a dual study programme "Economics / Industry 4.0." Alongside the common economics contents, this programme involves knowledge about IT technologies and Industry4.0 and combines academic studying with workplace learning. At the same time, there is an increasing importance of further training in manufacturing. Learning and training processes increasingly integrate the need for independence and self-control: where do I find the information I need and how to I distinguish correct from false information?

Digital learning systems and methods, such as Daimler's online platform DAS@web, enable flexible and individualised learning and qualification processes. The online platform Daimler supports its trainers through qualification measures, particularly with regard to integrating new developments and trends in training. Cooperation with the works council is vital. The design of Industry4.0 as well as education and training is subject to co-determination. The use of data glasses will also be applied in the future in order to learn new processes in assembly.

While the relevance of digital formats grows, there is also an increased importance of workplace-oriented and integrated learning processes. The aim is to integrate qualification for new production processes into everyday business. The application of digital media can also be incorporated well into learning at the workplace. The digital learning platform that has been used by Daimler Trucks since 2005, for example, is now being made available on mobile devices. Qualification thus moves closer to the workplace in assembly and production. Physical and temporal proximity between learning and working is important. Learning can take place on demand. The quick and immediate shift between practice and theory has been proven to increase educational success. More competences are integrated and a deeper understanding of complex interdependencies is achieved which plays an important role in the context of Industry4.0.

Source: Shaping digital transformation in companies. Examples and recommendations for initial and further training. Federal ministry of Economy and Energy, Berlin, March 2017.

## Case Finland: The Importance of Coaching and Training in Activating the Long-Term Unemployed

by Craig Donald, Salpaus Further Education

Lahden Työn Paikka is a company owned by the city of Lahti and the municipality of Hollola. Its operations focus on offering solutions to long-term unemployed people in the Lahti area to improve their social status and employability through coaching and rehabilitation. We interviewed Pekka Kotiaho, the managing director of the company on his views on the role of workplace tutoring.

*How would you define workplace tutoring in Lahden Työn Paikka and what kind of facilities do you have?*

Workplace tutoring means developing people's skills and giving them a possibility to get a job and survive in the outside world. We have professional coaches who guide people to learn normal working life routines. We have real work processes for training purposes: we have production work and production machinery or production. In our recycling centre we can actually simulate almost the whole work process chain of any supermarket or shop: from logistics to sales, working on the cash machines and general customer service.

*When people come here for training can they specialize in a certain area or do they all go through a set programme? Can the programme be revised during the training process?*

We have many people from different backgrounds and we make a training plan for them individually. There are checkpoints for the training and depending on their progress we can reassess the target during the training, so we do not have a set model for the training.



The starting point depends on the person's capabilities and background.

*If we think about good practice in workplace tutoring how important is this training plan?*

That's the essence, that's really the most important thing because it gives the framework and it is where the targets for the training are set.

One important feature is that we should never become too attached to a trainee because if the person has potential we want to keep him in our organization. That is not the purpose of our organization: if we have someone who we see has skills we should try to push him to look for work outside our company. The success for us is when people get a permanent job or at least a job for a fixed period of time outside our organization.

*Who from your company are actually involved in the training process?*

*And what do they do to help the trainee learn the skills?*

Basically we have three different groups of employees if we exclude our administrative organization which is really small. We have the professional workers who in charge of parts of the production process, for example in our bookbinding operations they produce the pages and have the digital printing skills or in the metal workshop they take care of certain welding processes that require high level of welding skills. Their job is to work together with the trainees but not to instruct them directly, they are there to support the tutoring process. Of course when you have been working in an environment like this for years they probably are just as good coaches as anybody.

Then we have the professionals who have tutoring skills and training skills but their main emphasis is on the production process as a whole and to instruct people on the process of working.

The third group is the life coaches who instruct the trainees and make sure that they actively look for employment. In the trainees' employment contract it is also stated that they have a duty to look for jobs on the open labour market. Our company gives them worktime to search for and apply for jobs. The life coaches help them with applications and CVs as well social skills to survive in the working life and society in general.

*And would you agree that it's a group effort of all the people working to actually help them get back to working life?*

Definitely yes, it should be like that. Everyone within the company strives to help the trainees get back to working life. They all have their own role in the process of integrating the trainees back into the society.

