

Improving relations with families and informing them

Main objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* To involve families as relevant stakeholders of the interaction process of an apprenticeship path* To inform families about apprenticeship opportunities* To find and share common interests between families VET Units and other stakeholders of the apprenticeship system
Desired outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* To work out a methodology regarding the involvement of families* To implement participative interaction methodologies from the orientation phase to other CAAP sub steps and that enable families involvement
Target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* VET Units* Companies* Apprentices* Apprentices' families* Employment/Counselling services
Persons involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* MCG Vet Unit: VET Unit Tutor, Training Coordinators and/or staff in charge of training programme managing* Representatives of companies hosting the apprentices* Company tutors* Apprentices and/or potential apprentices* Apprentice's families
Targeted improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Dialogue between the core actors of an apprenticeship programme* Families' information and involvement* Understanding and knowledge of the programme rules/incentives* Apprenticeship programmes quality
Deliverable	Targeted information leaflet; Specific "open door" events/learning sessions.



The story

First background element

In the implementation of its training activities MCG has always concretely supported orientation activities for dual training programs beneficiaries focusing on the following main objectives:

- Providing concrete information about the hosting job/company contexts and about future possible job insertion;
- Improving the mutual knowledge between the apprentice and the company;
- Matching apprentices and companies;
- Encouraging the apprentice integration in the company context;
- Improving apprentices' involvement and motivation.

To achieve these objectives, MCG developed, in the past years, the specific practice of planning, organizing and managing a specific Training Module –during the classroom phase of the path – held directly by the Company representatives and/or Company Tutors.

The reason of organizing such activity comes also from the need of compensate for the lack of public employment/counselling services' actions.

This practice resulted indeed really efficient because:

- it enables Companies to present themselves and to present what they concretely need;
- it enables VET Units to have a direct exchange with companies about the needed competences and related professional profiles to be used also for apprenticeship paths planning;
- it enables apprentices to have a first and concrete direct contact with the job context, preventing false expectations;
- it improves and fosters mutual relations and cooperation among the different involved actors.

Second background element

ASSET project was an important occasion for MCG for reflecting about the role of other stakeholders in the accompanying process of apprenticeship/dual training paths. According to the analysis realised in the project framework, it emerged that in Italy families play a very important role in the orientation and integration phases of the path, motivating and influencing apprentices choices and effective participation.

The following important elements emerged from the analysis:

- Families usually have a sort of prejudice towards apprenticeship paths because they think them to be “less qualifying” and “second class” activities;
- Families less interact with employment/counselling public services;
- Families are more interested to the effective job insertion perspectives than to acquired competences ones.

It has consequently become important to analyse and answer also to families information's needs, and find suitable methods/tools to better involve them in the process.

Improvements

According to these purposes, what has been realized by MCG is the following:

- Adapting and opening the orientation training module also to families participation;
- Focusing orientation and information material and sessions not only on target competences but also on concrete professional and job insertion perspectives;
- Drawing up information/communication material in cooperation with other key actors of the process (mainly program managing authorities (Regione Siciliana, and local companies).

Conclusions

This new approach and related methods generated concrete and important benefits for the involved actors in terms of:

- The improvement of a common and more **effective information language**;
- The improvement of the **knowledge level** about apprenticeship programs from potential beneficiaries;
- The development/improvement of shared permanent **communication strategies**;
- The improvement of the **dialogue** process between the different actors;
- The improvement **of conscious choices of the apprentices and the decrease of training drop outs**;
- The development/improvement of a more **pro active role of the VET Unit and of its good reputation**.