

Output O2

Digital competence training programme



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SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT AND INTRODUCTION

On average, SMEs are less innovative than large companies, as they have limitations due to more limited internal resources (EC, 2019a). Especially in Eastern European countries, SMEs have very low innovation activity and there are large differences between SMEs and large companies. In the field of customer innovation, SMEs find it particularly difficult to innovate. Meeting real customer needs is the core factor for successful innovation management, for generating customer-oriented business ideas and innovative concepts (von Hippel, 2005).

SMEs do not have the time and resources to receive feedback and ideas from their customers. And when they do find the time, it is difficult to process the information and turn it into valuable solutions. A holistic approach to customer-centric innovation is complex and requires changes at all levels of a company. However, digitization and new media are now opening up far-reaching opportunities to make full use of customer-centric innovations in SMEs as well, thus strongly promoting innovative strength and competitiveness (Robra-Bissantz, 2017). These technologies and the opportunities they offer have so far been little known in SMEs and are only used by very few SMEs. They lack information, experience, knowledge and skills on instruments, methods and procedures as well as on the use of digital technologies to acquire, process and realise customer innovations.

Against this background, the project pursues on a broad regional basis the objective of enabling and supporting SMEs to exploit their customer innovation potential and thus to strengthen the productivity and competitiveness of SMEs, to secure existing jobs and to create new ones. The following main activities will be carried out to achieve the objectives.

- a) In 13 countries, analysis and comprehensive investigation of best practices on how SMEs generate, process and realise customer-centric innovation approaches and which digital technologies they can use doing so. The best practices obtained will be processed, transferred to SMEs in the context of training and consulting, and supported in their implementation in the companies.
- b) Development of a toolbox with instruments, methods and procedures for the realisation of customer innovations in SMEs.
- c) Through the development of two specific training and coaching programs, SMEs gain digital skills and are enabled to continuously realise comprehensive customer-centric innovations. The learning takes place mainly at the workplace and at the same time includes individual company development projects, so that digital technologies are already used, and corresponding innovations are realised during the further training.
- d) Comprehensive qualification of teachers and consultants of SMEs.

The qualification, consulting and support programs are carried out by chambers, which, as central SME supporters, have direct access to SMEs and, with their training and technology centres, also have corresponding capacities. However, many teachers and consultants lack the knowledge and skills to qualify and advise SMEs and their staff in the application of digital technologies and in the acquisition, processing and realisation of customer innovations at a high-quality level. Therefore, two specific train the trainer programs for teachers and consultants are being developed, which will be implemented and permanently run by 24 colleges and universities from 9 countries. These programs are:

- a) strengthening and promoting the knowledge and skills of teachers and consultants on digital technologies on the one hand and on the realisation of customer-centric innovations on the other hand.
- b) constantly providing well qualified teachers and consultants on a broad regional basis.

The developed instruments, digital models, educational and support programs will be tested and evaluated under different national conditions in several countries and implemented by all project partners. A continuation of the work after the end of the project with an ongoing implementation of the educational and support programs is secured, including financing.

The project is carried out by eight experienced partners (chambers, other institutions of vocational training and universities) from Denmark, Germany, Poland and Hungary with different levels of development and conditions. The transnational project approach enables learning from each other, identification and transfer of best practices and joint development work.

All results of the project will be transferred to 74 chambers, SME associations and colleges/universities from 13 countries, which will receive implementation advice and will be involved in the project work as associated partners from the beginning.

This Output 2 Digital competence training programme includes:

- Concept, Curriculum and Teaching materials for SME specific further Training including the integration Best Practices of the use of digital technologies.
- A coaching programme.
- Examination regulation including a procedure for the international recognition of the vocational further training qualification.
- Four reports of the testing of the training programme under different national conditions.
- A concept for quality assurance and testing of the training programme.
- A report with the results of the quality assurance and evaluations.

CONCEPT, CURRICULUM & TEACHING MATERIALS

Digital competence training programme



Michael Christiansen, International Business College (IBC)



1. INTRODUCTION

During the era of computers, digitalization has changed the world piece by piece. And also, faster and faster. We are talking Industry 4.0, generation Z, mega trends. A huge opportunity to sell products and services all over the world - Globalization. Doing business is nowadays mostly communication with and via digital systems. Some people say that digitalization get the world smaller.

Digitalization can give some advances and disadvantages in relation to have a company. Advances because companies can sell products all over the world and disadvantages that your customers can buy products from other suppliers - all over the world. Often cheaper. A countermeasure to this trend is to invite your customers and bring them closer to you and your organization - your products and services. Perhaps by involving them. Involve and give the customers a good and easy opportunity to be a part in an innovative process. We call it “*customer-centric innovation*”.

Basically, we need to rethink the way companies do business and behaviors the way we think customers. New tools have been and will be developed. Terms like Big Data, Artificial Intelligence, machine learning and data analytics have already become known in many sectors of business management, like marketing, engineering and designing. Unfortunately, we nearly only see this in big companies. SMEs, especially in eastern Europe countries, are behind and are more conservative when adopting the new technology, looking for new markets and ready to engage their existing customers.

However, the complete benefits of new possibilities can be gained only if the entrepreneurs and managers of companies have an overall view of technology, methods and opportunities they offer.

The aim of this course is to enable target groups to have such an overall view that they understand opportunities, benefits, and risks of digitalization, including the ethical aspects.

2. COURSE

This course has been designed to fulfill the needs described above. The training, which contains both theoretical lectures, group works, and practical training will be set to EQF- levels 4 or 5.

2.1 TARGET GROUPS

The target groups of this training are:

- founders,
- owners,
- managers,
- employees and
- company consultants / advisers

of and for SME companies.

2.2 OBJECTIVES

The learning objectives of this course are set to serve SMEs in digitalization and innovation as well as possible. The concrete learning goal is that after attending the course the trainee has at least a sense of what innovative behavior, digitalization and digital tools can bring to his / her own business.

The learning objectives are

- Trainees understands the importance of digitalization in a globally world.
- Trainees understand what “*digital customer-centric innovation*” is
- Trainees understand the importance for a company, why and how to involve customers.
- Trainees knows two analyze tools for internally use, maturity of innovation and IT.
- Trainees knows the contemporary basic concepts of digitalization – the relevance of topics in this area should be ensured before each training session / course.
- Trainees knows the basic about digital international payment and transactions.
- Trainees knows tools that a SME can utilize when digitalizing their innovative process.
- Trainees has applied the tool during his / her practice period.

2.3 SCHEDULE

This course is divided into three parts. The training begins with a 1.5 – 2 days theoretical part, during which the basic issues of each topic will be clarified by presentations and group work. This part will be followed by 12 – 18 weeks practice period in the company, during which the participant gets acquainted with the topics of the course in point of view of this company. During the practice period the participant will also prepare a presentation concerning the findings and ideas he or she gained during that period in the company. After the practice period is completed, a seminary of 1.5 – 2 days will be hold. In this seminary the participants will present their findings, discuss their experiences and ideas, and finally, everything will be concluded with a lecture / course / seminary.

1. Leading training
2. Practices in compagnies
3. Concluding seminary

3. PART I: FIRST WORKSHOP

3.1 CONTENT OF COURSE

(1,5 - 2 days training – 15 hours)

Goals and tasks of the first workshop are to enable knowledge transfer regarding digital customer-centric innovation,

- create a common basis of knowledge among the training participants concerning global and international market opportunities.
- create a common basis of knowledge concerning digital innovation.
- create knowledge concerning international digital payment systems.
- create knowledge regarding the customers of tomorrow – generation z.

During this 1.5 to 2-days workshop the participants get to know (usually science-based) and digital pilot-models (prototype) and instruments from project-related research for structuring and solving problems and learn to apply them (mentally). This is intended to create a common conceptual basis for the further procedure in the training.

The models, digital tools and instruments presented as examples and design recommendations for practical use, ideally form a common framework in which, in particular, the existing experiences of the participants are to be integrated in order to pursue the training objectives. The experience of the participants should serve to supplement or modify the proposals for structuring and solving problems given by the research.

Thus, at an early stage of the training, a necessary adaptation of the proposed models and instruments to the individual needs and characteristics of the participants on site, usually with different frameworks and conditions, should take place.

Before the first workshop, a trainer / consultant designing the course should select and modify the models, instruments and other material applicable to just this country, area, branch and companies in question. The material presented in this curriculum consists of common examples and works as models and stimulus for trainers.

3.2 THE ROLE OF THE TRAINERS

It is a task of the trainers / consultants to take into account the individual needs and particularities of the participants on site in a face-to-face training. This requires a high degree of knowledge and experience with the use of interactive and participant-centered didactic methods on the part of the trainers. A further focus of the first part of the training is to introduce the participants with the planning, implementation and critical evaluation of their own project work they are involved in the second part of the training. Thus, another central goal of this part of the training is to give the participants important impulses for the implementation of the presented models and instruments in their own project. The application and implementation of the presented models and instruments

by the participants "at home" is, so to speak, the focus of the second part of the training concept.

First day

Note: The material presented below is examples and stimulus, which should be applied and modified according to the country, area, culture, background, level and needs of trainees, and also according to knowledge areas of trainer. The times are suggestions and may vary depending to the weighting of topics (see above).

	Time	What?	Materials
1	8:00	Welcome and presentation. Perhaps an icebreaker?	Evt. Name tag - Challenge
2	8:15	Theme 1; The world as "local" market	
	10:00	Short Break	
3	10:15	Theme 2; Internally analyzes	
	12:00	Lunch	
4	12:30	Theme 3; Extern analyze	
	14:00	Coffee and tea	
5	14:15	Theme 4; Innovation strategy	
	15:30	End day 1	

Second day

	Time	What?	Materials
6	8:00	Welcome following up on that we discuss yesterday	9 dots - Challenge
7	8:15	Theme 5; Practice digital innovation tool	
	10:00	Short break	
8	10:15	Theme 6; International payment	
	12:00	Lunch	
9	12:30	Theme 7; How to handle data	



	14:00	Coffee and tea	
1 0	14:15	Theme 8; From analyze to action	
	15:30	End – next step	

4. PART II: LEARNING AT THE WORKPLACE AND PROJECT WORK

(12 - 18 weeks self-study and practice in company)

During the company specific practice students compile the assessments given during the training phase in the point of view of each company (general maturity of innovation and IT, answering to the questions presented above describing the contemporary situation, what should be done, how, are there barriers and / or enablers, how to evaluate. The results will be briefly presented in the concluding seminary, separate or together with the project work presentation.

Goals and tasks of the self-study-phase are

1. Accompaniment and support of change processes in enterprises, from the formulation of objectives, description of measures, conception of implementation to impact analysis by training and process-oriented, if necessary, also technical consulting,
2. Application and transfer of knowledge into the individual practice of the participants on site

In this part, the participants have the task of applying the knowledge acquired in the first part and the knowledge of how to shape their own practice in the sense of the training idea in their companies / organizations. For sustainable learning, it is necessary that they plan, implement, evaluate, critically reflect and document their own project or activities to improve a situation on site under their individual framework conditions in the "here and now".

This phase with the duration of approx. 12 – 18-weeks is accompanied and supported by professional advice and support given by the trainers / consultants. In principle, the participants should apply and implement the knowledge they have acquired in Part 1 themselves. As a rule, however, advice and support are often required in order to apply the process of adapting the knowledge acquired in Part 1 of the training appropriately under the real conditions on site and to lead one's own project to success.

The role of the trainers/consultants

The support given by the trainers can vary from a rather simple general consultation in the sense of passing on relevant information to an intensive accompaniment in the sense of coaching. In individual cases, it is usually necessary to find out, what kind of support it is needed to enable the individual participant to pursue his or her individual project goals.

In this phase, it is quite possible and even usual, that, when applying the models and instruments presented in the first phase in practice, the individual project proceeds differently than initially thought and planned by the participant. Even in such situations, the trainers of the project team can provide valuable support in pursuing the "actual" project goals.

This second part of the training enables in particular the very welcome didactic aspect of working on concrete improvements in one's own company / at one's own workplace, which is associated with a high motivation to learn. In this learning process, the company management and other employees are usually intensively involved in what is actually done at the workplace, thus achieving joint learning and strong multiplication effects in the training.

Further advantages, i.e. what has been learnt, is directly implemented in everyday business life, or the innovations associated with project work are in the interest of company's management, quickly become visible and motivate managers to promote further training for the workforce and to use it as a strategic instrument of company management. The advantages also respond to the particular needs of small and medium-sized enterprises, which are constantly suffering from a lack of time as the biggest obstacle to training.

5. PART III: CONCLUSION WORKSHOP

(1,5 – 2 days seminary – 15 hours)

Goals and tasks of the conclusion workshop are to

- Reflect (evaluate) on the successes in the dimensions of individual, operational and structural changes and change processes,
- Identify supportive and obstructive conditions of change processes and
- derive “lessons learned” for further change processes.

In the third part of the training, the participants will present and discuss the experiences and the insights gained as well as their individual projects. Both the participants and the trainers have as their particular task to review the projects and to reflect on whether, or respectively what, contribution they make to the sustainable pursuit of the overarching training idea to strengthen the capacity and ability for innovation-policy and workplace innovation. The exchange between the participants can provide them with very valuable impulses on how to make their own project even more successful. In this context, an important goal can also be to show which major obstacles are responsible for "not-yet-successes" in order to work on this in the future.

5.1 THE ROLE OF THE TRAINERS/CONSULTANTS

- Enable constructive exchange between the participants,
- Focus on the common basis for the pursuit of (general) training objectives, and
- Moderate an instructional discussion on the identification of supportive and obstructive conditions of change processes and present contributions for a possible reduction of resistance in the tracking of individual projects.

5.2 SCHEDULE OF THE WORKSHOP

Note: Two shorter pauses (with coffee) and one longer pause (lunch) will be held during each day.

First day

- 1) Welcome, registration and material, 0,5 hour
- 2) Presentations of students, discussion and the feedback of the trainers – continues, if needed, in the second day.

Second day

- 3) Customer-centric and innovation – Concluding lecture including:
 - Concept of Human capital
 - How the digitalization can help daily work
 - How the digitalization can help sales force



Digital methods, toolbox and trainings
for increasing customer innovation in
SMEs (IClinSMEs)



With the support of the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

- How the digitalization and innovation can help management
- How the digitalization can help strategy planning
- How the trainees can / should continue with their own project / company / business
- Length 2-4 hours, depending to the time allocated for student's presentations.

End of the course, diplomas, etc.

6. INTERNALLY ANALYZE TOOLS

A screening process to measure the maturity of innovation.

The following questions are guideline for a semi structured interview so you, as a teacher/consultant, have a better knowledge about the company. Important to higher the validity in the interview is getting answers from several employees (minimum 8-10) in the company.

Do you give bonus for innovative ideas?

Do you have a culture that it is OK to do mistake in the company?

Do you disseminate your innovative projects?

Do you know who your customers of tomorrow are? Yes / No

Is it normal in your business area to innovate? Yes / No

o you have an Innovation strategy in your company? Yes / No

Do you have innovation financial statements? Yes / No

Do you have KPIs to measure Innovation in your company? Yes / No

Do you involve employees in innovation projects? Yes / No

Do you have project-managers to manage innovative ideas? Yes / No

Do you guide your employees for Innovation Courses? Yes / No

Do you use innovative software in relation to customers? Yes/No

**Scale under-
standing.**

0 = Non

5 = medium

10 = All ways

How much is innovation a part of your culture in your company? Scale 0-10

How much do you (as a company) normally involve your customers in an innovation process? Scale 0-10

How much do you (as a company) normally involve your suppliers in an innovation process? Scale 0-10

How good are you (as a company) to share knowledge/ideas with customers or suppliers? Scale 0-10

How often do you do living labs? Scale 0-10

How often do you do field tests? Scale 0-10

How fast will you say you can improve new ideas in your own company? Scale 0-10

After you have done the interview, you have a good opportunity to coach the company in a more innovative direction and ask yourself; does this company have a 1) inhibitory innovation culture 2) normal innovation culture or 3) developing innovation culture.

A screening process to measure the maturity of the company – IT

Company

Customers

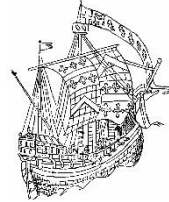
Digital Readiness/maturity level questions	YES	NO	Yes	NO
Do you have personal emails?				
Do you have a website?				
Do you have a web-shop?				
Do you have a digital order system?				
Does your website have a chat function?				
Does your website have a FAQ section?				
Do you use e-Banking?				
Do you confirm online automatically?				
Do you have a CRM-system?				
Do you send out digital invoices?				
Do you save your documents in a sky?				
Do you save your documents locally on your computer?				
Does your company have social media (Facebook, LinkedIn etc) presence?				
Do you have chatbot?				
Do you do online training?				
Do you have e-digital support?				
Do you work with big/right data?				
Do you utilize online meeting systems, ie Zoom, Teams etc?				
Do you ever receive digital feedback from customers?				
Do you have an it-employee in the company?				
Do you buy it-guidance/help externally?				
Do you have a e-marketing budget?				
Do you have a e-marketing employee (content marketing)?				
Do you have customers living + 50 kilometers away from you?				

7. Links (Examples)

- <https://ci-smes.eu/>
- https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes_en
- <https://www.tuni.fi/en/study-with-us/computational-big-data-analytics>
- <https://www.aaltopro.fi/en/aalto-leaders-insight/2018/excellent-discussions-on-digitalization-and-the-ethics-of-ai>
- <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/globalization/>
- https://www.researchgate.net/publication/275133520_The_digital_generation
- <https://www.pwc.co.uk/issues/megatrends.html>
- <https://www.quora.com/What-is-an-innovation-What-are-some-of-the-modern-innovations>
- <https://www.walkme.com/glossary/digital-innovation/>
- <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1471772718300757>
- <https://kvanto.com/>
- <https://razorpay.com/learn/digital-payments-india-definition-methods-importance/>
- <https://analytics.google.com/analytics/web/provision/#/provision>
- <https://www.mentimeter.com/>

COACHING PROGRAM

Dr. Jürgen Hogeforster



Hanse-Parlament

1. INTRODUCTION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is planned to design and implement the digital competence training programme according to the KAIN method, which is described in chapter 2 below. This method can be used very flexibly and can be designed according to the respective regional conditions as well as the needs of the participants and the SMEs involved. In any case, at least two two-day workshops with classroom teaching and a longer phase of own learning at the workplace in between should be realised. The implementation of further workshops and further phases of own learning and the realisation of workplace development projects are possible at any time.

During the implementation of the continuing vocational training program, innovation subsidies are to be implemented and tested at the same time. The focus is on the implementation of the innovative development projects. During the course of the project, the trials of the continuing trainings as well as the trials of the innovation support measures will be evaluated.

The training is to be concluded with an examination. Wherever possible, examinations should be based on official examination regulations and training should end with a recognized further vocational training degree. The official Examination Regulation listed in Chapter 3.1 serves this purpose. If the necessary legal basis for this does not exist in individual countries and cannot be created during the project period, an internal examination is to be carried out, which is, however, also implemented in accordance with the official examination regulations below and documented in a certificate. It is important that the official continuing education qualification achieved is recognised internationally. To this end, the Hanse-Parlament has developed the procedure outlined in Chapters 3.2 and 3.3 and coordinated it with the relevant institutions in the Baltic Sea Region.

As part of the Train the Trainer Programme A Digitization, teachers and counsellors need to be trained and familiarised with

- the application of the KAIN method and in particular the coaching process.
- the official examination regulations, conducting the examinations and ensuring international recognition of the official training qualification.

For this purpose, it is recommended to integrate in the Train the Trainer programme:

- a) at least three to four hours: Coaching and KAIN Method
What is and how to apply with the KAIN-method (Knowledge Acquisition according to Individual Needs)
Phase 2: Attitudes and behaviour in coaching processes
Working in small groups
Discussion
- b) at least one to two hours: educational qualifications and examinations
Examination regulations.
Recognised further education qualifications.
ECVET valuation and international recognition.
Examination pedagogy.
Discussion, exchange of experiences and clarification of questions.

2. KNOWLEDGE ACQUISITION ACCORDING TO INDIVIDUAL NEEDS – KAIN

A striking obstacle faced by SME is lack of time and permanent overburdening of their owners as well as their impossibility to release employees from work for a long-er scope of time to engage them in advanced trainings. There is also particular interest in ensuring that, as far as possible, qualifications offered should match individual skills needs of the employees and, at the same time, address specific SME issues. In response to such demands, a structural concept will be applied in the project, consisting of the following items:

- 2-3 learning phases with classroom teaching, delivered on two days per week, possibly Fridays and Saturdays.
- in between, longer on-the-job teaching periods at the trainees' workplace with simultaneous realisation of innovative development projects in SMEs, covering three to four months.
- Proposal for teaching periods at the trainee's workplace:
 - a) coaching by same trainers that are also delivering classroom teaching,
 - b) optional and customised e-learning options,
 - c) implementation of a specific development project within the company, in the topic area of the respective advanced training, involving as many employees as possible, thus, ensuring joint team learning.

The successfully tested and implemented methodological framework (training method) KAIN.

- creates a common knowledge base for participants with different backgrounds in training and consulting processes,
- takes particular account of the individual experience of participants,
- shows possibilities to change/improve the situation of the participants on site for the pursuit of project goals and change measures,
- sharpens the knowledge of possible needs for change,
- enables those involved participants to design the right measures and implement them correctly, and
- combines qualifications with the implementation of innovative development projects in companies.

KAIN describes the tasks of trainers / consultants to carry out qualifications within the framework of continuing vocational training, to accompany the implementation of company-specific development projects and to enable company employees to carry out change processes under the supervision of external consultants.

The qualification and consulting process is composed of three phases:

1. classroom teaching
2. self-study with external support
3. report and reflection.

The overall aim of the training is to ensure that all participants have sufficient information and knowledge on how the basic training idea can be implemented and pursued under the individual (quite different) framework conditions on site. Hopefully they will gain confidence in the feasibility of change processes.

2.1 PART 1: CLASSROOM TEACHING

Duration: approx. 2 days

Key objective: imparting knowledge - forming a common ground within the group.