*Thank you Pekka. This was interesting. Thank you for telling us about how Lahden Työn Paikka helps society in general here in Lahti Finland.*

Thank you. It was interesting. Pleasure to help.

## Case Spain: Spanish WBL Programmes in Higher Education by FPT

European policy is placing an increasing emphasis on involving employers and labour market institutions in the design and delivery of higher education programmes that match curricula to current and future needs of the economy. The aim of this paper is to investigate the curriculum development process for work-based learning (WBL) programmes and to connect it to the basic pillars, organizational and pedagogical strategies and key stages that enable higher education institutions to foster students' learning, employability and innovation.

The university systems in the European countries naturally differ in some aspects. Spain's universities are on the whole traditional, although some smaller universities link university and vocational programmes. Work-based learning in Spain refers almost exclusively to work placements. Spanish universities increasingly incorporate work placements into their curricula.

Two case studies of Spanish WBL programmes in Higher Education are reported. A range of stakeholders including students, employers, teaching staff, programme leaders, administrators, HEI strategic planners and labour market intermediary organizations contributed to the data collection underpinning the case studies.

<b>COURSE/ QUALIFICATION</b>	<b>INSTITUTION</b>	<b>WORK BASED ELEMENT</b>
Industrial Engineering in Processes and Products (undergraduate)	IMH / Universidad del Pais Vasco	Company placements in years 1, 2 and 3
Innovation and Development of Business Project (Master)	Florida Universitaria (Universitat de Valencia)	Project based up to 375 hours

These two cases provide an illustration of companies taking part in the universities' Social Councils. As a member of this Council their responsibility is to evaluate and approve the programmes, but they are not often involved in the design aspect, which is usually carried out by university academic staff. This situation led to the following comment from one council member, "So we don't feel really represented in the study programmes we are approving". Nevertheless, both cases come from consortiums or foundations where universities and companies are part of the same body.

Market need should be what drives WBL. In other words, a recognized lack of skills or competencies has to be detected in the labour market. This lack of skills is reported either by potential students (people) who need to enhance their qualifications, or by employers (participating organizations). It makes sense to identify any HEI efforts towards that goal

as a good practice. Market need can also be detected by the participating organizations. One example of this is the case of the Master in Innovation, where the Valencian Business Confederation identified the need to create a postgraduate programme to cover the growing need for innovation in the Valencian business sector.

Once market needs are perceived or observed, the labour market typically asks the HEI to develop an education programme to meet that need. However, in WBL, the HEI cannot develop the solution on its own; it needs an external organization (employer, intermediary, or social partner representing the interests of a group of employers) as a partner in planning the learning activities that will satisfy those needs. Thus, good practices will appear when such a partnership is established and maintained to develop a joint viewpoint from interaction to integration. A good example comes from the field of Industrial Engineering, *“at the beginning of the course year, the person in charge of external relations for the programme contacts local companies in order to ask about their training and staff needs”*.

Alignment of teaching and learning activities means that the activities in the practice programme must be deliberately designed and connected to the theory and vice-versa. For instance, in one of the cases, *“integration is evident as most of the practical work which the student has to carry out during the Masters is integrated into the real role of the student as a professional in the company”*.

Assessment with integrative learning objectives. The integrative learning outcomes are the key objectives of WBL; assessment should therefore be aligned with integrative activities. HEI teachers consider that for students to obtain the most value, they must be able to link theory and practice and integrate work undertaken at university with their work in the employer’s organization.

The literature highlights the importance of agreement between academic and practitioner assessors on the standards for assessment, so that they reflect the levels of student achievement within the WBL context. These assessors may include external examiners who operate outside (“the tripartite relationship of student, employer and HEI staff”). For instance, in the Master in Innovation *“There is an Advisory Board. It is an expert team coming from different areas related to business development. They have to advise the student in the project planning and execution in those areas directly related to their expertise area; to regularly assess the project progress and the assessment of the Master.”*

One way to combine learning and evaluation is through ‘live’ projects. An example of this is seen in the following comment from a programme manager: *“On the placement, the student has to develop real projects (one of them is the final project) in order to put the knowledge into practice and cement the professional skills”*.

