IMPLEMENTATON OF THE MOBIL APPLICATION LOOP ME[*]
IN HEALTH AND CARE APPRENTICESHIP PATHS

Main objective

Jointly (teacher/tutor) support, formalize and evaluate the learning process of each apprentice at the workplace, making the apprentice being an actor of this learning process and of its evaluation.

Desired outcomes

* Process and ameliorate the joint accompaniment (teacher/tutor) by making the learning process tangible for both of them.
* Improve the teacher's knowledge of the workplace/company/business
* Improve the tutor's understanding of the skills to be acquired by the apprentice
* Make the apprentices more easily consider and reflect on their learning progresses.

Target groups

* Apprentices at all program levels
* Head teachers for apprenticeship programs
* Tutors at hosting companies

Persons involved

* The headmaster of apprenticeship programs.
* Teachers of the apprenticeship Health and Care program
* The app developers
* A group of apprentices
* A group of tutors

Targeted improvements

* Strengthened interaction between apprentices, teachers and tutors to ensure the quality of the learning processes at workplace and at school
* Improved involvement of companies for apprenticeship development and quality
* Improved reputation of the VET-unit and the attractiveness of apprenticeship programs for companies

Deliverable

* Customized app for the apprenticeship program
* Formalized process of presentation of the app to new apprentices and tutors
* Formalized process of involving tutors in using the app and defining formative activities.

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[*] See a présentation of the tool « LOOP ME » on http://www.asset-partnership.eu/results/LOOP_ME.html

The story

After having worked with the app developers to make the application usable for following and evaluating the learning of apprentices at workplace (through the collaboration of two teachers), the apprenticeship centre (GLU) at Uddevalla Gymnasium decided to make every head teacher of the all apprenticeship programs implement the LoopMe app for following and supporting the learning process at the workplace.

The application was introduced to the GLU teacher team in the frame of two half days meetings organized during November 2016. Just before Christmas break, the app developers were involved together with the two teachers having worked with them. The head teacher for the Health and Care Program and a colleague, proposed to test the use of the app with a group of apprentices from the first grade. This was done in April.

A first test

The first step of the test was to define tasks to be assigned to the apprentices through the app. In order to do that, the two teachers broke into pieces the content of the vocational courses year by year for the three grades. They re-organized (very hands on with the help of paper, scissors and colours) these different pieces according to a number of generic learning areas. The work resulted in defining 24 tasks that were to be assigned to the apprentices during their time at the workplace. Example: *Find a patient with whom you can have a cup of coffee and read some parts of the newspaper. Be responsive for what the patient self wants to talk about. Write down your personal reflections. Repeat this task five times* (this relates to the targets Communication, treatment and sensory stimulation in one of the courses)

The interesting point for the teachers was to note that a very little part of « pure theory » remained after the exercise and that it was possible to find activities that related to theory (like reflect on a concept, describe a symptom, etc.). In that way theory/practice or doing/reflecting could go hand in hand through all the workplace learning.

To support the apprentice´s reflections a number of "tags" were defined. The tags sometimes consist of just one word, mostly of some kind of value or description of the specific learning situation. For example: *Meaningful/-less, Motivated, Bored, Learned something new, In-depth understanding, Finding concrete way to use knowledge, Independent, together with tutor, etc*

The reflections from the apprentices often consist of *doing – learning – emotion*. This leads to a higher degree of understanding, both of content and context. The loops are often given back to the apprentice with a follow up question.

Implementation with all the apprentices

In August, Loop Me was implemented with all the 21 apprentices in the Health Care programme, in all the grades.

The test gave at once some very clear improvements in the relation between the teacher and the tutor.
- It increased the pace of contacts between school and tutors.
- It improved the teacher's knowledge of the work place/company.
- It made the tutors better understand the skills to be acquired and incited them to proactively create formative situations (by creating conditions / proposing opportunities to carry out the assigned activities).
- The tripartite face-to-face meetings that the teacher organizes at the company every three weeks, became more efficient as the learning process had become more tangible. It was easier to concretely specify what did work or did not and to insure a progression between these different following/evaluating moments.
- The testing apprentices got more signals on what they did and performed at the work place and thereby increased their confidence and their perception of their learning progresses.

On the basis of this test, the teacher could plan the involvement of the all apprentices and tutors in using the app at the school year beginning at fall 2017.

It is of interest to note that the app was even used during the first six weeks in school, before the first year apprentices were sent out to their workplaces.

No major changes were made in the implementation compared to the plans. It has all worked out very well!

Mobilization of the tutors

A common meeting was planned at the beginning of the school year with all three years tutors. This has not been done yet. GLU plans to have a major gathering of tutors specifically targeting the tutor´s roll in the app. A challenge is that the centre works with different persons in the companies, who are changing over time.for each apprentices
The tutors will be presented the different tasks, give their opinion on their feasability/interest in the company, propose new tasks/affine them. At this point this is done at individual meetings with tutors.

Involvement of the tutors for following and evaluation

The tutor will see each report of the apprentice and may react on them (the tutor comments are not seen by the apprentice). The tutor may launch a loop to alert on a problem, make a proposal, etc…
Loop Me data is used in the debriefs by the tripartite meetings. All loops given by the apprentice are revised but only one or two are scrutinized.

A matter for discussion for the Health Care programme is that the apprentice has to sit down for half an hour each day in order to write the loops and reflect on the learning. This must be done at the workplace because the apprentice sometimes needs to address a certain issue together with the tutor.