This training module basically consists of a 1.5-2-day workshop, during which participants learn about (usually science-based) models and (conceptually) apply instruments of project-related research for structuring and solving problems. This is intended to form a common conceptual ground for further training steps. The presented models and instruments (recommended for practical application) ideally form a common framework, mainly to better integrate existing experience of course participants in pursuing their training goals. The participants' experience may complement or modify the research proposals on structuring and solving problems. Such approach enables a desired (conceptual) adaptation of the proposed models and instruments to the individual participants' needs and specificities (given the diversity of their situations) at an early stage of the training.

Observance of the participants' individual needs and specificities in classroom training requires a high degree of expertise and experience by trainers, including their ability to use interactive and participant-oriented didactic methods.

Another addressed focus in the first part of the training is communicating to the trainees' relevant issues with regard to planning, implementation as well as to (critical) assessment of their own projects that are processed in the second part of the training. Thus, another key objective of this part of the training is to equip the trainee with critical impulses for processing the presented models and instruments in his individual project. In a sense, application and implementation of the presented models and instruments by trainees at their work constitutes the primary focus of the second part of the training concept.

Tasks of the trainers/consultants:

This consideration of the individual needs and particularities of the participants on site in a face-to face training requires a high degree of knowledge and experience with the use of interactive and participant-centred didactic methods on the part of the trainers.

A further focus of the first part of the training is to introduce the participants with the planning, implementation and also (critical) evaluation of their own project, which is to be dealt with in the second part of the training. Thus, another central goal of this part of the training is to give the participants important impulses for the implementation of the presented models and instruments in their own project. The application and implementation of the presented models and instruments by the participants "at home" is, so to speak, the focus of the second part of the training concept.

2.2 PART 2: SELF-STUDY IN OWN COMPANY/ORGANIZATION WITH THE SUPPORT OF TRAINERS

Duration approx. 12 – 18 weeks

Key objective: transfer and practical application of acquired knowledge in the trainees' individual job practice; special role of the trainer as consultant and coach.

In the second part of the training, trainees are tasked to apply skills and knowledge acquired in the first part of the training with respect to their individual job practice at their company/organization, in line with the training idea. For a sustainable learning effect, it is crucial that trainees plan, implement, evaluate, document and critically reflect on their own project or their own activities with regard to improving their individual situation, basically under their respective "here-and-now" conditions.

This course phase is accompanied and assisted by trainers and their technical advice and support. Basically, trainees are on their own with respect to applying and implementing knowledge acquired in Part 1. As a rule, however, advice and support are usually required in order to properly enjoy the benefits of adaptive process of newly acquired knowledge from the training Part 1, now under real-life conditions, and to turn the project into success. Support by trainers may vary, from a rather simple general advice in the sense of passing on relevant information up to an in-depth assistance-like coaching. Normally, it is advisable to decide on case-by-case basis which type of support is best suited to enable each trainee achieving individual project goals.

At this stage, it is certainly possible, if not uncommon, that in processing the models and tools presented in Phase 1, the trainees' projects may differ from their initial concepts and plans. In such case, trainers may lend a helping hand in bringing back on track "real" project goals.

The second part of the training has a particularly welcome didactic attribute, allowing for fine-tuning improvements on the job / in one's own company, thus, ensuring high learning motivation. As a rule, this type of learning, embedded in real job conditions, involves committed personal involvement of company management and other employees, and, by joint team learning, delivers expressive multiplier training effects.

Further advantages are straight implementation of the acquired new knowledge in daily job operations; project-related innovations are in the interest of corporate management; they become quickly tangible, and managers feel encouraged to continue with advanced trainings for their employees, turning them into a strategic instrument of corporate management. Apart from this, this training approach meets particular needs of SMEs, which biggest barrier to good training is their lack of time. Under KAIN training method, lost working hours and work absences are almost entirely avoided.

In the second part, the participants have the task of applying the knowledge acquired in the first part and the knowledge of how to shape their own practice in the sense of the training idea in their companies/organizations. For a sustainable (learning) effect it is necessary that they plan, implement, evaluate, critically reflect and document their own project or activities to improve a situation on site under their individual framework conditions in the "here and now".

This phase with the duration of approx. 12 – 18-weeks is accompanied and supported by professional advice and support from the trainers/consultants.

If necessary, additional one to two-day workshops with classroom teaching can be conducted during Phase 2.

Tasks of the trainers/consultants:

At the beginning of the longer phase of learning on the job, the innovative development project to be realized is defined and prepared in the company. The trainer accompanies the work to realize the development project in the company and involves other consultants and experts as needed. The support of the trainers can range from a rather simple general consultation in the sense of passing on relevant information to an intensive accompaniment in the sense of coaching. In individual cases, it is usually necessary to consider what kind of support is needed to enable the individual participant to pursue his or her individual project goals.

In this phase it is quite possible and not uncommon that when applying the models and instruments presented in phase 1 in practice, the individual project proceeds differently than initially thought and planned by the participant. Even in such situations, the trainers of the project team can provide valuable support in pursuing the "actual" project goals.

This second part of the training enables in particular the very welcome didactic aspect of working on concrete improvements in one's own company / at one's own workplace, which is associated with a high motivation to learn. In this learning process, the company management and other employees are usually intensively involved in what is actually done at the workplace, thus achieving joint learning and strong multiplication effects in the training.

Further advantages are that what has been learnt is directly implemented in every-day business life, that the innovations associated with project work are in the interest of company's management, quickly become visible and motivate managers to promote further training for the workforce and to use it as a strategic instrument of company management. It also responds to the particular needs of small and medium-sized enterprises, which are constantly suffering from a lack of time as the biggest obstacle to training. The KAIN Training Method generally almost completely eliminates absenteeism.

2.3 PART 3: INDIVIDUAL PROJECT PRESENTATION AND REFLECTION

Duration approx. 1.5 – 2 days

In the third part of the training, experience and insight gained will be presented and exchanged at a joint event, in emphasis on presentation of individual participants' projects. Both, the trainees and the trainers, will be tasked to review and reflect on projects presented by the participants and to analyse answers with respect to a possible contribution to sustainable training target tracking. Moreover, a further key goal may help identifying major barriers to "not-yet-a-success" and fix them in the future.

The exchange of information amongst participants may provide valuable information on how to improve their own projects to be even more successful.

Tasks of the trainers/consultants:

- enable constructive exchange between the participants,
- focus on the common basis for the pursuit of (general) training objectives, and
- moderate an instructional discussion on the identification of supportive, ideas on struggle-free implementation solutions for trainees` projects, and
- obstructive conditions of change processes and present contributions for a possible reduction of resistance in the tracking of individual projects.

Of course, upon completing third part, subsequent longer self-study phase may follow, combined with on-the-job implementation, followed again by classroom-teaching in form of a third workshop, etc.

At the end of the training, all participants should have sufficient information and idea on how to implement and pursue the basic training idea, mostly under different real-life conditions.

2.4 TIME-ORGANISATIONAL SETUP AND COMPETENCIES OF PARTICIPANTS

For sure, a truism that in a large-scale transnational project, participants from different countries would never be able to match their time frames to enjoy joint meetings and events. Yet, planning and delivery of training to a specified target group and their participants, requires that:

- participants of Part 1 are in, any case, also participating in training Part 3. Where appropriate, couples or small teams should be made available as representatives of a project team with respect to these training parts,
- participants are experienced in presenting content or in using interactive training design methods, or they are trained to meet required demands,
- participants are to a certain degree involved in decision-making or co-determination in their company/organisation with respect to pushing through their projects and receiving appropriate support from senior management.

As a rule, participation in the seminar is subject to a fee.

The offering institutions may attach obligations to the paid course, e.g. that a fee is due for the arrangement of consultancy services and/or a written a written report on the results of the consultation processes must be provided.

2.5 INSTRUCTIONS, REQUIREMENTS AND TASKS FOR TRAINERS/CONSULTANTS

The selection of companies/persons for the training and consultations depends on the interests of the companies. In an active approach, a pre-selection can be made on the basis of individual criteria, e.g. sector, company size, state of technology use, quality of personnel policy, innovation orientation, ..., i.e./with other words the maturity level of the organization.

The size of the group should not exceed more than ten and not be less than three or four companies. Enterprises may be allowed to send more than one person (project group). The total group should not exceed more than fifteen persons.

The persons from the companies should have the right to make decisions or have a say in their organizations in order to be able to decisively advance the pursuit of their individual projects.

The participants should decide at the end of part 1 to carry on with parts 2 and 3. Otherwise resources will be wasted. If there is a fear that problems will arise in part 2, it will be better to do a small project for testing rather than too many or too large projects. And: Even from failed projects something can be learned.

The companies can exchange their ideas and experiences during the development phase, e.g. develop measures together.

Requirements for trainers/consultants

At various points in the brief description of the training method it became clear that the trainers have a special role to play in the use of this method, which is underlined here again.

In general, the trainers/consultants should have experience in presenting content and using interactive methods to design training.

Against the background of an overview knowledge covering all relevant subject areas the trainers are not only representatives for a variety of project topics and contents, but also –from a didactic-methodical point of view – moderators, learning (process) facilitators, coaches, sometimes co-managers, consultants, and even learners.

In individual cases, they must also decide in what form the involvement of experts and specialists on a (detailed) topic is necessary for highly specialized topics. This requires a good network.

A special challenge for the trainers is when they are in the role of a coach, who may also have to provide individual support for the learning processes of individual participants in the pursuit of a project on site.

Within the framework of a Train the Trainer program for teachers to conduct further training, teachers are familiarized with the KAIN method and taught skills for its application.

The qualification seminar must be advertised and promoted intensively.

- Early and repeated announcement of courses in professional journals, on websites, via newsletters, circulars, etc. are needed.
- Repeated dissemination of information via various media channels – in writing and particularly active in face-to-face meetings, in form of individual consultations, at meetings, trainings, via consultants, etc. should be done.
- Production of posters, hand-outs with invitations to advanced education training courses or related information on counselling events and information

placement/introduction in educational establishments, chambers, universities, etc. are additional possibilities.

- Co-operation with local/regional/national institutions, e.g. business and urban development; employers' associations, trade unions, employers' liability etc. may extend the reach of the acquisition.
- If you have an address pool of trainers and consultants: Sending personal invitation letters with indication of date, including a reply sheet by mail and/or by e-mail and possibly repeated telephone follow-up activities to addressed potential participants.
- Conducting press conferences/discussions and issuing press releases to achieve publications in the daily press.
- Involvement of relevant multipliers who approach potential participants in person.
- Use every opportunity for personal contact to pass on information and to advice potential participants about your measures.

Implementation the Training / Organisational Preparation

- Assuring timely and binding reservation of training rooms and securing an adequate equipment.
- Timely recruitment of lecturers and organising a complete teaching timetable for each respective complete advanced training block.
- At least one full-time lecturer shall be active and/or a competent specialist on the respective training topics.
- Timely preparation and provision of documents, materials, etc. for
 - all teachers and staff.
 - all participants.
- Provision in paper form as well as electronically
- The following documents and materials have been designed and are available free of charge: Concept, Curricula and Teaching materials for a SME specific digital competence training programme.

Evaluation of Training Seminars

Any training seminar is subject to evaluation in order to identify and implement further developments and improvements in future training programmes.

For this purpose, written and oral interviews with the participants and lecturers shall be conducted.

The concepts, questionnaires, guides etc. developed are free of charge for all and any future use.

2.6 COACHING PROCESS

The entire training from the first approach of the participants to the execution of the test and the end of the training must be accompanied by individual coaching, which is particularly intensive in phase 2 of the training. Within the scope of the coaching, all

relevant subject areas must be covered, for example, consultations with the participants and the participating companies, transfer of know-how and information, determination of needs and implementation of follow-up training, referral to experts, organization of information and experience exchange, etc., up to assistance with personal questions or problems.

The words “coaching” and “consultation” are often used interchangeably. However, strictly taken, these concepts imply very different notions. Coaching focuses on a goal- and results-oriented process which helps clients to find their own solutions. It is therefore understood as a method that enables those facing special (often professional) challenges or problems to manage them (largely) independently. Due to this self-understanding, it becomes clear that a coach is not an advisor or consultant answering the questions of the person seeking advice, but a coach enables the client, through certain questions and techniques, to ask the “right” questions and find the answers by him or herself.

The task of consultants or advisers, on the other hand, is to answer specific questions of the person seeking advice as an expert on the topic. Hence, the solution or answer to the question of the advice seeker is given by another person, implying that the person seeking advice does not need to further investigate the issue.

Nevertheless, there are some common characteristics of the two processes:

Profound expertise and professionalism: usually acquired through university studies, training and with extensive professional experience.

Reflexivity: Here understood as a systematic and well-founded thinking about one’s own actions and activities as well as the structures and processes with which one pursues a goal.

Value orientation and positive image of man understood here as an appreciation and recognition of the diversity of personalities, a personality’s dynamics and changeability.

Working in and with networks: as a necessary condition for pursuing goals and increasing professionalism.¹

As part of the IClinSMEs project, due to the complexity of challenges and issues faced by participants and SMEs, it can be assumed that there will be no clearly defined border between coaching or counselling support from the coaches/advisors. Both can be appropriate, important and necessary depending on the case. Therefore, consulting or coaching is seen in this context as an interactive process in which both, the strong support of the consultant or coach and active participation of the person seeking advice, is of immense importance for solving the problem at hand.² Within the

¹ Cf. <https://www.unternehmer.de/management-people-skills/128418-die-coaching-serie-teil-i-was-istcoaching-ueberhaupt> or <https://www.unternehmer.de/management-people-skills/131706-die-coachingserie-teil-ii-wo-liegen-die-grenzen-von-coaching>

² Cf. Nußbeck, Susanne (2010). Einführung in die Beratungspsychologie (2. Ed.). München: Reinhardt.

“IClinSMEs” project, this process should be based on the “Case Management Model” increasingly used in the realm of social work.³

Case management is an extremely complex and intensive process carried out together with the advice seeker. It is always on a voluntary basis and requires the consent of the person seeking advice. Cases in which a case management structure is worthwhile are particularly complex problem situations for whose solution a large number of helpers from different areas is required. This also means that multiple coaching sessions will be necessary. Furthermore, setting up case management structures is a time-consuming and labour-intensive process. Therefore, it cannot be expected that the advisors/coaches of the project participants will fully implement this concept. Nevertheless, it should serve as a suggestion for structuring the coaching process.

The case management process is divided into two levels: the case level and the (care) systems level. At case level, the case manager focuses on the person seeking advice. First, the case is assessed. In this phase information is collected comprehensively, systematically and without judgement or evaluation. The next step of this phase is a conscious decision which problem should be worked on made jointly by the case manager and the advice seeker. Once this decision has been made, hypotheses are formulated to come up with different explanations for the selected problem. These hypotheses facilitate the formulation of action goals in the next phase. In the case of this project, the selected problem should be the desired self-employment as entrepreneur. Furthermore, it is important to record strengths, competences and resources of the participant to be able to draw on them when solving the selected problem during the coaching process.

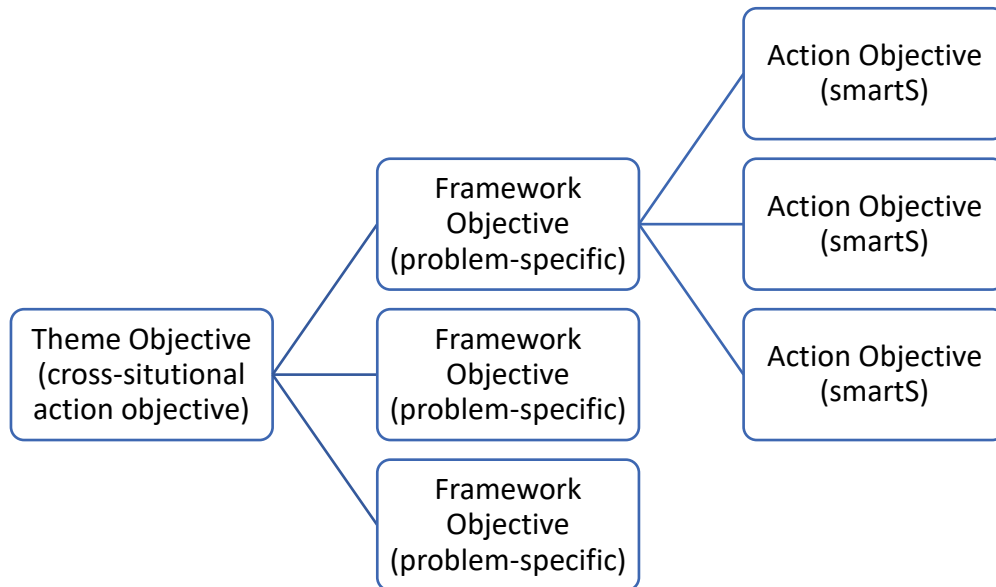
In the next phase (planning) an individual support plan is drawn up. Here, a distinction is made between theme, framework and action objectives. It is crucial to adhere to the hierarchy moving from the abstract theme objectives to the concrete action objectives. Theme objectives take interests and hopes into account, they are personal, easy to understand and formulated in a positive way – they reflect the participant’s visions. Framework objectives relate specifically to the guiding problem (i.e. self-employment as entrepreneur) and its explanation hypotheses. They are generally in line with the theme objectives. Lastly, action objectives are formulated to concretely implement the framework objectives. They are incremental and must be manageable for the participant. The so-called smartS criteria (specific, measurable, acceptable/attractive, realistic, timed and strength-oriented)⁴ should be taken into account when formulating the action objectives.

In the case level’s next phase, it is a matter of implementing the defined objectives. In contrast to regular counselling, in case management this phase is more than just a recommendation and placement into assistance services. Here, close accompaniment and, if necessary, support is foreseen. The process is oriented towards the wishes, strengths and resources of the participant to initiate a helping process that is

³ Cf. Müller, Matthias (2016). Case Management in der Migrationsberatung für erwachsene Zuwanderer (MBE) – Eine Arbeitshilfe (1. Ed.). Berlin: Deutscher paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband Gesamtverband e.V.

⁴ Cf. Ehlers, Corinna/Müller, Matthias & Schuster, Frank (2017). Stärkenorientiertes Case Management: Komplexe Fälle in fünf Schritten bearbeiten. Opladen u.a.: Barbara Budrich Verlag.

as autonomous as possible (keyword empowerment). If many different institutions work together, so-called case conferences can be of an advantage to make cooperation more effective.



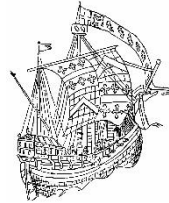
Before ending the case management process as well as already during the implementation phase, the process should be closely monitored and if, necessary, modified by the advisor/coach. The close accompaniment of the change process by the advisor/coach offers the participant additional support.

The end of the process should be active and binding. It contains elements of reflection, evaluation and farewell in which the handling of new situations without the advisor/coach should also be discussed.

The systems level of case management focuses on all the organisations and specialists who are involved in the solution process for those seeking advice. Here it is helpful to fall back on already existing networks of the advisor/coach as well as of the participant.

EXAMINATION REGULATION

Dr. Jürgen Hogeforster



Hanse-Parlament

1. OFFICIAL EXAMINATION REGULATION

The training program developed and implemented can be examined alternatively:

- On the basis of an official examination regulation leading to a state-recognised degree. The following examination regulations fulfil this purpose.
- As an internal audit, which is also carried out on the basis of the following examination regulations but does not lead to a recognised degree. In this case, the participants will receive a certificate and attestation showing the overall examination grade.

Wherever possible, examinations should be based on official examination regulations and training should end with a recognized further vocational training degree. If the necessary legal basis for this does not exist in individual countries and cannot be created during the project period, an internal examination is to be carried out, which is, however, also implemented in accordance with the official examination regulations below and documented in a certificate.

§ 1 Purpose of the examination and designation of the degree

1) The examination is intended to determine whether the candidate possesses the necessary knowledge, skills and experience required in management and technologies of Digitalization in SMEs.

2) A successful pass in this examination leads to a recognized degree in
(for example, specialist for digitization in SMEs).

§ 2 Requirements

The examination is to admit those who have:

1) Successfully completed vocational training or have at least five years' professional experience

2) Further to Paragraph 1, admission to the examination may also be granted on presentation of certificates or otherwise, as proof that the requisite knowledge, skills

and experience have been acquired in previous activities and can justify admission to the examination.

§ 3 Structure, content and duration of the test

1) Theoretical fundamentals

In the first part of the examination, basic knowledge in the following fields of activity must be demonstrated:

a) Analysis of operational conditions with regard to the current and future management and technologies of Digitalization in SMEs.

b) Submit economically justified proposals for anchoring workplace innovation measures using digitization.

c) Activities for the implementation of innovation measures in management and technologies of Digitalization in the company.

d) Examination of the company suitability of the innovation measures.

e) Development of optimisation proposals to improve the innovation measures.

2) Planning, implementation and evaluation of innovation measures in management and technologies of Digitalization in the company.

In the second part of the examination, the candidate should prove that he/she is capable of planning, implementing and evaluating a company-related innovation project. This includes:

a) the identification of workplace innovation fields of action in SMEs

b) the planning of innovation activities in management and technologies of Digitalization in the company

c) the presentation of advantages and disadvantages in the implementation of workplace innovation activities in the company

d) the anchoring of digitalization innovation activities in the company as a project

e) Measures to check the suitability of innovation activities in management and technologies of Digitalization in the company

3) The third part of the examination is in the form of a project work, which is to be prepared as a written, extra-occupational term paper. The scope start and processing time of the project work is determined by the examination board.

4) The first part of the examination is oral and should not take longer than 30 minutes in total.

5) The second part of the examination is conducted in writing and should not exceed 60 minutes.

6) On the basis of the examination performances in the project work, a technical discussion is to be held in which the candidate is to show that he/she can demonstrate the technical connections underlying the project work, justify the course of the project

work and present technical problems associated with the project work and their solutions. The technical discussion should not last longer than 15 minutes.