Work-based learning must take place in real, or at least well-replicated, work situations. Practice settings offer a range of experiences that are authentic in terms of acting out an occupation in particular work situations. Experiences are goal-directed. This means that practice periods must be established to enable a previously planned objective to be learned. In one of the cases, *“Once a term (that is 5-6 visits throughout the programme), the academic company tutor goes to the company in order to make an assessment along with*



*the student and the company tutor. All three sign a document where the assessment and new objectives for the student are established”.*

Assisting individuals in developing the capacities to realize their vocational ambitions includes understanding the goals for occupational preparation, as well as how integration of experiences in both academic and practice settings can contribute to generating occupational expertise. Here, a programme manager in Spain says that their “*students have a personal tutor (Senior Advisor) who helps to solve any academic problems, as well as supervising all the work the student is going to undertake during the Master and supervising the Master Thesis.*”

Communication is related to accessibility. The three-way communication between the academic tutor, students, and the company/employer tutor is particularly important. A good example of this practice: “*After this, the whole cohort (of students), led by the pedagogical tutor, negotiate and decide which competencies to work, how much time to spend on each one and the methodology (visits, seminars, etc.). There is a special budget for this. The analysis is individual, but the response is collective. Once the student is assigned to a company, this company, the HEI and the student together define the profile with the basic competencies required at the end of the programme. This profile becomes a learning contract and it is signed by the three parties.*”

Assessment is another stage in which all the agents must be involved. It must therefore obviously include the student. But the students and tutors need support from the HEI, and at least some kind of guidelines should be provided. As some forms of assessment may be unfamiliar to individual tutors, their understanding would probably be largely premised on their own personal experiences of assessment. One case resolved this issue as follows: “*The company tutor is trained and is continuously supported by the HEI which facilitates the tutoring work and homogenizes objectives and assessment criteria.*”

In our framework, culture is the intersection between people and participating organizations. People behave differently depending on context, habits, expectations, and so on. In this way, this intersection to a certain degree determines the specific behaviour of an organization. Different cultures will produce different results in terms of reflection and improvement. Among academic staff “employers would have neither sufficient time nor knowledge about ‘critical reflection’ to encourage it among students. [...] some employers consider that it was the role of the university to develop skills of reflection in students, but with their support”. Some practices therefore attempt to solve this problem by training company tutors in the skill of critical reflection. Sometimes critical reflection is mainly carried out by the HEI, as in the following response from Spain: “*Once a month students spend three days a week in the HEI and only two in the company. These are reflection days, and they are used to talk and share experiences.*”

The Coordinator’s role is to oversee the programme, to support company tutors and students in a company and to build the culture of ‘public space’. This is illustrated in an example: “*The Academic Coordinator is the person in charge of coordinating the teaching team as well as all the professionals taking part in the programme (tutors in companies, invited speakers, etc.). He/she also coordinates the Principal Advisor team and the Advisory Board in order to guarantee the normal development, monitoring and assessment of the modules.*”

## Conclusions

Higher education institutions should weave the workplace perspective into their education programmes in order to better match the needs of a changing society. In the cases reported, university and labour market have worked together in a partnership. Depending on many contextual factors (tradition, regulations, flexibility, etc.) this partnership was more or less integrated, but there are evidences of some elements that highlighted WBL as the main strategy in the curriculum design, delivery and evaluation.



## Cases Ireland:

### **Case 1: NORESIDE MOMENTUM programme**

MOMENTUM is an outcomes-based model of education and training established by the Irish Government that sees best international practice adapted to an Irish context. The courses are tailored to both the needs of the long-term job-seeker, but also employers who are experiencing skills shortages. Courses are free, full and part-time and are aligned to levels 3 to 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) or to an industry required certification within the sector. The projects range in duration from 11 weeks – 45 weeks. Participants are required to undergo a period of “on the job training”.

Noreside Resource Centre was one of the training centres that delivered the Looking Forward MOMENTUM Warehouse and Logistics course to include Forklift licence. It was a six-month course, the profile of the learner is from the ages of 18 to 65, minimum qualification level 3 – 4 with work life experience in the sector, a head for heights and a good physical fitness.

