

Guidelines for setting participative design laboratories/workshops

Some basic principles

The implementation of the activity is based on a participative and cooperative approach of the local actors focused to the realisation of long term impacts;

The general methodology used for the activities implementation is oriented to the different actors competences and experiences valorisation.

Main objectives

To identify the trends (in terms of employment and economic facts) of the target sector;

To identify the main factors that cause the job changes in the target sector;

To identify and to define together the professional competences and the professional profiles that are needed in order to make companies more competitive according to new employment creation point of view.

Main attended results

Out comes:

Professional profiles and professional competences definition

Executive definition of training paths more respondent to the target needs

Company and other stakeholders motivation and involvement

Synergy activation between local development policies (represented by local institutional authorities and companies) and employment/training policies(represented by the VET Units).

Outputs:

Activity reporting

Executive training project/program planning document.



IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

The **participative planning workshop** is a valid method that enables different methodological elements combination (i.e. focus group and group interviews ones) by the strategic use of the **group interaction**. This use is mainly focused to the survey and production of information concerning the orientation of the different actors on a specific topic.

This method is, in fact, very efficient in order to take out – from each participant – expertise and opinions on the target topics, by a constructive comparison and debate.

For that reason, the participative planning workshop mainly focuses on:

- Market dynamics of the target sector;
- Innovative processes/products related to the target sector;
- Innovative technologies and/or best practices scouting that could be applicable to the target sector;
- Specific training needs according to the indentified processes/products;
- Training approach.

Participants

A number of 8 – 12 participants (maximum) is recommended giving priority to local company representatives (as privileged witnesses).

Besides the VET Units participation it is very recommended also the participation of other stakeholders representatives such as local authorities representatives, program managing authorities, schools/educational paths representatives.

It is recommended also that participants have "**common interests**" in order to let them concretely contribute to the workshop; it is important, as well, **not having "too much homogeneous groups"** because it could affect the discussion (since different positions always enrich the debate).

It is up to the **workshop moderator** to recognize and to manage the different contributions and the different group dynamics all along the workshop.

The Moderator

It is the person who facilitates the opinion/contents exchange between participants. His role is not "directorial" but aimed at supporting and helping the discussion flow, by contrasting the eventual digressions and by equilibrating the different interventions.

The moderator should:

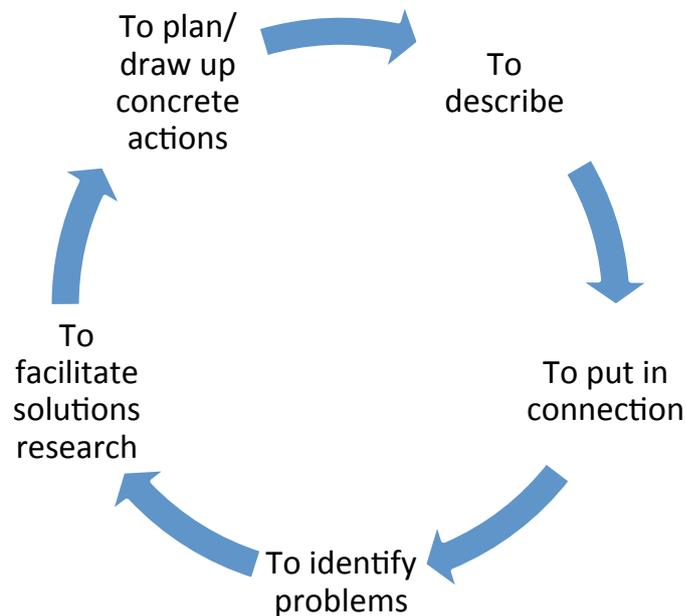
- Well Know the framework program/project and eventual reference documents
- Know reference organizations of participants and their role inside the respective organizations
- Have good "listen and feedback" capabilities
- Encourage participants contributions without influencing them
- Sit among other participants
- Make open questions and/or offer at least 2 possibilities
- Sometimes summarize, during the discussion, the main contents, by using the same works emerging from the debate
- Try to maintain the debate always open in order to let each participant to express him/herself
- Manage those participants that can stop other participants to express themselves

The moderator should not:

- Contradict participants

- Let one or few participants monopolize the discussion
- Give solutions (it is up to the participants)

The moderator "**work cycle**".



In order to facilitate the data and information collection emerging from the workshop the moderator should take note according to a predetermined scheme.

In addition, the presence also of **an observer** mainly concentrated on the participants dynamics recording should be functional to the workshop.

Organization

It is important that all participants arrive to the workshop already knowing the scope and main contents of the activity.

About the **setting**:

A comfortable room sized in relation to the number of participants (moderator and observer included) is recommended.

In the room:

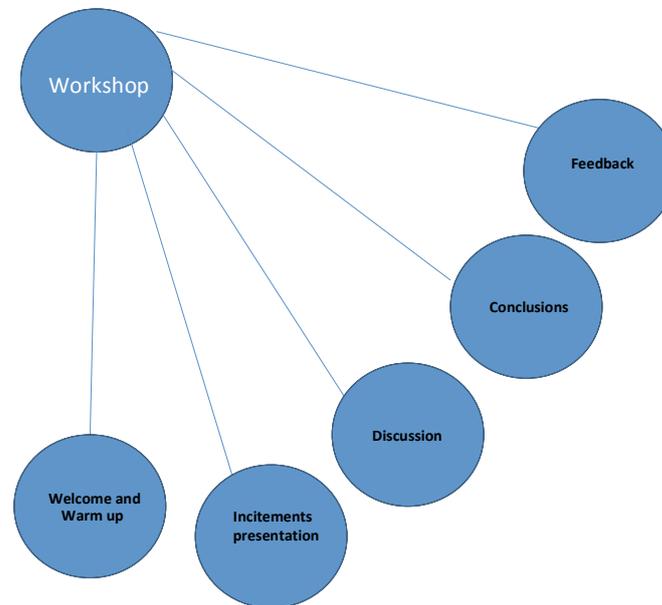
A flipchart

A free wall where to hang post it ..., ect

A table for the moderator

Support material (sheets of paper, pens, markets, scotch, post it ect...)

Workshop phases



“Welcome and warming up”

During this phase, the moderator, after having welcomed participants and briefly reminded them to the activity's objectives, will introduce the activity and executive modalities of implementation. The first moments are really important in order to “found” the working group and to make participants at ease in order to establish a trustful climate.

A brief presentation made by each of participants and an eventual “short” ice breaking activity are recommended.

In this phase, the moderator and observer are often perceived with suspicion: it is better to mitigate the climate by using friendly and soft attitude towards participants.

“Incitements presentation ”

In this phase the moderator introduces the general theme of the activity by posing some starting and target questions.

“Discussion”

In this phase the moderator can ask participants contribution also in written form by using post it. This modality enables participants to better clarify their minds and to better contribute to the workshop topics and specific work.

“Conclusions”

During this phase the moderator asks some question to participants about their general evaluation of the activity, in order to record their satisfaction or in satisfaction.

"Feedback"

The moderator should inform all participants about the fact they will receive a document with the results of the workshop work. This would contribute to consolidate and to foster the positive relationship between participants , also for future further activities.

Duration

The activity should last between 60 and 180 minutes . The duration depends on participants and on their level of interaction.

Recording Results

Following the workshop the moderator (with the observer support) should:

Transcript the contents of the activity;

Identify the most relevant topics according to the workshop objective;

Discuss and interpret main outcomes.

The final output document will consist on an elaborate presented for the different thematic areas addressed by the workshop; It should be functional to the concrete identification of the competences needs and/or professional profiles.