§ 4 Consideration of previous examinations

1) The examinee can apply for exemption from the examination in individual areas of action, if he/she has passed a previous examination before a competent authority, a public or state accredited educational institution or before a state examination board whose content requirements correspond to the respective fields of activity.

2) A complete exemption is not allowed.

§ 5 Passing the written and oral examinations

1) The examination results in the parts stipulated in § 3 must be assessed separately.

2) The number of points obtained in the three papers for the oral and written examinations should be summarized into a total score. The final grade is therefore:

15% from the first part of the examination,

25% from the written examination in the second part of the test,

40% of the project work in the third part of the test and

20% of the technical discussion in the third examination.

3) The written examination of the second part of the examination must be supplemented by an oral examination if this can be decisive for passing the examination. The oral examination should not last longer than 15 minutes per examination.

4) The examination is passed if at least sufficient performance has been achieved in each examination part.

5) A certificate is to be issued on passing the examination, which must show the overall examination grade.

§ 6 Retests

(1) An examination which was not passed can be repeated twice.

(2) If the candidate has passed individual sections of the examination but has not performed at least adequately in sections in accordance with §3, the parts successfully passed must not be repeated on further application, provided that the candidate has filed for reassessment within two years from the date of the declared result of the failed examination. The assessment of the examination will be made with regard to this factor.

§ 7 Application of other provisions

For all craft and non-craft occupations, the respective training examination regulations apply in their currently valid version.

2. EVALUATION IN THE QUALIFICATION FRAMEWORK AND INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

2.1 QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK “BALTIC SEA REGION”

A qualifications framework for the Baltic Sea Region was designed under the Project Leonardo “Baltic Education”⁵. By means of the European Credit Transfer System of Vocational Education and Training (ECVET), this “BSR-QF” provided the basis for the evaluation of two craft occupations – “carpenter” and “painter”. ECVET is a system which allows to characterize qualification (knowledge, skills and competence) by transferable and accumulable learning units and to assign credit points to the learning outcomes. The BSR-QF and the applied ECVET process for the two named occupations formed the basis for the evaluation of the three advanced training programmes developed “Workplace Innovation”.

EQF and BSR-QF – an introduction

The Maastricht Declaration of 2004, the Lisbon Strategy of 2000 as well as several other European Union initiatives, and in this context specifically dedicated funding to raise the geographical and labour market mobility and to promote lifelong learning, will yield increased employment and economic growth across EU countries. Rapid social, technological and economic changes along with an aging society make lifelong learning a necessity. For that reason, education is a major component to meet and to achieve the ambitious Lisbon goals. Hence, the European Commission has induced to develop a European Qualifications Framework and to establish National Qualifications Frameworks (hereinafter: NQF) by 2010. The modelling of National Qualifications Frameworks lies in the competence of national authorities, whereas the EU-Commission has recommended that the EU Member States implement NQFs. The European Qualifications Framework represents a meta-framework and is considered by the European Commission as crucial in meeting European objectives, set out in the Lisbon Strategy.

The main purpose of a qualifications framework is to improve transparency, quality and comparability of professional and academic qualification levels across differing education systems and European countries. The EQF itself does not constitute a formal recognition of occupational qualifications. A special feature of Europe is the enormous diversity of educational systems. A prerequisite to make this specificity an asset is to foster transparency.

Transparency can be considered as a fundamental prerequisite for the recognition of qualifications, and it improves comparability. Better comparability between countries is a decisive element to increase labour mobility and to ensure permeability of qualifications, whereby permeability constitutes a prerequisite for lifelong learning.

In the near future, qualifications frameworks must meet these criteria with concrete and well-designed concepts. A qualifications framework is an appropriate tool for the

⁵ Hanseatic Parliament: Baltic education, Hamburg 2008

development and for classifying qualifications. The European Qualifications Framework was adopted in November 2007.

Under the project “Baltic Education”, constructive and fruitful discussions at European and national levels should be encouraged by a “Baltic Sea Region Qualifications Framework” (hereinafter: BSR-QF). This BSR-QF should be regarded as a supplement and contribution to the ongoing debate rather than a substitute for the shaping of National Qualifications Frameworks. The project “Baltic Education” has delivered a sizeable contribution to this strategy.

The Baltic Sea Region (BSR) is an area with a considerable number of different countries. These countries share common problems as they endeavour to cope with the same economic and demographic challenges and concerns. It is essential for this region to further develop vocational training, to improve quality and to establish transparency and recognition models. To solve these complex issues, the BSR-QF provides an orientation, allowing for classifications across the whole qualification range and also serving as a common ground for constructive discussions, conceptual considerations and individual progress.

The Baltic Sea Region Qualifications Framework

The BSR-QF comprises eight qualification levels that take into account acquired skills from the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) plus vocational qualifications and competences.

This concept is consistent with the recommendations of the European Commission. Table 1 shows the elaborated proposal for the BSR-QF. The following presents a brief overview of the respective competence levels of the BSR-QF. The following section provides more detailed information on the methodology and descriptors that have been developed and used for the BSR-QF.

Competence level 1 – Basic education

Skills profiles to be reached at this stage are general basic training skills and they will not be counted to vocational training or academic education. Basic training is a prerequisite to gain access to higher qualification levels. The development of learning skills still requires resolute continued guided support. It is not possible to assign this skills level to a specific domain. Therefore, qualifications in this level are domain independent.

Competence level 2 – No vocational training

Level 2 comprises the first level of vocational training (VET area). Qualifications at this stage are not specifically pronounced, since knowledge and skills are at an early stage of evolving. Methods and social skills are not yet domain specific. 1 to 2-year qualification programmes, training phases and vocational training preparation phases are covered by this stage.

Tab.1: Baltic Sea Region-Qualifications Framework

Level	Education Degree	Framework for Qualification of the VET* area and EHEA**
1	<i>Basic Education</i>	-
2	<i>No Vocational Graduation</i> graduation/training after/for 1-2 years, and work and apprenticeship preparation phase (at the age of 15/16)	First cycle VET area
3	<i>Lower Vocational Graduation</i> certificate of apprenticeship (in 2-4 years), and no/limited professional or experience (certificate of apprenticeship + <5 years of profession experience)	Second cycle VET area
4	<i>Middle Vocational Graduation</i> long profession experience as skilled worker (certificate of apprenticeship + ≥5 years of profession experience); comprehensive further education; “young master craftsman” with no/limited professional experiences (<3 years of profession experience)	Third cycle VET area
5	<i>Upper Vocational Graduation</i> master craftsman with long profession experiences as master (≥3 years); “master craftsman plus”; long profession experiences and further education (certificate of apprenticeship + ≥8 years of profession experience); introductory study period	Fourth cycle VET area and short cycle academic area
6	Bachelor (academic bachelor’s degree) and other similar qualifications and competences	Fifth cycle VET area and first cycle academic area
7	Master (academic master’s degree) and other high qualifications and competences	Sixth cycle VET area and second cycle academic area
8	PhD and other very high qualifications and competences	Seventh cycle VET area and third cycle academic area

Competence level 3 – Lower vocational training

Level 3 covers complete vocational training from a training period of 2 to 4 years. Access to the competence level of a lower vocational training is possible after completion of a secondary school or after reaching the competence level 2. This involves professional skills, equivalent with an expertise level of an initial vocational training. The graduate has no or limited work experience. Qualifications at this level include a

broad general education and an initial job specific expertise. Therefore, only specific parts of a domain will be covered in this qualification level. Completion of the skill level 3 is a precondition for achieving the competence levels 4 and 5.

Competence level 4 – Intermediate vocational education

Compared to Level 3, this level specifies a higher degree of professional and technical expertise. Vocational training qualifications, extensive advanced training, “Young master craftsman”, and long work experience are covered by this stage. The level in this field is relatively high and all parts of a professional domain are covered. Level 4 qualifications indicate great job specific knowledge and skills. In this level, a person can be regarded as a specialist who has the knowledge and skills to relatively independently solve problems. Finally, achieving level 4 along with extensive advanced training, allows a limited number of candidates with ambitious and superb qualifications to access an academic bachelor level, without having previously obtained a general qualification for university entrance.

Competence level 5 – Higher vocational education

At this stage, candidates already have a formal vocational qualification as a master craftsman, including follow-up trainings; they have long professional experience and thus a high degree of technical expertise. Each part of a domain is covered at a high level, but without scientific expertise. Knowledge acquired by candidates at this competence level comprise autonomous learning, broad theoretical and practical knowledge. At this relatively high level of competence basic academic studies are touched upon. Completing of the competence level 5 with comprehensive, previous vocational education and further training (e.g. as “Master Craftsman Plus”) gives access to competence level 6, without having a general qualification for university entrance. It is possible to obtain credits for university entrance, based upon previously acquired knowledge (maximum 120 credit points). Nevertheless, persons who seek access to the bachelor level, have to pass an individual interview. Competence level 5 covers the short academic cycle with regard to the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). University students with circa 120 credit points are within competence level 5.

6

Competence level 6 – Bachelor and other comparable education and skills

Candidates within this qualification range have already completed the first cycle of the EHR and the 5th level of vocational training. The academic bachelor’s degree is obtained by students who usually scored 180-240 credit points⁷. Level 6 qualifications feature advanced theoretical knowledge and skills. This also applies to individuals with completed vocational training and notably domain-oriented knowledge. Precondition for access to the competence level 6 is the general qualification for university entrance

⁶ cf. MINISTRY FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND INNOVATION (Eds.) (2005): *A Framework for Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area*. Bologna Working Group on Qualifications Frameworks. Copenhagen.

⁷ MINISTRY FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND INNOVATION (Eds.) (2005): *A Framework for Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area*. Bologna Working Group on Qualifications Frameworks. Copenhagen.

or similar sophisticated competences and skills within a domain-specific education. Completing the qualification levels 4 and 5 also opens up access to the competence level 6.

Competence level 7 – Master and other higher qualification and skills

Having an outstanding domain-specific knowledge, candidates are at a significantly high level within this stage. They are highly qualified professionals, with advanced training and skills in a most deeply specific domain. Qualifications at this level include self-determined and theoretical learning. The master's degree is one of the conditions for reaching the third level of the academic cycle. Competence Level 7 is the second highest qualification of the EHR and the second highest level of the vocational training cycle.

Competence level 8 – PhD and other first-rate qualifications and skills

A PhD title is one of the highest academic degrees and it is the highest level within the EHR system. An academic person at this proficiency level is a professional and expert. Competence level 8 is the highest vocational training cycle to be reached by individuals. These persons have outstanding expertise and intellectual abilities in a most highly specific domain field. Persons at qualification level 8 have leadership skills and experience as well as potential for critical, methodical analyses, assessments and presentations.

Methodology and Descriptors

The proficiency levels measure professional, personal skills, abilities and competences within a specific domain. It is a method to classify and assess qualifications in levels. It is not the acquired diplomas but skills that are subject to assessment in levels. Qualifications are understood as a set of skills. A competence is defined as the ability to meet tough requirements in a specific context. Competent execution or effective actions involve the mobilization of expertise, cognitive and practical skills as well as social and behavioural components such as attitudes, emotions, values and motivations.⁸ Skills are more than school and work-related knowledge. It is therefore a consistent argument that (professional) skills comprehensively include social and personal competence. Skills, as they are set out in the BSR-QF, are not occupation-specific, but they are in fact aggregates.⁹ Hence, educational degrees were used in the project to describe, illustrate and classify skills. This increases the legitimacy among stakeholders, builds on familiar ways of thinking and classification patterns and enables easy, transparent and unbureaucratic description and understanding.

⁸ D. S. RYCHEN/L. H. SALGANIK (2003): Key Competencies for a Successful Life and a Well-Functioning Society. DeSeCo Project report Summary, OECD, Paris, p. 2

⁹ cf. BUNDESINSTITUT FÜR BERUFSBILDUNG (BIBB) (Eds.) (2005): *Fachlicher Prüfbericht zu den Grundbegriffen und Deskriptoren des Entwurfs für einen Europäischen Qualifikationsrahmen*. Bonn; and Hanf, Georg und Volker Rein (2005): *Towards a National Qualification Framework for Germany*. Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB), Bonn.

Table 2 shows the descriptors for each skills level of the BSR-QF. The descriptors “expertise” and “competence” are equivalent to the descriptors in the EQF.

The Baltic Sea Region Qualifications Framework contributes to the discussion and advisory debate on the development of the National Qualifications Framework. The design is consistent with the structures and methods of the European Commission.¹⁰ This BSR-QF contributes to the fostering of education and the economy of the Baltic States as it presents an instrument to reduce cross-border barriers, which limit the work-related mobility and productivity dependent thereon. Accordingly, the BSR-QF has been accepted by the members of the Hanseatic Parliament in the General Assembly on 8 November 2007 in Vilnius as a substantial support and development tool. In the further work of the present project, the BSR-QF ensures orientation for grading, structuring and evaluation of individual professions.

Tab. 2: Descriptors for competence levels 1-8 (Source: Own research)

Level	Expertise*	(Methodological) Competence*	(Formal) education degree	Framework for Qualification of the VET area and EHEA
	<i>In the BSR-QF, expertise is described as knowledge and skills (equivalent with EQF)</i>	<i>In the BSR-QF, competence describes the degree of responsibility and autonomy</i>	<i>The (Formal) education degree describes the degree which can be reached by an individual</i>	<i>The framework VET area and EHEA is a modified and extended EHEA framework</i>
1	Basic general Education; basic skills required to carry out simple tasks	Work under direct supervision in a structured context	–	–
2	Basic factual knowledge of a field of work or study; basic cognitive and practical skills	Work under direct supervision in a structured context with some autonomy	graduation/training after/for 1-2 years, and work and apprenticeship preparation	First cycle VET area

¹⁰ cf. EUROPÄISCHE KOMMISSION (EC) (2005): *Towards a European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning*. Commission Staff Working Document, SEC (2005) 957, Brussels; EUROPEAN COMMISSION (EC) (2006): *Implementing the Community Lisbon Programme. Proposal for a recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning*. COM (2006) 479 final, 2006/0163 (COD), Brussels; and Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (Eds.) (2005): *A Framework for Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area*. Bologna Working Group on Qualifications Frameworks, Copenhagen.

	required to use relevant information in order to carry out tasks and to solve routine problems using simple rules and tools		phase (at the age of 15/16)	
3	Knowledge of facts, principles, processes and general concepts, in a domain; a range of cognitive and practical skills required to accomplish tasks and solve problems by selecting and applying basic methods, tools, materials and information	Take responsibility for completion of tasks in work; adapt own behaviour to circumstances in solving problems	Certificate of apprenticeship (in 2 - 4 years), and no/limited professional or experience (certificate of apprenticeship + < 5 years of profession experience)	Second cycle VET area
4	Factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a domain; a range of cognitive and practical skills required to generate solution to specific problems in a domain	Exercise self-management within the guidelines of work contexts that are usually predictable, but are subject to change supervise the routine work of others, taking some responsibility for the evaluation and improvement of work activities	Long profession experience as skilled worker (certificate of apprenticeship + ≥ 5 years of profession experience); comprehensive further education; "young master craftsman" with no/limited professional experiences (< 3 years of profession experience)	Third cycle VET area
5	Comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a domain and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge; a comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative	Exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities with unpredictable change; review and develop performance of self and others	Master craftsman with long profession experiences as master (≥ 3 years); "master craftsman plus"; long profession experiences and further education (certificate of apprenticeship + ≥ 8 years of profession experience);	Fourth cycle VET area and short cycle academic area

	solutions to abstract problems		introductory study period	
6	Advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories and principles; advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialised domain	manage complex technical or professional activities or projects, taking responsibility for decision-making in unpredictable work or study contexts take responsibility for managing professional development of individuals and groups	Bachelor (academic bachelor's degree) and other similar qualifications and competences	Fifth cycle VET area and first cycle academic area
7	Highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work or study, as the basis for original thinking; critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and at the interface between different fields; specialised problem-solving skills required in research and or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields	manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and/or for reviewing the strategic performance of teams	Master (academic master's degree) and other high qualifications and competences	Sixth cycle VET area and second cycle academic area
8	Knowledge at the most advanced frontier of a field of work or study and at the interface between domains; the most advanced and specialised skills and techniques, including synthesis and evaluation, required to solve critical	demonstrate substantial authority, innovation, autonomy, scholarly and professional integrity and sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or processes at the forefront of work or	PhD and other very high qualifications and competences	Seventh cycle VET area and third cycle academic area

	problems in re- search and or inno- vation and to extend and redefine exist- ing knowledge or professional practice	study contexts in- cluding research.		
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* European Commission (EC) (2006): Implementing the Community Lisbon Programme. Proposal for a recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning. COM (2006) 479 final, 2006/0163 (COD), Brussels.

2.2 STRUCTURING AND EVALUATION

Introduction

The objective of the Baltic Education Project was to develop, introduce and implement a system for mutual recognition of professional qualifications. This will be achieved by using the European Credit Transfer System of Vocational Education and Training (ECVET).¹¹ ECVET is a system that enables describing qualifications by transferable and accumulable learning units (in the form of knowledge, skills and competence) and corresponding allocated credit units.¹²

ECVET also perfectly complements the European Qualifications Framework.¹³ In its guidelines, the European Commission outlined the overall concept as follows:

- a) focus on learning outcomes expressed in terms of knowledge, skills and competence.
- b) based on a process of qualification.
- c) adapted to the demands of lifelong learning and all learning contexts, on an equal footing.
- d) geared towards the mobility of people.¹⁴

Further ECVET consultation guidelines and regulations specify:

- a) mobility of people undertaking training.

¹¹ EUROPEAN COMMISSION (EC) (2006): European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET). A system for the transfer, accumulation and recognition of learning outcomes in Europe. SEC (2006) 1431, Brussels, p. 3

¹² EUROPEAN COMMISSION (EC) (2006): European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET). A system for the transfer, accumulation and recognition of learning outcomes in Europe. SEC (2006) 1431, Brussels, p. 3

¹³ cf. EUROPEAN COMMISSION (EC) (2006): Implementing the Community Lisbon Programme. Proposal for a recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning. COM (2006) 479 final, 2006/0163 (COD), Brussels.

¹⁴ EUROPEAN COMMISSION (EC) (2006): European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET). A system for the transfer, accumulation and recognition of learning outcomes in Europe. SEC (2006) 1431, Brussels, p. 5

- b) validation of the outcomes of lifelong learning.
- c) transparency of qualifications.
- d) mutual trust and cooperation between vocational training and education providers in Europe.¹⁵

In a first step, the individual training modules are evaluated according to the principle "25 training hours = 1 credit point". Based on this starting point, in a second step the significance and content of each training module is evaluated by project partners and experts and then the credit points for each module are determined in a group evaluation.

Within the framework of the "Baltic Education" project, a procedure for the mutual international recognition of vocational education and further training qualifications was developed and agreed with all countries bordering the Baltic Sea. Following this agreement, the project developed and agreed a procedure for the recognition of qualifications from all training courses. The following procedure then follows for the recognition of the degrees of all training courses of the project.

- Lecturers/examiner rates the courses by assigning credit points.
- Mutual recognition of completion in the Baltic Sea countries follows upon fulfilment of the following conditions:
 - a) The final exam was passed.
 - b) The assessment of the course has resulted in at least 80 % of the possible credit points shown in Tables 3 (20% margin of tolerance).
 - c) Skills were acquired in all three mandatory modules.
- Where they do not yet exist, each of the future participants will receive an EU education passport in which the results are documented.

2.3 STRUCTURING AND EVALUATION OF FURTHER VOCATIONAL TRAININGS

The training programme comprises three modules, which are classified as mandatory modules, in which knowledge and skills have to be acquired.

With regard to the assignment of the trainings in the BSR-QF, the classification was made competence level 5 "Higher vocational education", if participants have already acquired appropriate skills by other qualifications and professional activities and if they contribute them to the course.

The assessment in the project for the training led to the following conclusions:

¹⁵ EUROPEAN COMMISSION (EC) (2006): European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET). A system for the transfer, accumulation and recognition of learning outcomes in Europe. SEC (2006) 1431, Brussels, p. 35

Table 3: Evaluation further vocational trainings by credit points system

Modules of every training	Credit Points
Training module A: "Knowledge"	2,5
Training module B: „Self-study"	5,0
Training module C: „Reinforcement"	2,5
Credit Points total for each training	10,0

Internationally recognised educational qualification

Upon completion of the respective training course and the final examination, the participants acquire the recognised professional further training qualification of Specialist for Digitalization in SMEs.

IMPLEMENTATION REPORTS

1 IMPLEMENTATION IN OLZTYN, POLAND

Justyna Kaczorek and Aldona Szajner, Warmia and Mazury Chamber of
Craft and Entrepreneurship



Warmińsko-Mazurska
Izba Rzemiosła
i Przedsiębiorczości
w Olsztynie

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Warmia and Mazury Chamber of Crafts and Entrepreneurship is an organization of economic self-government of crafts, an association of employers and entrepreneurs and is a form of social dialogue. The purpose and task of the Chamber is to represent the interests of its affiliated members in front of state and local government bodies, provincial, district and local government institutions, to provide them with instructional and advisory assistance, training, and to conduct qualification examinations and supervise the training of juvenile workers.

In connection with our participation in the IClinSMEs (Digital methods, toolbox and trainings for increasing customer innovation in SMEs) project, we conducted a training course at our Chamber on Business Digitization, which was included in WP3. The training was aimed at companies in the SME sector. The training was attended by craftsmen, employees of craft organizations, members of the Chamber's Board of Directors and Chamber staff.

We adapted the training to the participants' level of knowledge and in terms of their needs and interests.

1.2 ADMISSION AND ORGANISATION OF THE TRAINING

Information about the course was sent via email to organizations affiliated with our Chamber of Crafts and cooperating companies, and through them to Craftsmen. Participants who applied for participation were then qualified for the course.

All participants are representatives of Polish SMEs. They are employees / entrepreneurs dealing with the topics of digitization, innovation and customer relations, as the

whole project is aimed at introducing digital solutions that will help create innovations with the participation of customers.