#### **Benefits to the Learner Include**

- Certified Training
- 10 weeks practical work experience
- Individual Employment Plan
- On the job support and Coaching
- Follow up support and Mentoring
- Assistance with workplace integration
- Advice on Employment Benefits and Entitlements
- Employees can keep their payment while participating on this programme

#### **The Benefits to the Employer include**

- Database of skilled jobseekers
- Access to a committed workforce Grants & Financial Support:
- Job Plus
- Wage subsidy Scheme (WSS)
- Workplace Equipment/Adaptation Grant (WEAG)
- Job Interview – Interpreter Grant (JIIG)
- Personal Reader Grant (PRG)
- Employee Retention Grant Scheme (ERGS)

#### **The programme included the following Certification:**

- FETAC Level 5 Customer Service,
- FETAC Level 5 Personal Effectiveness in the Workplace,
- FETAC Level 5 Business Computing, Work Experience,
- Manual Handling,
- Safe Pass
- Forklift Driver for both Reach and Counter Balance.
- The course was run for 23/27 weeks which includes 6 weeks work placement (over 25yrs) and 10 weeks work placement (under 25yrs)

Noreside were very successful in this course and out of the 45 learners 39 secured employment and we continue to give support to the learners and the Employers.

## **Case 2: Workplace training**

Ideas Institute a training company owned by SIPTU Irelands largest trade union developed a very successful intervention model for use in companies who were going through difficulties or needing to change production methods. The system involved seven (7) steps as follows.

1. Establish a "Steering Committee" consisting of members of management including the most senior manager in the company and representatives of the workforce including union shop stewards.
2. The steering committee agrees to work together to find a solution to problems.
3. The steering committee decides what training they themselves need to be able to work together. This might include communications training, problem solving training, conflict management training, project management training, teamworking etc.
4. Ideas Institute arranges to provide the training.
5. When the training is complete the steering committee decides what exactly are the problems within the company that need to be overcome and how they can be resolved. A plan is drafted. This would identify the workplace training needed which included the creation of in company training and the provision of an accredited "Train the Trainer" course.
6. Action is taken to resolve the problem by implementing the plan
7. The actions taken are reviewed and modifications to the plan made if necessary

Two examples of where this model was used successfully are at Benning Betriebsgesellschaft Irland GmbH known locally as Theo Benning based in Wexford where it produces power supplies. And Siaca an Irish subsidiary of a Spanish company which manufactures packaging for the food industry.

Both companies were under pressure from their parent companies to increase productivity and in the case of Siaca to change the production system from assembly lines to team working in a cellular production system.

At Theo Benning major changes have taken place which now involve the employees and management meeting in their respective work areas each morning to consider problems and agree solutions. The company, during the project, trained internal trainers to EQF Level 5 and these are available to provide training as required. The company has since built on the success and introduced Lean manufacturing to the organisation.

In the case of Siaca the immediate effect of the project was the establishment of teamworking and this resulted in cost reduction which meant the company picked up contracts that they would not previously have been able to compete for. From a technical point of view, it reduced the SMED (Single Minute Exchange of Dies) by 58%.

Both companies were affected by the world economic crash, however on contacting representatives of both management and workers at both companies and the project leader from Ideas Institute for this publication all agreed that the use of the model helped the companies to survive.

## Workplace Tutors in Portuguese VET system by ISQ

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In Portugal, like in Europe special attention has been dedicated to work-based learning and how cooperation between VET institutions and companies is ensured during all the phases of practical training at the workplace.

The Portuguese National Qualification System (SNQ) regulates the apprenticeship-type schemes, with a strong link with the labour market. On the other hand, the cooperation between VET institutions and companies is defined by the regulatory authority (Employment and Vocational Training Institute, i.e. IEFP, I.P.). Although the SNQ does not have a special qualification for learning process guidance or workplace tutors, commonly, the professionals who cooperate on a regular basis are the training coordinator (from the VET institution) and the tutors (from the companies). The training coordinator supports the training manager and is responsible for ensuring the global coordination of the training courses, while tutors are the professionals of the company responsible for monitoring, training and evaluation of the trainee during the practical training at the workplace.

Recent debates in the Portuguese VET system have been focused on reinforcing the cooperation and communication between VET system and companies, strengthening the participation of tutors in the pedagogical teams at VET institutions. One of the measures is the possibility of integrating in the national qualification framework of trainers/tutors, the profile and training curriculum to tutors from companies. This is of great added-value and represents an important achievement for the quality of the VET offer in Portugal. It is in this frame that, the Level-up! project and the European Workplace Tutor course, it is considered new and extreme relevant at national level.