Number of participants: 18 people from 17 different companies.

The training was divided into three parts. The first meeting took place on October 27, 2022. This was followed by a four-week break to implement new solutions in companies, try out the digital tools presented during the training, analyze the situation in the company or self-study. The same group of participants then returned for a summary and further training on November 29, 2022.

One training day included 8 hours. The self-study lasted 4 weeks. Afterwards, course participants had the opportunity to receive individual consultations according to their needs.

The training was conducted by a digitization specialist, owner of an Internet company, Business Development Manager of BinSoft Ltd. The lecturer is the creator of the online community "Console Gamers". Since 2016, he has been associated with BinSoft, which transfers Polish companies into the world of digital management. The training was conducted in cooperation with the Chamber's staff responsible for the project.

1.3 PARTICIPANTS PROFILE AND ORGANISATION OF THE TRAINING

The trainees were 18 people (9 men, 9 women).

All of them are Polish citizens.

Age: from 35 to 74 years old.

Education very diverse from low through high school to university education.

They were representatives of 17 companies from 10 sectors:

- management (managers, office directors) - 3
- training/education - 2
- car mechanic - 2
- electrician - 2
- hairdresser - 2
- insurance; optician; legal counsellor; chimney sweep; carpenter; bioenergotherapist, office worker (projects) - 1 person each.

1.4 EXECUTION OF THE TRAINING

The purpose of the training was to introduce entrepreneurs to what the digitization of business is, to present the various aspects, and to familiarize entrepreneurs with the basics of dealing with the digital world.

The training used practical exercises on computers and phones. The use of digital tools, programs and applications was practically tested. Many discussions were held. The trainees received answers to the questions they had and the problems they

encountered when introducing various digital tools in their companies. During each day of the meeting there was also an opportunity for individual consultations. Participants also received training materials in the form of two presentations.

During the course there were many discussions, brainstorming. The training was conducted in a relaxed atmosphere that encouraged the exchange of experiences and reflections.

The training was not concluded with an exam, participants did not receive certificates.

Immediately after the training, evaluation surveys were forwarded by email. Then two months after the training, surveys with open-ended questions were conducted. Some surveys were completed during phone calls, while others were forwarded to the office via email.

The participants' very low knowledge and skills in digital tools appeared to be a challenge. Many participants have been running their companies unchanged for many years and modern methods of contacting customers, collecting feedback or the topic of innovation are a problem for them.

Both strengths and weaknesses of the training were the wide variety of industries, and therefore different customer experiences and a different range of needs. However, it was also possible to find many common topics and digital solutions that can be applied regardless of the company's profile.

1.5 MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Participants were very satisfied; they took from the training not only theoretical knowledge but also practical skills. Many of the trainees expressed a desire to participate in similar trainings and see a very great need for further training in the subject of digitization and innovation. Therefore, we plan to continue training in this area.

2. IMPLEMENTATION IN KOLDING, DENMARK

Michael Christiansen, International Business College, Denmark

IBC

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This project – Digital Customer Innovation in SMEs, which IBC is a project-partner of. IBC has split the project into two training parts. 1) Learning new skills and competences through 1a) Digitalization (Computers), and 1b) in a classroom with focus on AI and 2) learning new innovative competences through “face-to-face” in a classroom (Live-Learning).

Regarding digital learning, IBC has more than 600 students/course participants, participating in more than 150 different “online”-courses each year, where the student can increase her/his skills and competences by having digital teaching by instruction teaching through a computer and also having a physical teacher around them. This product, and way to learn, is unique because the student can learn 1:1. Unique because there can be many students (50+) in a single classroom and all of those 50+ can study their own course, depending on their needs.

For this IClinSMEs project IBC has produced a) 2 digital online-courses (asynchronously), see link (Log-in code is needed);

- <https://learn.ibc.dk/course/view.php?id=62> Social Media interaction
- <https://learn.ibc.dk/course/view.php?id=63> Online customer service and sales

And b) A 1-day course in “real live” (synchronously) where 13 students from different companies receive teaching in AI and how to use AI in combination with online shops.

- https://www.canva.com/design/DAFbMn2AgFQ/-NIn-dLQ0oVNCTCSrA-hVQ/view?utm_content=DAFbMn2AgFQ&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=publishsharelink – Power Point incl. AI

IBC has in general in 2022 more than 20,000 course-participants receiving learning in a classroom. Normally the courses (digital and physical) are small courses, training of micro skills, with EQF-level from 2 to 5 and mostly with a duration between 2-5 days.

The digital and innovative competences in Denmark are in general high, measured on individual level and company level¹⁶ and compare to other European countries. Swiss Management Academy conclude that Denmark is no. one in Europe and no. three in the world. Therefore, this report is primarily about the experiences and training of the innovative skills.

The training in this project was included in the WP3 package, many thematic elements of this training were developed by IBC – Kolding by Ms Helene Bo Olesen. Although the training has mainly involved start-up, micro and small businesses, but also suitable for training for larger companies in terms of providing them with digital, innovate and marketing skills. Skills where they can use directly in companies.

We organised this training mainly for student/apprentices in companies. This 1-day course with focus on AI was a part of a 6-week course with student from different companies. Then teaching where we were focused on how to train and raise the skills/competences of digitalization (here with focus on AI) for the participants. Given that process is not only to develop skills for a student but also give them skills they can use directly in their companies/jobs as apprentices. Furthermore, they also got other aspects in the digital areas like “how to manage home pages, build up new home pages, selling products on homepages, VR, MR, AR ect. All in combination while they are workers in companies. Also, to raise the opportunities for SME to sell product and services to customers which are longer away and true digital and innovative opportunities.

It was a 1-days course in March 2023. This course were followed up by a qualitative evaluation/ questionnaire in writing plus a verbally unstructured interview/dialogue, about one month after the course. Here the participants will give constructive feedback on their own digitalization and Ai skills in their respectively companies.

The 1-days course was planned as an “EQF-level 4”.

The students have afterwards trained and implemented huge part of the new skills in their companies. (a part of their homework).

2.2 ADMISSION AND ORGANISATION OF THE TRAINING

All the participants were representative from Danish SMEs (under 250 employees) and voluntarily choose this course.

All participants are students / apprentices in SMEs in Denmark and the opportunities to develop/maintain their own web shop. Not only from sales, retail- and marketing but also teams from production, maintain, craftsmanship, retail, distribution, stock and development of products.

Number of participants

1 day-course 2023; 13 participants

All participants are between 18 and 25 years, all females.

¹⁶ Denmark is European champions in digitization - and number 3 in the world! (investindk.com)

Our advice and recommended preparation 8-10 hours about “what is digitalization?”. The training is a 1-day course (in real live, synchrony and 7,4 hours a day) + some self-study and training directly in their companies with recommended minimum 10-15 hours praxis training in digital processes in their organisations. After one month there will be a follow-up-, dialogue- and evaluation stage. Afterwards there will be an opportunity for the participants to have an individual coaching/talk – “how they can get more help/learning from IBC to continue and develop digital process in their companies.

All was carried out by teachers from IBC-Curser – Ms Helene Bo Olesen.

All the participants, in this 1-day course, have a background as apprentices in SMEs in Denmark where they will learn professional skills and competence in different areas. This course was a part of their 2 years combination program – meaning that they often are 2 years in companies and 2-3x 6 weeks at IBC during those 2 years to train their skills. But when it comes to micro-skills and competences in digitalization and digital behaviour, the knowledge of the participants was average compared to the other students during the last few years.

IBC and their teachers always give an opportunity to operate an online counselling / coaching depending on what the needs/challenges are for the participants. Here the student and companies always can, afterwards, contact the teacher and ask for more help.

One of the biggest challenges for the participants is the time and the opportunity. Many of the participants do not have the power to improve new technologies in their companies because they are apprentices. But some of the students are allowed to improve some of the digital thing in their organisations/companies. Many of those participants are working in daily days operations with personally and teams KPIs where digitalization is a part of their daily work and therefore with a high focus.

Number of participants

- Course 2023; 13 participants
- All participants are between 18 and 25 years, all females and Danes with middle education.
- The participants were from many sectors, but mostly retailers/shops and primarily from SMEs.

2.3 EXECUTION OF THE TRAINING

Most of the material was pre prepared from IBC side. But the way the teacher designed the program was with a high energy, many exercises, and flip overs (papers), lpads, computers and power point. A didactic wish was to change the learning environment many times. Therefore, the teacher used the whole building/institution like small/micro rooms, halls, classrooms, open places, meeting places etc.

During the course there was a huge opportunity to have dialogues, reflections, and a beautiful space to learn new digital skills.

Observations and feedback:

- A good course with good and eager to learn. Interesting and exceptional good learning environment. Perfect materiel, exercises and presentations. Good food. The participants were “hungry” for more learning.
- The training was perfect, and the participants were satisfied with the course, material and teacher.
- The training was too short. Beside this, it could be interesting to have a digital process only with one company (and their employees) and then some customers (B2B or B2C – end users) to this one company. And then in combination with the innovation course. It could be interesting to see what the output would be?!

2.4 MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The course was a success. All the participants evaluated themselves to have received, learned and trained their digital skills and competences.

The strengths were that there were participants from many different companies. But this was also the challenge. An ideal wish is to design a scoop only for one company and their customers to come closer to “digital customer-centric Innovation”-idea.

The training will be continued by the partner in the future.

2.5 TWO MORE TRIALS

Partner IBC - Kolding has conducted two more trials with other target groups and longer training sessions.

The trainings in this project were included in the WP3 package, many thematic elements of this training were developed by IBC – Kolding. Although the training has mainly involved start-up, micro and small businesses, but also suitable for training for larger companies in terms of providing them with digital, innovate and marketing skills.

We organised a training mainly for leaders in SMEs. It was only by coincidence that the most applier were SMEs, so we had to make a 2-days programme best fitted into their needs. Doing so we focused on how to train and raise the skills/competences of Innovation for the participants. Given that an Innovation process is not only thinking of “new products” but also a huge part of (digital) sales- and marketing activities. Not only to the existing and which perhaps is close to the market. But also, to raise the opportunities for SME to sell product and services to customers which are longer away and true digital and innovative opportunities.

The two periods (2-days) where in December 2021 and September 2022. Both courses were followed up by a qualitative evaluation/ questionnaire in writing plus a verbally unstructured interview/dialogue, about one month after the course. Here the participants gave constructive feedback on their own innovative skills in their respectively companies.

All the participants were representative from Danish SMEs and voluntarily chose this course.

All participants are leaders / managers in SMEs in Denmark and the opportunities to develop their own teams. Not only from sales and marketing teams but also teams from production, maintenance, craftsmanship, retail, distribution, stock and development of products.

- First course 2021; 10 participants
- Second course 2022; 10 participants
- All participants are between 30 and 50 years, 18 male and 2 female.
- The participants were from many sectors and primarily from SMEs.

Our advice and recommended preparation 10-15 hours about “what is Innovation?”. One course is a 2-days of training (7,4 hours a day) + 1-2 months of self-study with recommended minimum 10-15 hours praxis training in innovative processes in their organisations. After one month there were a follow-up-, dialogue- and evaluation stage. Afterwards there was an opportunity for the participants to have an individual coaching/talk – “how they can get help from IBC to start an Innovative process in their own little team”.

All the participants have a background as managers and leaders in SMEs in Denmark with high professional skills in different areas. But when it comes to micro-skills and competences in innovation, innovation of culture and innovative behaviour, the knowledge was very low – in average 2,4 (out of 10) before the course.

One of the biggest challenges for the participants is the time and the opportunity. Many of the participants are busy managers and often do not have the time or/and the opportunity to focus on innovation in their companies. Many of those participants are working in daily operations with personally and teams KPIs where digital innovation unfortunately is not one of them and therefore with low interest / focus.

Observations and feedback

A funny course with good and eager to learn participants. Interesting and exceptional good learning environment. Perfect material, exercises and presentations. Good food. The participants were “hungry” for more learning, but also realise that they have huge challenges back in their own companies. Because how can they improve those innovative thoughts in their own SMEs and is the company/organization ready to think and act innovative?

The training was perfect, and the participants were satisfied with the course.

The training was too short. Beside this, it could be interesting to have an innovation process only with one company (and their employees) and then some customers (B2B or B2C) to this one company. It could be interesting to see what the output would be.

Main Findings and Conclusions

As mentioned before the training and course were a success. All the participants evaluated themselves to have received, learned and trained their innovative skills and competences.

The strengths were that there were participants from many different companies. But this was also the challenge. My wish is to design a scoop only for one company and their customers to come closer to “digital customer-centric Innovation”.

The training will be continued by the partner in the future for managers and leaders in SMEs.

3. IMPLEMENTATION IN BUDAPEST, HUNGARY

Tamás Rettich, Ipartestületek Országos Szövetsége



3.1 INTRODUCTION

This training was included in the WP3 package, many thematic elements of this training were developed by the Danish IBC, and we tried to take it into account as much as possible when we implemented our training. Although our training has now mainly involved start-up micro and small businesses, this training is also suitable for training larger companies in terms of providing them with digital and marketing skills.

We organised a training mainly for start-ups. It was only by coincidence that the most applier were start-ups, so we had to make a programme best fitted to their needs. Doing so we focused both to the basis of digitalisation and the fundamental knowledge on marketing. Given that marketing activities are today largely implemented through digital applications, the marketing activity is practically directly related to the issue of digitization.

The timing of the trainings was adapted to the economic activities of the participants. We held our first two-afternoon long meeting on 19th and 20th of May. Then the individual coaching period started with the ten participants. We went back to training on 30th of June and on 1st of July, again for two afternoons/evenings.

The training fits into the overall adult-education phase of the national system of trainings, but a direct EQF level cannot be classified to it. It is an out-of-school training taken place at and organised by adult educational company, called SZTÁV which maintains close cooperation with IPOSZ. The training provided knowledge on digitalisation and marketing conducted via individual and teamwork, thus has significance in the labour market as gaining knowledge on these topics. The topics used in the training can of course also be used in the training of enterprises of other sizes. So not only for micro-enterprises, but also for medium-sized enterprises. It should be highlighted that the training had elements that can be used to develop certain basic skills for the general public and thus help to develop a better digitalized relationship between businesses and consumers.

It was only by coincidence that the most applier were sturt-ups, we did not plan this way. The training was carried out in a difficult economic situation, in a constantly present epidemic situation. The special advantage of the training was that it was possible to gather mainly start-up businesses in one group, at a time when the war that had already started and the increasing inflation warned a significant part of the businesses

to be cautious and made them wait, regarding all kinds of development and progress. The start-ups participating in the course were otherwise optimistic about their own activities, and the course and coaching strengthened them in this regard.

3.2 ADMISSION AND ORGANISATION OF THE TRAINING

A big advantage of the course was that, although the businesses were small, but they covered a very wide spectrum of the economy, from flower decorator to robotic expert. This helped to crystallize the general elements of digitalization, which can then be used for a wide variety of professions and of course supplemented with professional specifics.

The training was advertised on the Iposz' and Sztav' (Adult training institution) websites. Two participants applied via these advertisements. Direct marketing strategies (phone calls and e-mails and many face-to-face conversations) were used to reach most of the participants. The other 8 participants were gathered this way. The participating businesses are mostly bound to one region, so the course also serves as a model for how similar courses can be organized in other regions of Hungary.

	Name:	Sex	Age	walks of business	Educational background	Country of origin
1.	Toth-Kovács Livia	F	30-40	Individually designed textile products	Secondary	Hungary
2.	Puska József	M	50-60	Quality assurance consulting, robotics, mechanical engineering	University degree	Hungary
3.	Vass Zsuzsanna	F	40-50	Real-estate agent, home staging	University degree	Hungary
4.	Szegedi-Jelasics Mirjana	F	30-40	DIY decorations	University degree	Hungary
5.	Jakab Csilla	F	40-50	Coach, and story therapist	University degree	Hungary
6.	Drávainé Németh Eszter	F	50-60	Textile products for children with a zero-waste approach, sew training	University degree	Hungary
7.	Simon Szilvia	F	40-50	Individually designed textile products, sew training	Secondary	Hungary
8.	Pálfi-Varga Krisztina	F	40-50	Publishing book on speech therapy	University degree	Hungary
9.	Szakács Gyuláné Éva	F	50-60	Lodging in rural tourism	Secondary	Hungary
10.	Musulín Béla Balázs	M	40-50	Selling special painting substance with consulting, induction	University degree	Hungary

4 days of training. 5 lessons a day + 1-2 months of self-study with minimum 10 hours of individual coaching. Individual coaching started with a personal meeting and was supplemented with further personal or online conversations. The final training provided the opportunity to discuss the coaching experiences together with the group members.

The organization of the implementation was carried out by the staff of the IPOSZ together with the experts of the SZTÁV adult education institution involved in the implementation. The trainer himself also came from the expert background of the SZTÁV Adult Education Institute. Considering the already mentioned difficult circumstances, the organization required more time and energy than usually. The organization was also complicated by the fact that we had to carry out extensive background information activities beforehand in order to explain the objectives and essence of the project, since this is considered a new type of activity in the life of most businesses.

The persons participating in the training were all those with extensive experience in training, both in the case of the IPOSZ and SZTÁV adult training institutions. The

instructors have appropriate competencies in the fields of marketing, digital communication, business development, business coach and web design.

Brief notes on accompanying advice, support for participants, etc.

This part of the project, on the one hand, defined the main digital and partially marketing aspects for the participating businesses and presented them specific implementation methods, based on which they were able to further develop their own business. During the coaching, this activity was further developed into the examination of the specific applicability at each company, and the counselling took place in the local environment. This opportunity for individual coaching tailored to the business has not ended, as companies can still contact the instructor and also the IPOSZ. If the project still provides an opportunity for this, then IPOSZ is ready to operate an online counselling system for a specified period of time within the framework of a pilot project. A similar online counselling system was already implemented in a previous Erasmus+ project.

The trainer made notes on each coaching process for each company. See trainer's description on the participants' development, which we attach. As a general comment, it should be mentioned that in the previously described difficult economic situation, it is not easy for the smallest businesses if they want to implement digital development. Two factors hinder their development: on the one hand, the costs of hardware and software, and on the other hand, the lack of appropriate expertise in their application and operation. Therefore, it would be very important that as many projects as possible should help the smallest micro-enterprises in these two areas.

3.3 EXECUTION OF THE TRAINING

We must point out that the training materials prepared by the Danish partner helped us a lot in the designing of the training, the elements of which we took into account in the training in Hungary. We must also note, however, that for the training in Hungary we had to take into account the existing economic environment, the legal regulations and the often-different development level and economic opportunities of Hungarian small businesses. We always do our utmost to ensure that the good practices of other countries could be continuously implemented in Hungary, and we consider this to be a priority task and benefit of the project.

Explanations and notes on implementation

We explained our comments in more detail on each point, perhaps we would like to emphasize once again that the project is being implemented in an extraordinary social, economic and epidemiological situation. Each country must keep these in mind, taking into account its own problems.

Concentrated on individual development, documented both by the participants and by the trainer. The Hungarian education system centrally regulates which documents the official adult education system can issue and which exams are required for this. We ourselves can issue a certificate to the participants about the training we have

implemented, which indicates the content of the training, the fact that it was completed and the project in which the training was carried out.

Was a certificate and/or diploma awarded? If so, please attach samples.

Diploma was not awarded. According to what was written above, all participants received a certificate.

3.4 OBSERVATIONS AND FEEDBACK FROM LECTURERS

The instructor was in constant contact with the participants during the entire duration of the training. Therefore, he dealt with them along individual themes. He summarized his experiences in short notes, which are attached to each participant. See trainer's description on the participants' development.

Based on the completed evaluation forms, it can be concluded that the participants were largely satisfied with the training. The training was rated as useful what encouraged them for further development plans.

According to our assessment, one of the peculiarities and not a weakness of the training was that it was attended by the smallest enterprises. In this way, we were able to get to know their reactions and test the training at their level of development. It is likely that in companies with more employees, the training could provide many other experiences. We were glad that such small businesses took part in the training, because in Hungary businesses without employees and those with very few employees make up the largest part of businesses. The use of offline and online digital marketing processes at the same time in the case of such small businesses usually exceeds their financial capabilities, although it is clear that the simultaneous use of both can be really effective. There is still a need for many more similar trainings offering industry-specific solutions in order to convince the masses of micro-enterprises. For this, it would be very important to start state support programs in this area as well.

3.5 MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

We have already summarized certain conclusions in the points above. In addition, we must emphasize once again that much more projects, support, information, persuasion and services are needed in order to speed up the catching up of the micro business sector in this area. Our very important comment is that this is extremely necessary, because there is a growing labour shortage in repair and installation work, especially in the field of new technologies that are already digitized.

The strength of the training, in our opinion, is exactly what we explained earlier, that we managed to attract companies working in the most diverse professions to the training and this helped that the general digital elements could be better defined during the training and coaching process. Another strength of the training was that we were able to do this taking into account the experiences of the Danish project partner.

In our opinion, it would be a great step forward in training if we could strengthen this knowledge even with an online service period and thus reach a significantly wider circle

of entrepreneurs. Of course, we continuously deliver these results to the entire membership of our more than 160 industry associations.

We recommend writing a project that could facilitate the operation of such an online service for organizations like ours. Organizations that include family, micro and small businesses do not have a team of experts that can provide specialized services, so we have to use these experts on a contract basis from the outside.

We also recommend thinking in the direction of how the generally proven digital procedures could be effectively supplemented with the special needs of larger professional sectors.

What we were able to do in this project was to create the opportunity for our entire base of industry associations to carry out similar training in their own region or profession, and we can also provide specialists and topics for this. The extraordinary advantage of our industry associations is that they usually have the necessary premises and infrastructure for such trainings and their network is nationwide.

3.6 REPORTS OF COACHING

DRÁVAINÉ NÉMETH ESZTER COACHING

I met Eszter as an extraordinary professional at the training. Her unique approach was reflected in a very special way in her products, where she made products for children with an eco-approach. It goes without saying how important the zero-waste approach is in today's world and how well she combined it with her products.

Besides eco products, Eszter also runs sewing courses for different target groups (adults - children). Based on their feedback, she imparts a very special atmosphere and knowledge to those who attend her courses.

During the training, I found that certain internal images hindered her from bringing her products to the market in the right way. Because he makes great products under his watchful eye, the focus of his communication was often not on the customer but on the products.

This, in turn, was a barrier to sales, because in the end the customer was lost among the many product recommendations.

In an individual coaching session, we looked at the resources Eszter was working with. Her professional experience and the charm of her personality are a very good basis for her business.

However, her online presence was very weak. From this we were able to look at two important areas:

1. her website reflected his communication to date. All information was on the website, but in an unstructured format. So that visitors would be on the lookout for the information they were looking for - or even the product. Courses could be found on the

website, but after talking together we could see how difficult it was to find the important information and to register.

2. communication. Communication revealed how little information there was about the client, the client's concerns and desires. When Esther understood this, it became clear to her that this important area definitely needed to change. In the process of individual coaching, I found that we were able to look at a lot of business pain points, which brought a whole new perspective for Eszter. I saw in her the potential of how she had put herself into improving her processes when doing her homework and stepping out of her comfort zone to look for new ways.

That's a good way to approach change!

JAKAB CSILLA COACHING

Csilla Jakab applied for the training as a coach, as a story therapist. What was most surprising to me during her introduction was that the very positive, leading character feedback from the outside world was completely unexpected - the outside world sees her as different from herself.

In the communication tasks, he found it difficult to articulate precisely the values that he knows and wants to communicate to his clients through his work, skills and expertise.

The situational exercises were therefore very useful for her in terms of how to articulate her service in a way that her target group could understand.

In individual coaching, we talked through the group sessions and looked at the possibilities of online presence.

We talked about how to redesign your website, how to simplify it so that your visitors understand your message, how to make an offer that your potential customers can identify with.

We also looked at ways to introduce a new service that could be turned into a product pyramid.

For him, building community is very important and to do this we looked at his internal strengths and areas for improvement.

I felt that, despite the initial uncertainties, Csilla had a great vision of the potential of her own system, which she needs to implement step by step into the future.

To do this, she needs to be able to move beyond some of her internal beliefs - because as we were in training, the team outside already sees the potential in her - and learn the technical terms of how to present issues, opinions and feedback that are important to her customers on her website.

MUSULIN BÉLA COACHING

Béla was one of my favourite participants in education, a stable person with a lot of potential.

True, he came from an entrepreneurial background, but the mindset of a generation growing up in the old system made it very difficult to grow in the modern online world. In the training and in the individual coaching process, we worked together to address these difficulties and opportunities.

During the training, Béla took a lot of notes, asked a lot of questions with his analytical mind, which covered the basics, but also asked about complex processes.

The biggest help for him was that we clarified basic business, marketing and online concepts, which he was then able to put into a system.

In one-to-one coaching, we looked at their business - both at the human resources level and in terms of market opportunities.

The company is also involved in consultancy, product distribution (imports) and we went through the online processes of this.

The website should provide the consultancy status that confirms the possibility to buy their products from them. They plan to do this through case studies, PR articles and personal videos.

Throughout the process, I saw a very constructive attitude from Béla, as he was able to look at the difficulties and I also felt an inner inspiration in him to realise the potential that the company has.

During the coaching process, we were able to look at his personal skills and abilities, finding areas where he could and should improve, and set up a process where his digital presence (website, social media, customer management) could be taken to a higher level than in previous years.

PÁLFI VARGA KRISZTINA COACHING

Krisztina was one of the most active participants in the group. It is true that she has already published books, but the knowledge gained from the joint sessions meant a lot to her. She felt that this was very new for her and that the fear of the unknown could be overcome much better with this knowledge.

For him, the most difficult thing was how to communicate what he has and how to influence his market as the market influences him (pricing).

In personal coaching, the first thing was to change paradigms. Each person/entrepreneur is most influenced by his/her own world of beliefs. If there are flawed beliefs in this, it can continually distract him from his goal.

In coaching sessions with Krisztina, we looked at these and were able to look at very serious things in a way that would allow us to work with them in the future.

Krisztina came to the next session already having seen for herself in her own conversations the possibilities and inspirations.

Even though she has less room for manoeuvre in her personal situation, we talked through the possible steps, what she should focus on when her business enters a certain stage, what steps will be important, what she should prioritise.

In Krisztián, I have met a great professional and I am confident that he will continue to provide his services to a very high standard, in a way that will give him and his client satisfaction and financial security.

I look forward to this era!

PUSKA JÓZSEF COACHING

József came to the training with several products and services. From these he chose one to work with in the sessions.

His company is quite specialised, so I felt it required a lot more mental work for him to apply what he heard to his own area, but he did this to a very high standard.

In feedback, he said that what he had heard had helped him a lot to put his business processes in order, which he now not only knows but understands!

In a personal coaching session, he introduced me to his company and its processes, and I learned about the efficiency opportunities/services that his company could offer in addition to robotization.

In the next session, we planned these on paper by prioritising from the important tasks to the less important ones. We also looked at how certain processes can be built on top of each other/into each other in a way that increases efficiency and effectiveness.

What I liked about Joseph's approach was his ability to think interconnectedly, to design in a product pyramid.

He took a truly creative, forward-looking approach to the challenges facing his company, recognising that they needed to be digital, as the sales process was already starting in front of the negotiating table.

Joseph is already thinking in terms of processes, and it was good to see that a lot of ideas can now be turned into a system.

SIMON SZILVIA COACHING

Silvi showed more than one face at the training. Sometimes she was a more reserved, modest entrepreneur, but there was also a lion's den attitude, bursting with power.

This can of course make life difficult for an entrepreneur and I saw that more than once she was not fully confident in what she had created or created so far.

It shows in his attitude and communication, but slowly over the course of the sessions I built and built more and more knowledge on the scaffolding within him.

I experienced this duality in personal coaching. In turn, it was great to see the precision with which he manages his things and the data of his business digitally.

Our task was to review your existing website. As it was an old, outdated platform, we quickly looked at the areas where he wanted to be active and sketched out in a mind map what could be done with it.

We also set a priority order of which areas he needed to start working on to build a well-functioning profitable business.

What I liked about Silvia in the process was that she was very open to the things we looked at. She was looking for opportunities within herself, what were the tasks that she could accomplish to the extent of her strength and confidence.

We also looked at the external circumstances affecting his potential, talking through where he could and should go.

I was very impressed with Silvia's value-added personality, and I am sure that she will continue to delight many of her clients with her products, services and personality as she continues to develop.

SZAKÁCS ÉVA COACHING

Éva came to the training with an established business. In my experience, she has developed the strongest entrepreneurial system in the group in the field of catering. She wanted to refine her system with what she learned in the training.

Communication was also the most difficult area for Eva. Although she was very good at communicating offline, when it came to presenting her company and services, she did not always get what she wanted right.

In one-to-one sessions, we went through the opportunities and difficulties in her market to see where she could improve.

In the online area, some service could not be bypassed, so we went less in depth on that part, but we did look at areas that are not prime season and revenue generation is possible.

We also looked at the possibility of services that could be linked as upsells or additional services.

In person, I saw the high level of service that Eva and her husband and wife provide to their guests in their very sophisticated reception area.

We discussed how, instead of online advertising, they could rely on their existing database to contact previous guests to invite visitors in the spring and autumn, in addition to the high season.

To do this, we planned to use a newsletter sending service (MailerLite) plus the promotion of spring and autumn programmes that are special to the target audience at this time of year.

Eva's wealth of entrepreneurial experience and background helped us to develop these opportunities and made it very easy to work together.

It was a pleasure to work with a thoughtful and accomplished entrepreneur!

SZEGEDI-JELASICS MIRJANA COACHING

Mirjám makes home decorations, which she currently sells at fairs and through Facebook.

Her products brought in for training showed that she has a very creative sense of beauty, and her products are very attractive.

Her difficulty is that she mainly makes custom requests, which makes scalability and continuous production difficult.

Mirjam faced the same difficulty as the rest of the group, i.e. she had difficulties in presenting, communicating and "selling" her business.

She had previously tested an online store for a short period of time, which seemed to her to be a complex process at first, so this was discontinued shortly afterwards.

Mirjam's approach was very captivating, because the issues that arose from the ground up were exactly relevant to her business.

I was able to give her a strong wireframe for the first step she would need to take when launching her online presence, focusing on not making a wide range of products a priority, but rather scaling her product ideas by creating a product pyramid.

With these in mind, I am very confident that Mirjam will lift the spirits of many homes with her products.

TOTH-KOVÁCS LÍVIA COACHING

Lívía is a very creative and enthusiastic entrepreneur. She is in the early stages of building her business as she is a highly skilled professional, but her entrepreneurial skills need to be developed.

During the training she solved her tasks (communication tasks) at a very high level, but there were also times when she felt that it was too much for her.

On each occasion he gave ample feedback on how much new stuff he had taken away from the training.

These were also discussed in individual coaching sessions.

Perhaps his biggest difficulty was that, despite the feedback, he was less able to believe that his product was valuable, worth charging a higher price for his service.

We made several fundamental changes to his website. We created a one-page product shopping facility alongside his web shop, with a very serious discussion about where, what and why we were putting it. For the copywriting, Liv was very good at understanding what and how to communicate differently than she had been doing.

We also collected and posted customer feedback for her site, which we used in the marketing process.

We also paid attention to PR, that yes, you do need to be able to sell yourself to make your products appealing.

Besides that, I saw the biggest improvement in Liv's entrepreneurial approach. The recommended literature helped her a lot to strengthen her approach and to take on things she felt.

I felt that I had an impact not only on her current project, but also on Liv's approach.

This is a very difficult area to reform because it is difficult to override old beliefs, to change the environment, but I saw that Livi would be able to do this because the skills she has given her every opportunity to do so.

VASS ZSUZSANNA COACHING

Zsuzsa has built a very conscious, value-based real estate business that she wants to expand with home staging.

Her biggest difficulty is bridging the gap between online and offline presence, as while she is very comfortable in offline communication, she needs more help in the online world.

He is looking for a collaborator, a contractor who not only does the assigned task, but understands and creates value at a very high level, creating work that is of value to clients.

Finding such people is currently very difficult for him.

In our conversations, I found that he considers value as the most important thing in his service, in that he wants to understand his clients' needs as deeply as possible and tries to provide a personalised service in relation to that.



Digital methods, toolbox and trainings
for increasing customer innovation in
SMEs (IClinSMEs)



With the support of the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

When creating your website, you want to present these values in a way that gives your customers the best information as quickly as possible.

I love this entrepreneurial attitude where the customer, the value, is the most important thing and Zsuzsanna believes in delivering this alone.

4. IMPLEMENTATION IN WROCLAW, POLAND

Magdalena Ornatowska and Anna Capik,
Dolnośląska Izba Rzemieślnicza we Wrocławiu



Dolnośląska Izba Rzemieślnicza
we Wrocławiu

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In connection with the implementation by DIRW of the project, "Increasing Customer Innovation in Small and Medium Enterprises (IClinSMEs)", a meeting of representatives of small and medium-sized enterprises was held on 30.01.2023 at the headquarters of the Lower Silesian Chamber of Crafts in Wrocław at 13 Solny Square. As in the previous training, these were owners of various companies with different profiles. A total of 17 people took part.

The meeting was chaired by Mr Daniel Mikrut, chief IT officer at IT Solves. Participants were introduced to the areas of cyber security, how to set up and maintain a website, what services Google Analytics offers micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, how micro, small and medium-sized enterprises should build their brand in social media.

Each participant received a package of links:

Useful links:

- <https://niebezpiecznik.pl>
- <https://sekurak.pl>
- <https://zaufanatrzeciastrona.pl>
- <https://www.virustotal.com>

Antivirus:

- <https://www.avast.com/pl-pl/>
- <https://www.eset.com/pl/>
- <https://pl.norton.com/>

Password manager:

- <https://bitwarden.com>

- <https://1password.com>
- <https://www.lastpass.com>

TAG'i:

- Apple AirTag -> <https://www.apple.com/pl/airtag/>
- Samsung Galaxy Smart Tag -> <https://www.samsung.com/pl/mobile-accessories/galaxy-smarttag-black-ei-t5300bbegeu/>
- Huawei Tag -> https://consumer.huawei.com/pl/community/details/Huawei-Tag-Anti-Lost-Wizard/topicId_77421/

ChatGPT:

- <https://chat.openai.com/auth/login> (<https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/ChatGPT>)

Google tools:

- https://about.google/intl/ALL_pl/products/#all-products
- <https://search.google.com/search-console/> -> Google Search Console
- <https://trends.google.pl/trends/> -> Google Trends
- <https://analytics.google.com/analytics/> -> Google Analytics
- <https://www.google.com/business/?ppsrc=GPDA2> -> free Company Profile
- <https://ads.google.com/> -> Google Ads

The WP3 training was based on material prepared largely by the Danish IBC and on material prepared by the trainer himself adapted to the needs and interests of the trainees.

Participants in the digitalisation training were mainly entrepreneurs from micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in the Lower Silesian Voivodship.

Each time, prior to the trainings, an email with an invitation to participate in the training (flyer) was sent to the Guilds affiliated to the Chamber. In addition, the invitation was posted on the Chamber's website and on social media on profiles run by the Chamber. The training sessions in the form of workshops were held on the Chamber's premises, where participants had direct access to the trainers, materials and the Internet.

Subsequently, as part of the consultations carried out (so far, i.e. up to 30.03.2023, four consultations have been held with one business owner, but we have been informed that the operator has arranged three more consultations at later dates with other business owners).

COMPANY	BRANCH	CONSULTATION WITH THE COMPANY OWNER	TELEPHONE CONSULTATIONS

Honorata Krawczyk VOLT Consulting	Photovoltaic	4	3
Monika Szymonek Stec " Szymonek Stec Academy"	Coaching, Com- petence Develop- ment	TBD	2
Aniela Sobierajska EGOLESS PSA,	chemical	TBD	2
Karolina Bielawska	jewellery	TBD	1
together		4	8

A link to the evaluation questionnaires was sent to participants after each training session usefulness of the training provided. A follow-up questionnaire was sent 3 months after the courses to evaluate the cooperation so far.

4.2 SPECIAL FEATURES OF IMPLEMENTATION

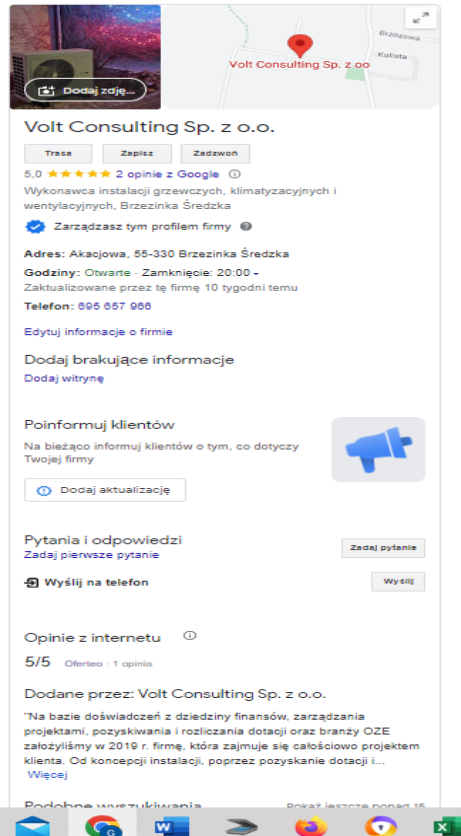
The dates of the trainings were adapted to the economic activity of the participants. The date of the consultation due to the late implementation of training. The training was in the form of a one-day workshop and took place on 30.01.2023. The training was then followed by a period of one-to-one coaching with willing participants, as in the previous time. In addition, the facilitator was available at the indicated telephone numbers for specialist consultations. There have been 8 such consultations so far. The consultations will have been finished by 31.05.2023.

One of the companies most active during the individual consultations was Volt Consulting sp. Z o.o.. Based on the workshops and individual consultations, the company implemented analytical tools for website positioning, as well as a significant increase in its activity on social media, which translated into a higher number of customers. In addition, during one of the consultations, the co-owner of the company was interviewed about the evaluation of the training as well as the needs and problems of the young entrepreneur. Below is a link to the recording.

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/167EMfNhCiWA_VjaJ4TMu6_e_ovcaX5st?usp=share link](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/167EMfNhCiWA_VjaJ4TMu6_e_ovcaX5st?usp=share_link)

During the meetings, the entrepreneur was presented with IT tools in which he or she had expressed an interest, and then independently (under the supervision of the trainer) implemented elements of digitisation of his or her own company. Below is a report by Ms Honorata Krawczyk of Volt Consulting sp. Z o.o. with a summary of the independent work:

"Launching the company's business card in Google Ads.



The diagram shows the effectiveness of the tool since its launch in early February this year. As part of the google function, an advertisement was also launched to display the company's profile in the search engine. The keywords were extracted, among others, from the keyword managers to which links were provided during the training.

Password manager:

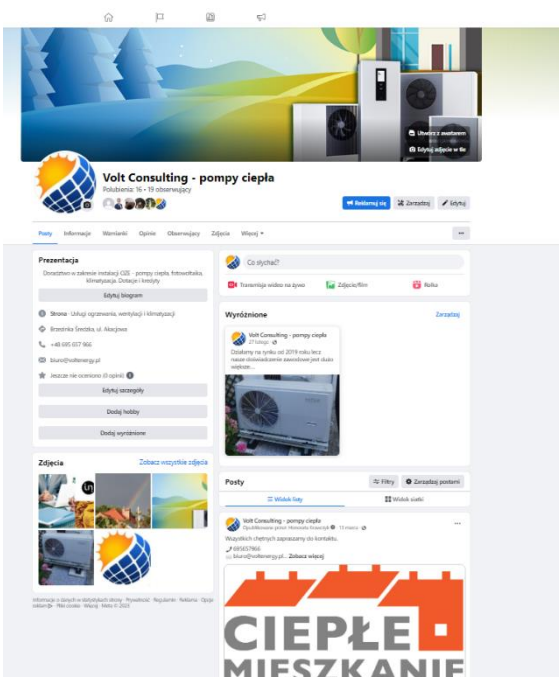
- <https://bitwarden.com>
- <https://1password.com>
- <https://www.lastpass.com>

A company page on FB has also been set up on the back of the training. We have not currently undertaken marketing activities through sponsored posts.

The biggest difficulty proves to be accessing professional photos of our investments, but above all processing the photos in dedicated programmes.

The operation of the programmes themselves is not complicated, but the range of possibilities is very large and, in the absence of knowledge of the programme's detailed functions, the trial-and-error method is time-consuming and problematic.

A page on FB has incomparably more page views and interaction than a business card on FB.



However, both methods have so far failed to bring about a significant change in the customer acquisition channel.

Thanks to the knowledge gained from the website building training, three web domains have been purchased. The company is currently in the process of building a website. Here, too, we have problems with the supply of photos. We do not rely on purchased images from publicly available sources.

In terms of cyber security, additional security measures were put in place to access the company account. We also learnt about the additional security measures and the need to use them during the training."

4.3 ORGANISATION OF TRAINING

A major strength of the trainees was their diversity both in terms of their profession and their expectations of innovation in digitalisation. This was related to the age of the participants and their ease in navigating social media and thus their understanding of the impact of brand building on customer acquisition. When asked how they acquire new customers, older participants mainly indicated whisper marketing as a tool to expand their customer base.

The younger participants, on the other hand, were open to innovation and participated with great willingness and commitment in all workshop activities.

The training was announced on the website and on social media (Instagram, FB). Information with the invitation was also sent by email. As a result, 17 participants signed up. The trainees came from one region - Lower Silesia.

One training day: 8 lessons of 45 minutes + 2 months of self-study with individual consultations at the participant's workplace or on the phone. The individual consultation started with an in-person meeting and was followed up with further meetings or online discussions. Each time, the facilitator discussed the experience and needs for further training with willing participants. A summary of the training is presented in questionnaires from participants and trainers (questionnaires were translated into English and sent to Ms. Monika Zajkowska, in the original and translated version).

The organisation of the implementation was handled by DIRW staff employed by the project, together with the teachers leading the workshops. The workshop on digitisation was led by Mr Daniel Mikrut, owner of It Solves. He has a great deal of experience and knowledge related to the implementation of IT systems and their administration. He implements IT solutions resulting from assumptions developed in tailor-made business models based on:

1. administration of IT systems based on hardware: Dell, IBM, HP, Cisco, Vmware;
2. Management of central backup system based on: Veeam, Tivoli Storage Manager, SEP;
3. Technologies: Navision, Novell GroupWise, eDirectory, SLES, Active Directory and SUSE.

The Digitisation training was attended by 17 participants. Below is a table of participants broken down by age, gender, education, profession, country of origin, etc.

L.P.	NAME	SEX	AGE	PROFESSION	COUNTRY OF ORIGIN
1	Kwietniak Beata	F	40-50	Hairdresser	Poland
2	Bielawska Karolina	F	40-50	Artistic jewellery	Poland

3	Urbanowicz Katarzyna	F	30-40	Artist	Poland
4	Mielczarek Joanna	F	30-40	Sworn translator	Poland
5	Fok Wanda	F	60-70	Tailor	Poland
6	Zarentowicz Sławomir	M	60-70	Car mechanic	Poland
7	Wolaniuk Kloc Ewa	F	60-70	Hairdresser	Poland
8	Zawieja Hubert	M	40-50	Car mechanic	Poland
9	Agnieszka Dowbecka	F	50-60	Hairdresser	Poland
10	Zygmunt Rzucidło	M	60-70	Construction industry	Poland
11	Lobodziec Jan	M	50-60	stonemason	Poland
12	Szymonek Stec Monika	F	50-60	Coach	Poland
13	Palczyńska - Czop Beata	F	50-60	Hairdresser	Poland
14	Krawczyk Honorata	F	40-50	Renewable energy	Poland
15	Demediuk Anna	F	40-50	Deratisation company	Poland
16	Ornatowska Magdalena	F	40-50	business consulting	Poland
17	Sygit Maciej	M	60-70	business consulting	Poland

4.4 DELIVERY OF TRAINING

Due to various national conditions the testing of the training was conducted based on a framework (1 day onsite plus continuous coaching and advisory support) the KAIN method was adapted to national conditions, one of which is the fact that the continuous education system for SMEs is currently in its development stage and due to entrepreneur time limitations, we as a Chamber decided to provide CE to SMEs on a step by step basis. We therefore decided to start out with a one-day programme as it was sure to attract and motivate the entrepreneurs in our region, and we succeeded in doing so as multiple participants stated that they would be interested in workshops in the future etc etc etc. We are motivating our entrepreneurs to understand that the time and effort that they put in for trainings will then in consequence allow them to implement innovation and have an impact on development of digitalization methods and its implementation in the companies.