Document source: Teachers and trainers in work-based learning/apprenticeships, European Commission, 2015

# The role of teachers in the introduction of WBL

by IG Metall

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As described in the previous chapters of this publication, since committing to the Bruges Communiqué, more and more Member States are transitioning towards an increased share of work-based learning (WBL) in their VET landscapes. The increasing success and implementation of WBL is certainly down to the fact that it has proven to achieve better individual professional development, particularly in terms of employability in the context of high youth unemployment figures in the South of Europe. This is certainly not the only success factor but a major one. However, in this chapter, we do not want to focus on the reasons of success but on the realities of implementation of WBL in countries that have hitherto not had a major tradition of WBL. And on the crucial role that VET teachers, alongside with in-company trainers, play in these reform processes.

As described, in-company trainers play a crucial role in WBL. They are the key actors in the company that plan and implement the training, select apprentices / trainees, guide and accompany the learning process, provide preparation for assessment and certification, ensure a balance between the company's and the individual's competence needs and contribute in a major way to the quality and success or failure of WBL. However, particularly in those countries that have yet had no or few WBL-pathways, there are few, if any, qualification offers for this key target group in the transition towards WBL. This creates a great divide.

A divide that is often filled by VET teachers, as we have found in the EWT network's debate surrounding educational reform towards WBL. This is not necessarily due to any overarching structural considerations but to the simple lack of alternatives. What are the reasons for this?

When we look at countries that have a tradition of in-company training, resp. WBL, such as Austria or Germany, we find established support structures (such as standardised training curricula, clearly defined responsibilities of actors, support for training companies through chambers, etc.) with clearly defined responsibilities and functions. They have the great advantage that the actors and their respective responsibilities are clearly defined and established. The long tradition of dual training in these countries that has brought about the incremental establishment of surrounding support structures. It is no surprise that such structures are not in place in systems with no or discontinued tradition of WBL, nor is it surprising that they aren't easily and quickly established. These support structures are often the results of decades of economic and societal developments, collective bargaining and political reform processes.

In the process of our network debate, we have found that VET teachers often assume the role that in traditional systems is partly borne by the chambers, social partners, etc. VET teachers are often the experts of VET and as there are no established support structures (yet) for training companies, they thus assume the role of advisor, trainer, consultant for training companies. This includes responsibilities such as: selection and quality control of training companies, information, training and guidance of in-company trainers, establishment of benchmarks and/or standards for training companies, in-



company trainers, assessment criteria, etc. It should not come as a surprise that such tasks put a great added effort on VET teachers in addition to their daily responsibilities. It also appears to be the case in the initiatives and schemes we have discussed that this is not typically facilitated by extra resources in terms of time, training or monetary benefits.

Making reform processes towards WBL depend on such fragile support structures appears to be risky. Affected teachers report a lack of training, preparation and time resources. Their belief in the success of WBL seems to be the main reason why they persist but they also warn that this comes at the price of a decreased quality of their daily jobs are an insufficient amount of support for apprentices and training companies.

The EWT Network demands that teachers are better prepared and supported in this important job they perform here: enabling the introduction of WBL schemes and thus employment opportunities for young apprentices as well as the development of skilled labour for companies and regions. We believe that (a) more research and analysis should be invested in the role and responsibilities assumed by this group in projects, initiatives and reform processes; (b) time and financial resources should be put in place for VET schools and individual VET teachers to perform this important task to the utmost quality; (c) alternative support structures and possible actors should be explored for various training systems and sectors, e.g. which role could chambers or social partners play to support the introduction of WBL?; (d) adequate training schemes for VET teachers should be provided to prepare and support them; (e) additional support should be given by the development of common training profiles, standards, benchmarks and quality criteria pertaining to curricula, training companies, in-company trainers, etc. so that this task is not also left to teachers who have to keep reinventing the wheel when better results could be achieved by more formalized standards.

#### **Project partners:**

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Fundación Pascual Tomas (ES)

Salpaus Further Education (FI)

Noreside Resource Centre (IE)

ISQ (PT)

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#### **For more information on the project, please visit**

Project website: <http://www.workplacetutor.eu>

Blog: <https://workplacetutorblog.wordpress.com>



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

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