Strengths and weaknesses of the training as perceived by participants (questionnaires) Please find attached the questionnaires submitted by the participants at the end of the second phase of the training. Based on the completed evaluation forms, it can be

concluded that the participants were largely satisfied with the training. The training was assessed as useful, which encouraged them in their further development plans. However, one peculiarity rather than a weakness of the training was that very young ("start-up") as well as experienced companies took part. In this way, we were able to find out their reactions and test the training at different levels of development. The simultaneous use of digital marketing processes as well as tools for the programming and implementation of process innovation for small companies usually exceeds their financial, and personal capacities. According to the participants, many more similar trainings offering industry-specific solutions are still needed to convince the masses of micro entrepreneurs. To this end, it would be very important to launch state support programmes in this area as well or the next joint Erasmus + project.

The trainer made a note of the consultation process. The following is a statement by Mr Daniel Mikrut regarding the observation and feedback after the consultation and training.

"From my point of view, cyber security online is one of the most important concerns of micro, small and medium-sized business owners for customer acquisition through social media. Entrepreneurs, especially those who have so far used more traditional methods of customer acquisition such as whisper marketing, banner ads, flyers, among others, are very apprehensive about online customer service and have reservations about the effectiveness of this type of business activity. They do not see the need for social media activity and branding as they have a regular customer base. In addition, they report concerns about personal data being taken over by online fraudsters and do not know how to deal with the so-called heit." Daniel Mikrut

4.5 MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

In our opinion, a key aspect within the IClinSME project is the compatibility with the implementation of the fourth industrial revolution programme, the so-called Industry 4.0, related to the digitalisation of the economy, in particular industry.

The widespread digitisation and digitalisation of customer-facing solutions is the result of the creation of innovative solutions by market leaders and the diffusion of these innovations not only in the sectors from which they originate. Ubiquity simultaneously means accessibility in terms of place, time and cost. It also refers to the ubiquity of technologies that change the needs and expectations of customers and the rules of supplier markets. Thus, digitalisation creates the economic environment of modern companies, and it can also be a valuable resource and knowledge of the potential of technology a unique value for small and medium-sized enterprises. In principle, there is no escape from the digitalisation and digitisation of enterprises - changes in business models, the way market relations are shaped, or the offer built. Nor is there much of an alternative to it. The old, legacy ways of acquiring customers in the age of ubiquitous social media are insufficient and ineffective. Certainly, however, the digitalisation of business is a long-term process, one might even say an evolutionary one, and the incorporation of individual solutions-technologies should take place in stages.

Therefore, the sooner entrepreneurs are able to define the configuration of a wide range of different digital technologies (or, in fact, their potential) in relation to the adopted market strategy, the easier it will be for them to respond to customer expectations in the near future. The initial diagnosis of innovativeness carried out during the training makes it possible to conclude that the Polish entrepreneur from the micro, small and medium-sized enterprise sector (with few exceptions) is de facto at the third stage of development among those indicated earlier in the figure, i.e. still before the stage of digitalisation and digitisation. Considering the fact that Poles are perceived as a very entrepreneurial nation (micro, small and medium enterprises generate 60% of GDP), and the development of digitalization has a universal dimension, it is puzzling that the relatively low innovativeness of micro, small and medium enterprises, which constitute over 99% of companies in Poland, is a matter of concern. It therefore becomes extremely important to search for the reasons for this situation and, more importantly, to propose adequate solutions enabling support for entrepreneurs in improving their competitive advantage not only within the sector in which they compete, but also on an international or global scale. This is also an important area enabling the Polish economy to shift its place from the group of efficiency-oriented countries (i.e. creating more efficient production methods and improving the quality of goods and services) to innovation-oriented countries. The increase in the level of knowledge, on the other hand, is strongly dependent on the internal initiative of entrepreneurs and business owners and the way in which the organisation is managed.

From the individual interviews conducted during the consultation, it appears that about half of the companies participating in the training do not have digitisation and digitalisation tools in place. However, this is not synonymous with the non-application of modern technologies by these companies. 20% of the companies have included in their strategy the use of modern solutions, mainly in the technological area. In these companies, innovative technological solutions were implemented primarily to reduce costs and gain a competitive advantage. The survey indicated that 85% of SME companies do not have human resources capable of implementing the proposed tools in the area of innovation and digitalisation. There is a barrier in the belief of entrepreneurs that the main benefits of implementing modern technologies relate to improving the quality of the products offered, improving productivity and reducing costs, and gaining new customers.

The most important barriers limiting the adoption of technology are related to lack of financial resources for such activities, lack of time and lack of qualified staff. Among the external factors inhibiting the process of innovation with the use of technological solutions, the trainees indicated bureaucracy, difficulties in obtaining competent employees and lack of support from public authorities. Among the actions taken or planned to be taken for the implementation of technology, investing own funds, improving the competences of employees through training and hiring new qualified people were mentioned. The responses point to the increasing role of competencies as an important resource in shaping a company's level of innovation.

When asked by the presenters what support they expect from government institutions in improving innovation, participants indicated tax incentives, the adaptation of the training of future personnel to the needs of companies and the clarity of innovation regulations. Unfortunately, public data indicate that only about 47% of companies allocate between 10 and 30% of their revenues to the implementation of technologies supporting production processes, about 30% of companies allocate less than 10% to this purpose, and about 13% do not spend any money on this.

The presenters also discussed what would be the factors influencing the decision to implement innovative solutions in their company. Participants included among the most important determinants of such choices the need to reduce costs of running a company (1/3 of responses) and the need to gain a competitive advantage in the market (1/5 of responses). Customers' expectations of an increase in the quality of the products offered were indicated as the third very important factor (1/10 of responses), followed by customers' expectations of lower product prices.

Analysing the statements of training participants, we can conclude that the implementation of each new solution in the enterprise is aimed (in a shorter or longer period) at improving the competitive position of the enterprise and increasing its profitability. When analysing the expected economic benefits resulting from the implementation of innovations, participants pointed to a very wide range of effects. The most important expected benefits in this respect include an increase in the profitability of the enterprise, an increase in revenue and the acquisition of new customers.

In terms of factors located outside the enterprise and at the same time constituting the greatest barriers to the pace of innovation implementation in an SME enterprise, participants indicated bureaucracy. This is also a "traditional" obstacle indicated at the interface between the private and public sectors in Poland. Managers coming from the group of the smallest enterprises, point to problems lying outside the organisation as an obstacle to innovation. In addition to bureaucracy, they indicate e.g. the lack of support from public administration, difficulties in obtaining EU subsidies or unfavourable regulations e.g. the ineligibility of VAT as a cost in EU projects. In addition, participants indicated difficulties in obtaining competent employees.

In summary, companies develop and gain competitive advantages because of their ability to respond to or create customer needs and expectations. This is therefore always done in relation to events taking place in their environment - especially changes on the demand side. Today's customers expect not only innovative products, but also new forms of delivery, an innovative form of communication. Thus, no company wishing to remain on the market in the future can be indifferent to widespread digitalisation. Indicating more specific areas of influence of technological solutions in the context of competitiveness, participants singled out the possibility of improving the quality of products offered, increasing productivity, or improving the efficiency of resource use. Due to the application of modern technologies, pre-entrepreneurs expect an increase in the profitability of their own operations through increased revenues. These results show the key role that technological solutions can play in competing through innovation.

Business owners and management have a special role in the potential for strategic change. Their knowledge of the potential for technology implementation therefore determines the progress of Polish companies towards digitisation and digitalisation and innovation.

Among the measures taken and planned to be taken for the implementation of innovation and digitalisation tools, investing own resources, raising staff competences through training and hiring new qualified people were mentioned. In the area of plans to raise competencies and hire qualified staff, participants showed a decreasing trend, and the same applies to investing own resources. This indicates an increasing problem of lack of human and financial resources in shaping the level of innovation. In addition, the administration and settlement of projects from Operational Programmes significantly reduces the application for this type of support.

We recommend starting a year-long series of industry-specific training courses with pre- and post-training competency testing. The training will be continued by the partner in the future.

CONCEPT FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE AND EVALUATION

Dr Monika Zajkowska, Hanseatic Institute for Support of SMEs



1. DEFINITION OF TRAINING EVALUATION

Training is the foundation of a modern organization. Properly selected and carried out, individual team members and the entire organization increase the effectiveness of operations step by step. Nevertheless, a lot depends on the quality of the training itself, so:

- skillful selection of the subject matter to the needs of employees,
- effective teaching methods used to conduct them,
- a well-thought-out training plan tailored to the employee's career path,
- reasonable organization of training in terms of logistics and technology.

And how to assess whether the implemented training solutions are effective? This is what their evaluation is for. It consists in verifying whether the training policy in the company is effective - and therefore whether it allows to achieve the company's development goals.

The evaluation is the final step of the training management cycle (diagram 1). A training management cycle can be divided into three major steps: Step 1: Planning; Step 2: Implementation; and Step 3: Evaluation. The results of the training evaluation are reflected in the next phase of training planning to improve future training programs.

Evaluation of training is one of the main components of a training program. It will not only provide the trainer with useful information in order to further improve the training course, but also creates an impression of completeness.

An evaluation is the systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing or completed project, program or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfillment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.¹⁷ The program evaluation is the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics, and outcomes of programs to make

¹⁷ *Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management*

judgments about the program, improve program effectiveness, and/or inform decisions about future programming.¹⁸

Evaluation of courses including gained results and found problems is essential to be able to develop further the existing training programs as well as to consider the experiences gathered from these programs when building new curricula. The evaluation process has been designed hand in hand with the courses themselves. This concept presents an overview of evaluation process and questionnaire.

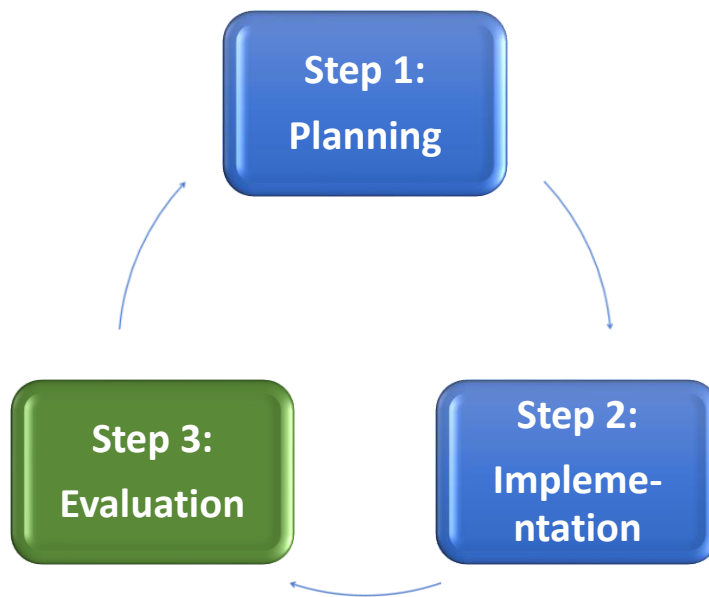


Diagram 1. Training Management Cycle

¹⁸ Patton, M.Q. (1997). *Utilization-focused Evaluation: The New Century Text (3rd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

2. TYPES OF EVALUATION

There are many different types of evaluations depending on the object being evaluated and the purpose of the evaluation. Perhaps the most important basic distinction in evaluation types is that between *formative* and *summative* evaluation. Formative evaluations strengthen or improve the object being evaluated -- they help form it by examining the delivery of the program or technology, the quality of its implementation, and the assessment of the organizational context, personnel, procedures, inputs, and so on. Summative evaluations, in contrast, examine the effects or outcomes of some object - they summarize it by describing what happens subsequent to delivery of the program or technology; assessing whether the object can be said to have caused the outcome; determining the overall impact of the causal factor beyond only the immediate target outcomes; and, estimating the relative costs associated with the object.

Formative evaluation includes several evaluation types:

- *needs assessment* determines who needs the program, how great the need is, and what might work to meet the need.
- *evaluability assessment* determines whether an evaluation is feasible and how stakeholders can help shape its usefulness.
- *structured conceptualization* helps stakeholders define the program or technology, the target population, and the possible outcomes.
- *implementation evaluation* monitors the fidelity of the program or technology delivery.
- *process evaluation* investigates the process of delivering the program or technology, including alternative delivery procedures.

Summative evaluation can also be subdivided:

- *outcome evaluations* investigate whether the program or technology caused demonstrable effects on specifically defined target outcomes.
- *impact evaluation* is broader and assesses the overall or net effects -- intended or unintended -- of the program or technology as a whole.
- *cost-effectiveness and cost-benefit analysis* address questions of efficiency by standardizing outcomes in terms of their dollar costs and values secondary analysis reexamines existing data to address new questions or use methods not previously employed.
- *meta-analysis* integrates the outcome estimates from multiple studies to arrive at an overall or summary judgement on an evaluation question.

3. STEPS OF TRAINING EVALUATION

The processes of training evaluation can be divided into five steps: identify purposes of evaluation; select evaluation methods; design evaluation tools, collect data; and analyze and report results.

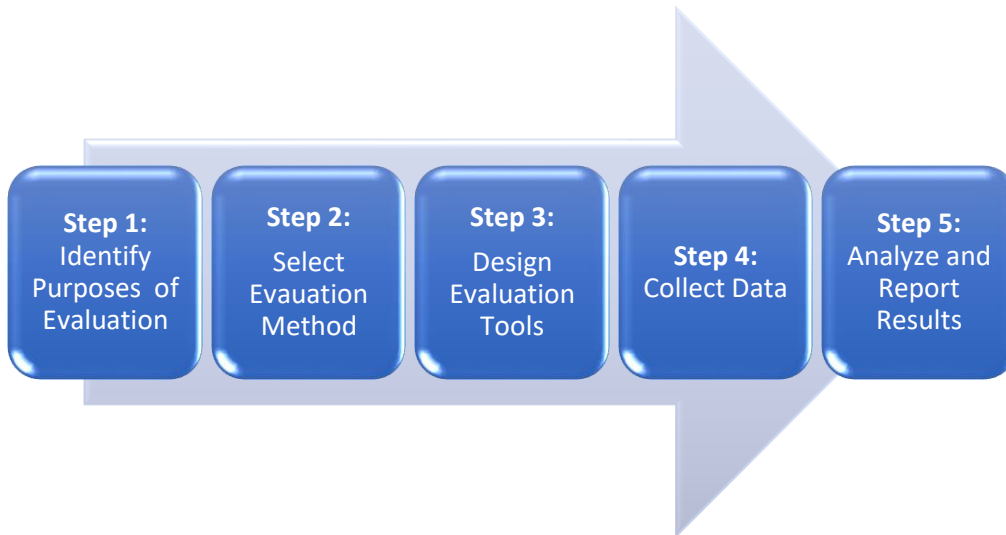


Diagram 2. Steps of training evaluation

Step 1: Identify the Purposes of Evaluation

- Before developing evaluation systems, the purposes of evaluation must be determined.
- Why do we want to evaluate training programs?

Step 2: Select Evaluation Method

- Kirkpatrick's four levels of evaluating training programs
- Reaction, learning, behavior, and result

Step 3: Design Evaluation Tools

- Questionnaire
- Pre/Post Test
- Impact Survey

Step 4: Collect Data

- Who, when, how to collect data?

Step 5: Analyze and Report Results

- Evaluation data analysis
- Reporting

3.1 STEP 1: IDENTIFY PURPOSES OF EVALUATION

Before developing evaluation systems, the purposes of evaluation must be determined. These will affect the types of data and the data collection methods.

Purposes identified by the GDLA Task Force

The GDLA Task Force has identified the following as the purposes of evaluating training programs planned and implemented by the Task Force for public officials in charge of local administration:

- To determine whether the objectives of the training were achieved.
- To see how the knowledge and skills learned in the training are put into practice.
- To assess the results and impacts of the training programs.
- To assess the effectiveness of the training programs.
- To assess whether the training programs were properly implemented.
- To identify the strengths and weaknesses of the training programs.
- To assess whether the training programs were suitable in terms of the training contents, timing, participants and other aspects.
- To find problems of the training programs and solutions for improvement.

3.2 STEP 2: SELECT EVALUATION METHOD

One of the most commonly used methods for evaluating training programs is the four levels of evaluation by D. L. Kirkpatrick. According to his concept, capacity development is realized by the four sequential steps: Reaction; Learning; Behavior; and Results.

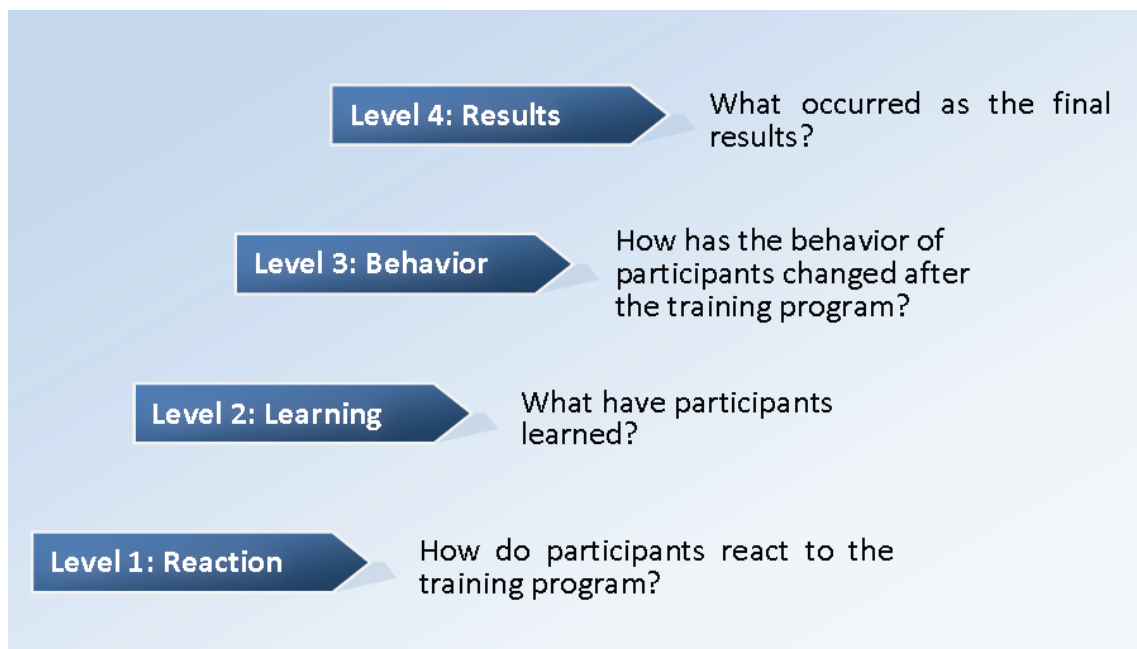


Figure 1. Four levels of evaluation by D. L. Kirkpatrick



Evaluation on this level measures how participants react to the training program. It is important to get a positive reaction. Although a positive reaction may not ensure learning, if participants do not react favorably, they probably will not be motivated to learn.

Level 2: Learning

Evaluation on this level measures the extent to which participants change attitudes, improve knowledge, and/or increase skills as a result of attending the training program. One or more of these changes must take place if a change in behavior is to happen.

Level 3: Behavior

Evaluation on this level measures the extent to which change in participants' behavior has occurred because of attending the training program. In order for change to take place, four conditions are necessary:

- The person must have a desire to change.
- The person must know what to do and how to do it.
- The person must work in the right climate.
- The person must be rewarded for changing.

Level 4: Results

Evaluation on this level measures the final results that occurred because the participants attended the training program. Examples of the final results include increased production, improved quality and decreased costs. It is important to recognize that these results are the reason for having some training programs.

When evaluating course, the goals and real results should be compared. This is not always possible or fair and just. The evaluation should be targeted only to such measurable issues on which the designer, teacher, facilitator or student himself has an impact. Evaluating the impacts of training programs against the presented main goals would require large societal research including the recording of the initial situation before starting the programs and the long-term follow-up research in which the conducted interventions and actions (In this case new forms of training and education) and their impacts on change of variables is followed. The final conclusions can be drawn just after some years or after decades. In this project this is not possible and the whole evaluation process must be rethought and simplified.

The most important variables, on point of view of achieving the goals set, are the motivation of student, the support he gets, the relevance of issues in curricula, the quality material and training and the ability of facilities to support training and learning.

Although most of the variables presented above are so called soft variables, which can't be measured directly by targeting the measurement tool to some point or phase in the process, they can be assessed indirectly by assessing the feelings and comments of participants and other stakeholders.

3.3 STEP 3: DESIGN EVALUATION TOOLS

Various evaluation tools can be selected depending on the purposes and methods of evaluation.

- Questionnaires
- Surveys
- Tests
- Interviews
- Focus group discussions
- Observations
- Performance records

For the Train-the-Trainer training evaluation the questionnaire will be used.

The questionnaire is probably the most common form of evaluating training programs. Questionnaires to evaluate the reactions of training participants.

The first step of questionnaire design is to determine the information we would like to know.

The following are some information we wanted to ask participants.

Contents: Was the content appropriate?

Materials: Were the materials useful?

Teaching method: Was the teaching method appropriate?

Trainer/Facilitator: Was the trainer/facilitator effective?

Motivation to learn: Were you motivated to learn the contents?

Program relevance: Was the program relevant to your needs?

Level of understanding: Did you understand the contents?

Time: Was the time and length of program appropriate?

Length: Was the program length appropriate?

Facilities: Were the training facilities appropriate?

Overall evaluation: What is your overall rating of the program?

Planned improvements: How will you apply what you have learned?

The second step in questionnaire design is to select the types of questions. Questions that might be asked in a questionnaire can be classified into two major categories: open-ended and close-ended.

In the questionnaire of Train the Trainer training both categories of questions will be used.

The third step in questionnaire design was to develop the questions based on the types of questions planned and the types of information needed.

The fourth step in questionnaire design was to test the questions. They were tested on a group of people at approximately the same job level as the participants.

The following were some of the points to be checked when pre-testing the questionnaire.

Does he/she understand all the questions?

Does he/she have any difficulty in answering the questions?

Do all close-ended questions have an answer applicable to each respondent?

Are the skip patterns followed correctly?

Does any part of the questionnaire suggest bias on your part?

Does the questionnaire create a positive impression to motivate people to respond?

Based on the result of pretest in Step 4, the questionnaire forms were finalized.

3.4 STEP 4: COLLECT DATA

To improve the effectiveness of questionnaire data collection were recommended following:

- *Keep responses anonymous.*
- *Distribute questionnaire forms in advance.*
- *Explain the purpose of the questionnaire and how the information will be used.*
- *Allow enough time for completing the questionnaire.*

3.5 STEP 5: ANALYZE AND REPORT RESULTS

An evaluation of the Train-the-Trainer is essential to identify problems and the quality of the training in order to be able to develop further the existing training programs as well as to consider the experiences gathered from these programs when building new curricula. The evaluation process of each course has been designed hand in hand with the course itself.

Before summarizing and analyzing the questionnaire, the data need to be entered into a computer. Many statistical software programs are available for such data. There are many ways to analyze data, but the analysis should be as simple as possible and limited to what is necessary to draw the required conclusions from the data.

The next step is to consider what forms of communication will be most effective to present evaluation findings to the primary users. The following questions may be used as guidance to choose appropriate forms of communication.

- To what extent and in what specific ways is the information *relevant* to the user's real and compelling problems?
- To what extent is the information *practical* from the user's perspective?
- To what extent is the information *useful* and immediately applicable in the user's situation?
- What information will the user consider *credible* and what reporting practices will support that credibility?

After knowing what kind of information will be relevant and useful to the primary users, the last step in evaluation process is to develop an evaluation report.

4. THE CONCEPT OF TRAINING “DIGITALIZATION” EVALUATION

4.1 The aim of the Training “digitalization”

The aim of this course is to enable target groups to have such an overall view that they understand opportunities, benefits, and risks of digitalization, including the ethical aspects.

This course has been designed to fulfil the needs described above. The training, which contains both theoretical lectures, group works, and practical training will be set to EQF- levels 4 or 5.

The target groups of this training are:

- founders,
- owners,
- managers,
- employees and
- company consultants / advisers

of and for SME companies.

The learning objectives of this course are set to serve SMEs in digitalization and innovation as well as possible. The concrete learning goal is that after attending the course the trainee has at least a sense of what innovative behaviour, digitalization and digital tools can bring to his / her own business.

The learning objectives are:

- Trainee understands the importance of digitalization in a globally world.
- Trainee understand what “*digital customer-centric innovation*” is
- Trainee understand the importance for a company, why and how to involve customers.
- Trainee knows two analyse tools for internally use, maturity of innovation and IT.
- Trainee knows the contemporary basic concepts of digitalization – the relevance of topics in this area should be ensured before each training session / course.
- Trainee knows the basic about digital international payment and transactions.
- Trainee knows tools that a SME can utilize when digitalizing their innovative process.
- Trainee has applied the tool during his / her practice period.

This course is divided into three parts. The training begins with a 1.5 – 2 days theoretical part, during which the basic issues of each topic will be clarified by

presentations and group work. This part will be followed by 12 – 18 weeks practice period in the company, during which the participant gets acquainted with the topics of the course in point of view of this company. During the practice period the participant will also prepare a presentation concerning the findings and ideas he or she gained during that period in the company. After the practice period is completed, a seminary of 1.5 – 2 days will be hold. In this seminary the participants will present their findings, discuss their experiences and ideas, and finally, everything will be concluded with a lecture / course / seminary.

1. Leading training
2. Practices in companies
3. Concluding seminary

The training programme consists of a combination of presentations, consultations and discussions in plenary, work in small groups and role-plays.

The conclusions of the evaluation research will contribute to improve the quality, and especially the effectiveness of training, show the limitations of the training model and indicate the direction for further activities.

4.2 EVALUATION CONCEPT

The objective of the evaluation is to determine whether the goals of the program will be achieved in the implementations evaluated, and how the program has impact on student's career and opportunities. An evaluation concept consisting of two feedback surveys, one with closed questions and one with open questions.

The evaluation process will be as follows:

1. The participants of the Train-the-Trainer will receive an online Semi-structured questionnaire at the end of the training (Appendix A).
2. Time for the survey (approx. 10 minutes) will be allocated in the end of the course.
3. The facilitator of the training informs the participants about the evaluation and its importance for further development actions. The purpose of the questionnaire and how the data will be used should be explained clearly to the participants. This will help to improve the response rate and encourage the participants to make comments that can be useful to improve future programs.
4. The questionnaires are being filled in online and submitted automatically and anonymously to the evaluator of the training.
5. The evaluator analyses all feedback surveys and summarizes them in a written analysis. Based on that, recommendations for the adjustment and future use of the curriculum result.

The evaluation approach will be based on a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. The Microsoft Excel package will be used to transcribe the feedbacks and interviews. Open questions will be categorized, and qualitative analysis of the groups will be done.

The final evaluation report will discuss the following issues:

- Did the curriculum reach the targets?
- How well was the knowledge creation and sharing realized?
- Did the participants assimilate knowledge and tools?
- Was the venue and equipment appropriate for the training course?
- What kind of further development will be needed, if any?

The schedule of the evaluation should be matched to the phases of the curriculum. There is no sense to evaluate the course before the students have a true and fair view of the course, its phases and contents. A closer schedule of each evaluation will be agreed later.

APPENDIX A: EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARTICIPANTS OF THE TRAINING “DIGITALIZATION”

EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE PARTICIPANTS TRAINING „DIGITALIZATION”

Dear Participant,

Thank you for taking time to fill out this feedback form on the “Digitalization” training, that was developed byin on as part of the Erasmus+ project “IClinSMEs”. We would like to ask you to evaluate the quality of training by filling in the form and giving potential notes. That can help us to improve the level of training quality. The information that will be given in the research may contribute to increasing the level of effectiveness and attraction of further trainings.

This survey is anonymous and will take approx. 5-10 minutes.

Please circle the scale that applies to your opinion on the following aspects of the education you participated.

Gender	female	
	male	
Age	< 20	
	21 - 50	
	> 51	
The size of the enterprise	micro	
	small	
	medium-sized	
The length of service in the enterprise	under 1 year	
	1 – 2 years	
	over 2 – 5 years	
	over 5 years	
The length of service connected with the topic of the training	under 1 year	
	1 – 2 years	
	over 2 – 5 years	
	over 5 years	

I. THE EVALUATION OF THE TEACHERS AND THE TRAINING ORGANISATION						
THE LEVEL OF SATISFACTION		very good (5)	good (4)	satisfactory (3)	unsatisfactory (2)	bad (1)
1.	the substantive preparation					

2.	the clarity and understandability of the communication					
3.	teaching materials relevance in everyday work					
4.	the accuracy, professionalism and involvement of the answering to the participants' questions					
5.	the ability to attract participants to the topic and engage them to the training					
6.	the level of training programme implementation					
7.	the climate of the training					
8.	the level of communication of the teacher with the group					
9.	the arranging of work and training					
10.	the training background (classroom, tools, etc.)					
II. THE EVALUATION OF THE USEFULNESS OF THE TRAINING FOR THE PARTICIPANT						
THE LEVEL OF SATISFACTION		very good (5)	good (4)	satisfactory (3)	unsatisfactory (2)	bad (1)
1.	Were your expectations fulfilled with the training?					
2.	Did the training help you to improve the abilities in the topic of the training?					

3.	Did the training improve your knowledge within the topic of the training?					
4.	What is your assessment of the possibility of using acquired knowledge and skills in everyday work?					
5.	What is your assessment of the training program?					
6.	<p>In your opinion, what kind of changes should be considered in such type of trainings in the future?</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>					

Thank you for your time!

Appendix B: Evaluation Questionnaire for Lecturers of the Training “Digitalization”

EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LECTURERS TRAINING „DIGITALIZATION”

The lecturer should evaluate the course with overall grade (very good, good, satisfactory, unsatisfactory, bad).

THE LEVEL OF SATISFACTION		very good (5)	good (4)	satisfactory (3)	unsatisfactory (2)	bad (1)
1	How do you evaluate the level of the trainees' knowledge at the beginning of training?					
2	How do you evaluate the level of the trainees' knowledge at the end of training?					
3	How do you evaluate trainees' work and learning organization?					
4	How do you evaluate the cooperation with trainees?					
5	How do you evaluate trainees' engagement?					
6	How do you evaluate trainees' preparation to work independently?					
	How do you evaluate overall atmosphere of the training?					
6	In your opinion, what kind of changes should be considered in such type of trainings in the future?					

Thank you for your time !

Appendix C: Evaluation Interview for Enterprises involved in the Training “Digitalization”

TRAINING / EDUCATION EVALUATION: FEEDBACK FROM ENTERPRISES AFTER 1-3 MONTHS FROM TRAINING

The interviewer will ask the following questions from each enterprises’ representant.

1. Usefulness: Was the participation in the training „Digitalization“ useful for your company? Why? Which skills and abilities you improve after participation in the training?
2. Content: Did the training contain issues and topics needed in your business? Was something missing? If, what?
3. Implementation: Have you introduced the solutions proposed during the training to the activities of your company? If not, what were the difficulties?
4. Future activities: What skills, knowledge and resources do you need for your company to implement the solutions presented during the training?
5. Training: What could have been done differently? What should have been done differently? What should not be changed?

Thank you for your answer!

EVALUATION REPORT "TRAINING DIGITALIZATION"

1. INTRODUCTION

IClinSMEs - Digital methods, toolbox and trainings for increasing customer innovation in SMEs" (IClinSMEs) – is carried out within the Erasmus+ program from 01.09.2020-31.08.2023.

The main aim of the project is to strengthen customer centric innovation in SMEs by increasing their digital competences.

The main assumptions of the project are:

- Customer centric innovation in SMEs, enhances the productivity and competitiveness of SME's, safeguard existing jobs and creates new ones.
- Digital technologies enable SMEs to implement customer centric innovations faster and better.

In the participating countries Denmark, Germany, Hungary and Poland, the level of knowledge of the concept customer-centric innovation is quite low. Especially in Eastern European countries, SMEs have very low innovation activity and there are large differences between SMEs and large companies. The participation in cooperation with customer is low. In the field of customer innovation, SMEs find it difficult to innovate. Particularly in these countries with the lower level of innovativeness like Hungary and Poland, the relevant skills and competencies must be significantly improved and high-quality achieved.

Moreover, in all the countries participating project countries, the participation in further training the skills and competencies in further training programmes should be strongly improved. While there are solid digitalization training capacities in Denmark, there is inadequate capacity in the other participating countries. Companies have no or little experience with digitalization training.

2. METHODOLOGY OF EVALUATION

The objective of the evaluation is to determine whether the goals of the program will be achieved in the implementations evaluated, and how the program has impact on student's career and opportunities. An evaluation concept consisting of two feedback surveys, one with closed questions each for teachers and participants and one interview within 1-3 months after the end of the training named:

- 1) Written survey of all participants at the end of the face-to-face training (Survey of participants)
- 2) Written survey of all teachers using at the end of the face-to-face training (Survey of teachers)
- 3) Interview with selected enterprises after 1-3 months from the training (Interview after 1-3 months from the training)

The evaluation process will be as follows:

- The participants of the Training will receive an online Semi-structured questionnaire at the end of the training.
- Time for the survey (approx. 10 minutes) will be allocated in the end of the course.
- The facilitator of the training informs the participants about the evaluation and its importance for further development actions. The purpose of the questionnaire and how the data will be used should be explained clearly to the participants. This will help to improve the response rate and encourage the participants to make comments that can be useful to improve future programs.
- The questionnaires are being filled in online and submitted automatically and anonymously to the evaluator of the training.
- The evaluator analyses all feedback surveys and summarizes them in a written analysis. Based on that, recommendations for the adjustment and future use of the curriculum result.
- Teachers complete a questionnaire for teachers immediately after the training.
- The interviews with selected participants are conducted within 1-3 months after the end of the training.

The evaluation approach will be based on a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. The Microsoft Excel package will be used to transcribe the feedbacks and interviews. Open questions will be categorized, and qualitative analysis of the groups will be done.

The final evaluation report will discuss the following issues:

- Did the curriculum reach the targets?
- How well was the knowledge creation and sharing realized?
- Did the participants assimilate knowledge and tools?
- Was the venue and equipment appropriate for the training course?
- What kind of further development will be needed, if any?

The schedule of the evaluation should be matched to the phases of the curriculum. There is no sense to evaluate the course before the students have a true and fair view of the course, its phases and contents. A closer schedule of each evaluation will be agreed later.

2.1 THE AIM OF THE STUDY AND EVALUATION REPORT

General objectives of the project is to:

- a) Develop, promote and strengthen digital competences in SMEs.
- b) To continuously implement fully customer-centred innovation in SMEs, thereby
- c) To strengthen the productivity and competitiveness of SMEs, safeguard existing jobs and create new ones.

General objectives set in this way will be achieved through, among others: develop, implement and evaluate further training program “Digital competence training program”.

The general aim of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of training “Digital competence training program” realized within the Project “Digital methods, toolbox and trainings for increasing customer innovation in SMEs” (IClinSMEs) carried out in Denmark, Hungary and Poland.

The conclusions of the evaluation research will contribute to improve the quality and especially the effectiveness of training, show the limitations of the training model and indicate the direction for further activities.

2.2 DATA SOURCES

Trial of the SME specific training and coaching programme has been carried out under different national conditions in Denmark, Hungary and Poland with at least 15 owners, managers and professionals of at least 10 SMEs each.

The trainings were carried out in Poland, Denmark and Hungary by 4 project partners:

- Warmińsko-Mazurska Izba Rzemiosła i Przedsiębiorczości (PP4 WIRP), Poland
- International Business College (PP6 IBC), Denmark
- Ipartestületek Országos Szövetsége (PP7 IPOSZ), Hungary
- Dolnośląska Izba Rzemieślnicza we Wrocławiu (PP9 DIRW), Poland

Table 1. Selection of participants, possible admission requirements

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PP4 WIRP	All participants are representatives of Polish SMEs. They are employees/entrepreneurs dealing with the topics of digitization, innovation and customer relations, as the whole project is aimed at introducing digital solutions that will help create innovations with the participation of customers. They represented 10 sectors: management (managers, office directors), training/education, car mechanic, electrician, hairdresser, insurance, optician, legal counsellor, chimney sweep, carpenter, bioenergo-therapist, office worker (projects).
PP6 IBC	All the participants were representative from Danish SMEs (under 250 employees) and voluntarily choose this course. Although the training has mainly involved start-up, micro and small businesses, but also suitable for training for larger companies in terms of providing them with digital, innovate and marketing skills. Skills where they can use directly in companies.
PP7 IPOSZ	A big advantage of the course was that, although the businesses were small, but they covered a very wide spectrum of the economy, from baker to photographer. This helped to crystallize the general elements of digitalization, which can then be used for a wide variety of professions and of course supplemented with professional specifics.
PP9 DIRW	Participants in the digitalization training were mainly entrepreneurs from micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in the Lower Silesian Voivodship. These included the profession of a hairdresser, artistic jewellery, artist, sworn translator, tailor, car mechanic, car mechanic, construction industry, stonemason, renewable energy, derealisation company, business consulting.

All partners dedicated the training to the SME sector. The employees/entrepreneurs represented various industries. No additional admission requirements were introduced. Any interested employees/entrepreneurs from SMEs could take part in the training.

Table 2. How were the participants approached and won?

PP4 WIRP	Information about the course was sent via email to organizations affiliated with our Chamber of Crafts and cooperating companies, and through them to Craftsmen. Participants who applied for participation were then qualified for the course.
PP6 IBC	All participants are students / apprentices in SMEs in Denmark and the opportunities to develop/maintain their own web shop. Not only from sales, retail- and marketing but also teams from production, maintain, craftsmanship, retail, distribution, stock and development of products. The participants were from many sectors, but mostly retailers/shops and primarily from SMEs.
PP7 IPOSZ	The training was advertised on the Iposz' and Sztav' (Adult training institution) websites. Two participants applied via these advertisements. Direct marketing strategies (phone calls and e-mails and many face-to-face conversations) were used to reach most of the participants. The other 8

	participants were gathered this way. The participating businesses are mostly bound to one region, so the course also serves as a model for how similar courses can be organized in other regions of Hungary.
PP9 DIRW	The training was announced on the website and on social media (Instagram, FB). Information with the invitation was also sent by email. As a result, 17 participants signed up. The trainees came from one region - Lower Silesia.

All partners mainly used digital channels to inform potential participants about the training. Most of them used their own website and social media. The training was also informed using traditional communication channels in the field of direct marketing strategies, such as: phone calls, e-mails and many face-to-face conversations.

Table 3. Number of participants

PP4 WIRP	18 participants from 17 different companies
PP6 IBC	13 participants; 1 day-course 2023
PP7 IPOSZ	10 participants from 10 SMEs
PP9 DIRW	17 participants from at least 10 SMEs

Each partner complied with the condition at least 10 owners, managers and professionals of at least 10 SMEs each.

Table 4. Number of lessons, amount of self-study learning

PP4 WIRP	The training was divided into three parts. The first meeting took place on October 27, 2022. This was followed by a four-week break to implement new solutions in companies, try out the digital tools presented during the training, analyse the situation in the company or self-study. The same group of participants then returned for a summary and further training on November 29, 2022. One training day included 8 hours. The self-study lasted 4 weeks. Afterwards, course participants had the opportunity to receive individual consultations according to their needs.
PP6 IBC	Our advice and recommended preparation 8-10 hours about “what is digitalization?”. The training is a 1-day course (in real live, synchrony and 7,4 hours a day) + some self-study and training directly in their companies with recommended minimum 10-15 hours praxis training in digital processes in their organizations. After one month there will be a follow-up-, dialogue- and evaluation stage. Afterwards there will be an opportunity for the participants to have an individual coaching/talk – “how they can get more help/learning from IBC to continue and develop digital process in their companies. This 1-day course with focus on AI was a part of a 6-week course with student from different companies. Then teaching

	where we were focused on how to train and raise the skills/competences of digitalization (here with focus on AI) for the participants. Given that process is not only to develop skills for a student but also give them skills they can use directly in their companies/jobs as apprentices. Furthermore, they also got other aspects in the digital areas link “how to manage home pages, build up new home pages, selling products on homepages, VR, MR, AR ect. All in combination while they are workers in compagnies. Also to raise the opportunities for SME to sell product and services to customers which are longer away and true digital and innovative opportunities.
PP7 IPOSZ	4 days of training. 5 lessons a day + 1-2 months of self-study with minimum 10 hours of individual coaching. Individual coaching started with a personal meeting and was supplemented with further personal or online conversations. The final training provided the opportunity to discuss the coaching experiences together with the group members.
PP9 DIRW	One training day: 8 lessons of 45 minutes + 2 months of self-study with individual consultations at the participant's workplace or on the phone. The individual consultation started with an in-person meeting and was followed up with further meetings or online discussions. Each time, the facilitator discussed the experience and needs for further training with willing participants. A summary of the training is presented in questionnaires from participants and trainers.

Project partners divided training into two parts: one of the parts was 1-4 days face-to-face training with at least two blocks and longer (1-3 months) periods of on-the-job learning in the participating SMEs. During this time, individual consultations with SMEs were conducted regarding selected projects to acquire and implement customer innovations. The organizers of the training conducted accompanying coaching by the teachers who organize the face-to-face teaching and by advisers from the chamber at the workplace.

Table 5. Organization of the implementation

PP4 WIRP	The purpose of the training was to introduce entrepreneurs to what the digitization of business is, to present the various aspects, and to familiarize entrepreneurs with the basics of dealing with the digital world. The training used practical exercises on computers and phones. The use of digital tools, programs and applications was practically tested. Many discussions were held. The trainees received answers to the questions they had and the problems they encountered when introducing various digital tools in their companies. During each day of the meeting there was also an opportunity for individual consultations. Participants also received training materials in the form of two presentations.
PP6 IBC	All the participants, in this 1-day course, have a background as apprentices in SMEs in Denmark where they will learn professional skills and competence in different areas. This course was a part of their 2 years

	<p>combination program – meaning that they often are 2 years in companies and 2-3x 6 weeks at IBC during those 2 years to train their skills. But when it comes to micro-skills and competences in digitalization and digital behavior, the knowledge of the participants was average compared to the other students during the last few years.</p> <p>IBC and their teachers always give an opportunity to operate an online counselling / coaching depending on what the needs/challenges are for the participants. Here the student and companies always can, afterwards, contact the teacher and ask for more help.</p> <p>One of the biggest challenges for the participants is the time and the opportunity. Many of the participants do not have the power to improve new technologies in their companies because they are apprentices. But some of the students are allowed to improve some of the digital thing in their organizations/companies. Many of those participants are working in daily days operations with personally and teams KPIs where digitalization is a part of their daily work and therefore with a high focus.</p>
PP7 IPOSZ	<p>The organization of the implementation was carried out by the staff of the IPOSZ together with the experts of the SZTÁV adult education institution involved in the implementation. The trainer himself also came from the expert background of the SZTÁV Adult Education Institute. Considering the already mentioned difficult circumstances, the organization required more time and energy than usually. The organization was also complicated by the fact that we had to carry out extensive background information activities beforehand in order to explain the objectives and essence of the project, since this is considered a new type of activity in the life of most businesses. The persons participating in the training were all those with extensive experience in training, both in the case of the IPOSZ and SZTÁV adult training institutions. The instructors have appropriate competencies in the fields of marketing, digital communication, business development, business coach and web design. The trainer made notes on each coaching process for each company. See trainer's description on the participants' development, which we attach. As a general comment, it should be mentioned that in the previously described difficult economic situation, it is not easy for the smallest businesses if they want to implement digital development. Two factors hinder their development: on the one hand, the costs of hardware and software, and on the other hand, the lack of appropriate expertise in their application and operation. Therefore, it would be very important that as many projects as possible should help the smallest micro-enterprises in these two areas.</p>
PP9 DIRW	<p>The organization of the implementation was handled by DIRW staff employed by the project, together with the teachers leading the workshops. The trainer made a note of the consultation process. The following is a statement by Mr Daniel Mikrut regarding the observation and feedback after the consultation and training.</p> <p>"From my point of view, cyber security online is one of the most important concerns of micro, small and medium-sized business owners for customer acquisition through social media. Entrepreneurs, especially those who have so far used more traditional methods of customer acquisition</p>

	such as whisper marketing, banner ads, flyers, among others, are very apprehensive about online customer service and have reservations about the effectiveness of this type of business activity. They do not see the need for social media activity and branding as they have a regular customer base. In addition, they report concerns about personal data being taken over by online fraudsters and do not know how to deal with the so-called "heist." Daniel Mikrut
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The employees of the chambers as well as teachers and lecturers from educational institutions who had appropriate competences in the field of digitalization were involved in the organization of the implementation.

Table 6. Brief notes on lecturers, their qualifications and experience

PP4 WIRP	The training was conducted by a digitization specialist, owner of an Internet company, Business Development Manager of BinSoft Ltd. The lecturer is the creator of the online community "Console Gamers". Since 2016, he has been associated with BinSoft, which transfers Polish companies into the world of digital management. The training was conducted in cooperation with the Chamber's staff responsible for the project.
PP6 IBC	All was carried out by teachers from IBC-Curser – Ms Helene Bo Olesen.
PP7 IPOSZ	The persons participating in the training were all those with extensive experience in training, both in the case of the IPOSZ and SZTÁV adult training institutions. The instructors have appropriate competencies in the fields of marketing, digital communication, business development, business coach and web design.
PP9 DIRW	The workshop on digitization was led by Mr Daniel Mikrut, owner of It Solves. He has a great deal of experience and knowledge related to the implementation of IT systems and their administration. He implements IT solutions resulting from assumptions developed in tailor-made business models based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Administration of IT systems based on hardware: Dell, IBM, HP, Cisco, VMware; 2. Management of central backup system based on: Veeam, Tivoli Storage Manager, SEP; 3. Technologies: Navision, Novell GroupWise, eDirectory, SLES, Active Directory and SUSE.

Each of the project partners ensured a high level of competence of the lecturers who conducted the training. The lecturers had sufficient experience to conduct training and consultations for SMEs on the subject of digitalization.

Table 7. Participants profile and organisation of the training

PP4 WIRP	9 Male, 9 Female aged 35-74 from 10 different sectors

PP6 IBC	13 Female aged 18-25 from different enterprises
PP7 IPOSZ	2 Male, 8 Female aged 30-60 from different enterprises
PP9 DIRW	5 Male, 12 Female aged 30-70 from different enterprises

When it comes to the proportions of participation of women and men in the conducted training, the predominance of women in every country is clearly noticeable. On the other hand, in PP4 WIRP there is a noticeable balance in the proportion of women and men. The age range of training participants ranges from 18 to 74 years old. Sectors of the participating SMEs are differential. No dominant sector was identified in the study.

2.3 EXECUTION OF THE TRAINING

All project partners responsible for trial of the training, applied curriculum and carried out the training. Partners used concept and curriculum and teaching materials for SME prepared by Partner 6 IBC (International Business College, Denmark) on the base on the results of Output O1 “Best Practice customer-centric innovation and digitization”. In all countries, the training used practical exercises, group work, exchange of experiences and also individual consultations. The training used practical exercises on computers and phones. The use of digital tools, programs and applications was practically tested. Many discussions were held. The trainees received answers to the questions they had and the problems they encountered when introducing various digital tools in their companies. During each day of the meeting there was also an opportunity for individual consultations.

In Denmark, most of the material was prepared from IBC side. But the way the teacher designed the program was with a high energy, many exercises, and flip overs (papers), iPad, computers and power point. A didactic wish was to change the learning environment many times. Therefore, the teacher used the whole building/institution like small/micro rooms, halls, classrooms, open places, meeting places etc.

In Hungary, a big advantage of the course was that, although the businesses were small, but they covered a very wide spectrum of the economy, from flower decorator to robotic expert. This helped to crystallize the general elements of digitalization, which can then be used for a wide variety of professions and of course supplemented with professional specifics. In Hungary and Poland training organizers emphasized, that the materials prepared by the Danish Partner PP 6 (IBC) helped a lot in the designing of the training. Both in Poland and in Hungary noted, that there was taken into account the existing economic environment, the legal regulations and the often-different development level and economic opportunities exist in these countries for small business. The participants represented quite different industries on the one hand and had different skills and experience in managing a small business on the other.

By partner PP 4 WIRP the participants' very low knowledge and skills in digital tools appeared to be a challenge. Many participants have been running their companies unchanged for many years and modern methods of contacting customers, collecting feedback or the topic of innovation are a problem for them.

By Partner PP9 DIRW, due to various national conditions the testing of the training was conducted based on a framework (1 day onsite plus continuous coaching and advisory support) die KAIN method was adapted to national conditions. One of which is the fact that the continuous education system for SMEs is currently in its development stage and due to entrepreneur time limitations, a Chamber decided to provide CE to SMEs on a step-by-step basis. The chamber decided to start out with a one-day program as it was sure to attract and motivate the entrepreneurs in this region, and they succeeded in doing so as multiple participants stated that they would be interested in workshops in the future etc. They were motivating their entrepreneurs to understand that the time and effort that they put in for trainings will then in consequence allow them to implement innovation and have an impact on development of digitalization methods and it's implementation in the companies.

3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

3.1 TRAINING MEASURE: WARMIŃSKO-MAZURSKA IZBA RZEMIOSŁA I PRZEDSIĘBIORCZOŚCI, POLAND

Training measure: Digital competence training program

Test of the training measure: Warmińsko-Mazurska Izba Rzemiosła i Przedsiębiorczości, Poland (PP4 WIRP)

Scope of the training: 1-day face-to-face training included 8 hours.

Conducting training – 1 teacher

Data collection: by PP4 WIRP

3.11 SURVEY OF PARTICIPANTS

Research tool: Written survey of all participants at the end of the face-to-face training

Participants: 18 people (9 male, 9 female)

Age: from 35 to 74 years old

Count of cases: 9

They were representatives of 17 enterprises from 10 sectors:

- management (managers, office directors) – 3
- training/education – 2
- car mechanic – 2
- electrician – 2
- hairdresser – 2
- insurance; optician; legal counselor; chimney sweep; carpenter; bioenergotherapist, office worker (projects) – 1 person each.

Table 8 presents the number and gender of participants who took part in the training. The online survey questionnaire was answered immediately after the face-to-face training by 9 respondents; 55,6% percent (5 participants) were male and 44,4% percent (4 participants) were female.

Table 8. Participants by gender

Gender	Number of participants	%
Female	4	44,4%
Male	5	55,6%
Total	9	100,0%

Table 9 presents the age of participants. Out of all respondents 66,7 percent were age 21-50 (6 participants), 33,3 percent were aged over 51 years old (3 participants).

Table 9. Participants by age

Age	Number of participants	%
< 20	0	0%
21-50	6	66,7%
>51	3	33,3%
Total	9	100%

Table 10 presents the size structure of the company from which the training participant came.

Out of all respondent's 55,6 percent represented small enterprises (5 participants), 44,4 percent participants came from medium enterprises (4 participants).

Table 10. Participants by the size of enterprise

The size of the enterprise	Number of participants	%
micro	0	0%
small	5	55,6%
medium	4	44,4%
Total	9	100%

Table 11 presents the length of the company's activity on the market. All respondents work in enterprises operated longer than 5 years on the market (9 participants).

Table 11. Participants by the length of the company's activity on the market

The length of the company's activity on the market	Number of participants	%
< 1 year	0	0%
1-2 years	0	0%
2-5 years	0	0%
>5 years	9	100%
Total	9	100%

Respondents were asked a number of questions to determine their satisfaction with the teachers and training organisation (Table 12). The overall results indicate that participants were very satisfied with the organisation of the training. The participants evaluated good (4.88) the substantive preparation of the teacher for the training. The lowest level of satisfaction in this part of the study would be the level of the clarity and understandability of the communication (4.55). Trainees were satisfied with teaching materials relevance in everyday work (4.66). The accuracy, professionalism and involvement of the answering to the participants' questions were evaluated on the very high level (5.00). They agreed that the training program implementation was good (4.77). This may result from the indication of additional training topics that would be worth including in subsequent training on these topics, which was pointed out by the training participants in additional suggestions. Trainees were extremely satisfied with the atmosphere of the training (5.0). The level of communication of the teacher with the group was also rated at a high level (5.00). Participants evaluated also very high the arranging of work and training (5.00) and the training background (classroom, tools, etc.) (4,88). Total results in this part of the questionnaire (4.86) indicate that participants were satisfied with the teachers and the training organisation.

Table 12. The evaluation of the teachers and the training organisation (the level of satisfaction).

I part. The evaluation of the teachers and the training organisation (the level of satisfaction)	Level of satisfaction (5-very good, 4-good, 3-satisfactory, 2-unsatisfactory, 1-bad)
The substantive preparation	4.88
The clarity and understandability of the communication	4.55
Teaching materials relevance in everyday work	4.66
The accuracy, professionalism and involvement of the answering to the participants' questions	5.00
The ability to attract participants to the topic and engage them to the training	4.88
The level of training programme implementation	4.77
The atmosphere of the training	5.00
The level of communication of the teacher with the group	5.00
The arranging of work and training	5.00
The training background (classroom, tools, etc.)	4.88

I part. The evaluation of the teachers and the training organisation (the level of satisfaction)	Level of satisfaction (5-very good, 4-good, 3-satisfactory, 2-unsatisfactory, 1-bad)
Total	4.86

Table 13 presents participants' evaluation of the usefulness of the training for participants. The results show that the training fulfilled trainees' expectations (4.77). They agree, that the training improve their abilities in the topic of the training (4.66) and improve their knowledge within the topic of the training (4.66). Furthermore, it was not agreed highly that the training will be useful for trainees in the job. The results show that trainees found it possible to use acquired knowledge and skills in everyday work (4.55), but the answers were not so optimistic in comparison to others. Overall assessment of the training was good (4.70). The last question was about opinion, what kind of changes should be considered in such type of trainings in the future. In answers there was two opinions, that the next training should be extended to the following topics: "digitization of production and advertising processes (youtube, tiktok), membership in purchasing and sales groups". The second suggestion was to repeat the training. It shows, that one day of the training is not enough for participants.

Tabel 14. The evaluation of the usefulness of the training for the participant

II part. The evaluation of the usefulness of the training for the participant	Level of satisfaction (5-very good, 4-good, 3-satisfactory, 2-unsatisfactory, 1-bad)
Were your expectations fulfilled with the training?	4.77
Did the training help you to improve the abilities in the topic of the training?	4.66
Did the training improve your knowledge within the topic of the training?	4.66
What is your assessment of the possibility of using acquired knowledge and skills in everyday work?	4.55
What is your assessment of the training program?	4.88
In your opinion, what kind of changes should be considered in such type of trainings in the future?	<i>"Digitization of production and advertising processes (youtube, tiktok), membership in purchasing and sales groups"</i>

II part. The evaluation of the usefulness of the training for the participant	Level of satisfaction (5-very good, 4-good, 3-satisfactory, 2-unsatisfactory, 1-bad)
Total	4.70

3.12 SURVEY OF TEACHERS

Count of cases: 1

Research tool: Written survey of all teachers using at the end of the face-to-face training.

Teachers were asked a number of questions to evaluate participants' knowledge and engagement during the training (table 15). The results indicate that the teacher was not very satisfied with the trainees' knowledge at the beginning of the training (3.0). On the other hand, the trainer was satisfied with the level of the trainees' knowledge at the end of training (4,0). Moreover, he was content with trainees' work and learning organization (5.0). The cooperation with trainees (5.0), trainees' engagement (5.0) and trainees' preparation to work independently (5.0) were evaluated highly by the teacher. He was very satisfied with the overall atmosphere of the training (5.0). According to the opinion of the teacher, there are any changes they should be considered in such type of trainings in the future.

Table 15. Evaluation questionnaire for teachers

Teacher evaluation of the training	Level of satisfaction (5-very good, 4-good, 3-satisfactory, 2-unsatisfactory, 1-bad)
How do you evaluate the level of the trainees' knowledge at the beginning of training?	3.00
How do you evaluate the level of the trainees' knowledge at the end of training?	4.00
How do you evaluate trainees' work and learning organization?	5.00
How do you evaluate the cooperation with trainees?	5.00
How do you evaluate trainees' engagement?	5.00
How do you evaluate trainees' preparation to work independently?	5.00

Teacher evaluation of the training	Level of satisfaction (5-very good, 4-good, 3-satisfactory, 2-unsatisfactory, 1-bad)
How do you evaluate overall atmosphere of the training?	5.00
In your opinion, what kind of changes should be considered in such type of trainings in the future?	"No changes"
Total	4.57

Total results (4,57) in this part of questionnaire indicate that the teacher was very satisfied with the training overall. The satisfaction with the increase in the knowledge of the participants of the training indicates its effective conduct and the effectiveness of the training methods used.

3.13 INTERVIEW AFTER 1-3 MONTHS FORM THE TRAINING

Count of cases: 7

Research tool: Interview with selected enterprises within 1-3 months after the training

In order to assess the effectiveness of the training and obtain feedback in the period within 1-3 months after the training, an interview was conducted with selected participants of the training. As part of the study, the usefulness of the training for the company, the content of the training and possible suggestions for the future, implementation and identification of possible barriers that may have appeared at this stage and possible additions of knowledge in order to successfully implement the concept were assessed.

The WIRP project partner conducted 7 interviews within 1-3 months after the end of the training. The questions were open-ended. The structured interview tool was used to conduct the study.

1. Usefulness: Was the participation in the training „Digitalization“ useful for your company? Why? Which skills and abilities you improve after participation in the training?

1/ *“Yes, useful. The training provided me with information on what digital tools I can use in my company to encourage customers to join the process of creating innovations and how to increase the reach of the company.”*

2/ *“It was so useful because I got to know new forms of company promotion. Better web browsing.”*

3/ *“Yes, useful. I learned how to promote my brand on the Internet.”*

4/ *“The training was very useful for my company. Thanks to it, I improved the functioning of my company's website and participation in social media, which definitely increased the attractiveness of my company among potential customers.”*

5/ *“The training was interesting, but i did not enter anything in the company, payments are made by an accountant and by computer, because everything is more clear and safer.”*

6/ *“Yes, it was useful. It turned out that I have big deficiencies in advertising over the Internet. I learned how to get customers.*

7/ *“Participation in the training was useful, I learned about safe use of the Internet, new applications and software, I improved e.g. the ability to communicate remotely using digital technologies.”*

2. Content: Did the training contain issues and topics needed in your business? Was something missing? If, what?

1/ *“Yes, the training contained very useful topics and issues for the development of my company.”*

2/ *“Yes, the training included the necessary topics.”*

3/ *“I think it contained.”*

4/ *“The training was sufficient, and the issues were presented in an accessible way.”*

5/ *“Our company is electrical services, and the subjects of the training are not applicable in company.”*

6/ *“The topics were needed, as I mentioned, for the possibility of acquiring customers and expanding advertising via the Internet.”*

7/ *“The training included topics that interested us, I am very happy to take part in the meeting.”*

3. Implementation: Have you introduced the solutions proposed during the training to the activities of your company? If not, what were the difficulties?

1/ *“Yes, one of the suggestions during the training was the use of a currency payment in the company using the Revolut tool, which was used in my company.”*

2/ *“This is how it was implemented.”*

3/ *"Thanks to the proposed solutions, I improved my own profile on Facebook and LinkedIn."*

4/ *"The solutions presented during the training are systematically implemented in my company (improving the website and my company's participation in social media)."*

5/ *"I did not implemented."*

6/ *"Of course."*

7/ *"After the training, we introduced the proposed solutions."*

4. Future activities: What skills, knowledge and resources do you need for your company to implement the solutions presented during the training?

1/ *"Recognition of the topic of Digitization and Innovation."*

2/ *"More knowledge about internet news."*

3/ *"Not applicable."*

4/ *"Not applicable."*

5/ *"Training worked but not for my industry."*

6/ *"I need more computer knowledge."*

7/ *"I believe that we need skills on how to use the potential of the Internet to provide all employees with e-learning opportunities and improve their competences."*

5. Training: What could have been done differently? What should have been done differently? What should not be changed?

1/ *"The training was interesting, it provided me with new knowledge that I will use in practice. Interesting topic, interesting way of conducting."*

2/ *"The form of the training – correct, extensive knowledge of the lecturers, a lot of news that I did not know about."*

3/ *"No comments - The training was conducted in a professional manner."*

4/ *"I believe that the training was conducted in accordance with my expectations and the content was presented in an interesting way."*

5/ *"Training is not for my industry."*

6/ *"Everything was consistent and legible, and the message was perfect."*

7/ *"Demand for this type of digital skills training is high, dynamically developing digital technologies are present in all aspects of life."*

The analysis of responses received from enterprises in the period of 1-3 months after the training shows the high effectiveness of the training. The assessment of the usefulness of the training for the company's operations was assessed very positively. In particular, attention was paid to the introduction of improvements in the functioning of the company in terms of better using of digital tools, website and social media.

The training showed the company how safe use of the Internet, new applications and software, It improved e.g. the ability to communicate remotely using digital technologies. The usefulness of the training was confirmed in the statement about big deficiencies in advertising over the Internet. Participants learned how to get customers. The respondents also showed that they became interested in the topic of what digital tools can be used in company to encourage customers to join the process of creating innovations and how to increase the reach of the company.

The comments emphasized the importance of introducing digital tools in the enterprise. It was recognized that the training was also useful in the context of new forms of company promotion, especially of better web browsing. The interlocutors also emphasized the acquired knowledge, how to promote my brand on the Internet.

Only one of the respondents had a negative opinion on the usefulness of the training for their business, which was justified by the fact that in his company there is not enter anything in the company, payments are made by an accountant and by computer, because everything is more clear and safer.

In assessing the content of the training and possible shortcomings, most of the interlocutors indicated that the issues and topics discussed during the training were in line with the needs of the company. Entrepreneurs indicated that the training was interesting and broadened their knowledge in the subject. None of the participants of the training reported proposals for changes or possible deficiencies in the training. Only one of the respondents had a negative opinion on the content of the training for their business which was justified by the fact that this company is electrical services, and the subjects of the training are not applicable in company.

In the next part of the interview, the question was asked whether the proposed concept had been implemented in the company of the training participant. In this regard, opinions were divided. Some of the respondents definitely stated that the learned solutions were implemented in the company's operations. The limitation resulting from the size of the enterprise is noteworthy. One of the respondents didn't implemented solutions form the training. However, the reasons why the solutions have not been introduced into the company's operations have not been given. Some of the respondents are in the phase of preparing to implement the solution learned during the training.

The next part of the interview was devoted to future activities. The question was what skills, knowledge and resources are needed for companies to implement the solutions presented during the training. Most of the training participants indicated that they

needed skills on how to use the potential of the Internet to provide all employees with e-learning opportunities and improve their competences. Attention was also paid to more knowledge about Internet news and computer knowledge. One of the respondents stated that training worked but not for my industry.

The last question in the interview was about suggestions for changes and improvements to improve the training in the future. The vast majority of interviewees expressed very positive opinions about the training. It was pointed out that there is the demand for this type of digital skills training is high, dynamically developing digital technologies are present in all aspects of life.

3.2 TRAINING MEASURE: INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS COLLEGE, DENMARK

Training measure: Digital competence training program

Test of the training measure: International Business School, Denmark

Scope of the training: 1-day face-to-face training

Conducting training – 1 teacher

Data collection: by PP6 IBC

3.21 SURVEY OF PARTICIPANTS

Research tool: Follow up after the face-to-face training

Participants: 13 people (all females)

Age: from 18 to 25 years old

Count of cases: 6

All the participants, in this 1-day course, have a background as apprentices in SMEs in Denmark where they will learn professional skills and competence in different areas. All participants are students / apprentices in SMEs in Denmark and the opportunities to develop/maintain their own web shop. Not only from sales, retail- and marketing but also teams from production, maintain, craftsmanship, retail, distribution, stock and development of products.

Table 16 presents the number and gender of participants who took part in the training. The online survey questionnaire was answered immediately after the face-to-face training by 6 respondents; all participants (6) were female.

Table 16. Participants by gender

Gender	Number of participants	%
Female	6	100%
Male	0	0%

Total	6	100%
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Table 17 presents the age of participants. All respondents 100 percent were age 21-50 (6 participants).

Table 17. Participants by age

Age	Number of participants	%
< 20	0	0%
21-50	6	100%
>51	0	0%
Total	6	100%

Table 18 presents the size structure of the company from which the training participant came.

Out of all respondent's 50 percent represented medium enterprises (3 participants), 33,3 percent participants came from small enterprises (2 participants) and one participant (16,7%) came from micro enterprises (1 participant).

Table 18. Participants by the size of enterprise

The size of the enterprise	Number of participants	%
micro	1	16,7%
small	2	33,3%
medium	3	50%
Total	6	100%

Table 19 presents the length of the company's activity on the market. All respondents work in enterprises operated longer than 5 years on the market (6 participants).

Table 19. Participants by the length of the company's activity on the market

The length of the company's activity on the market	Number of participants	%
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< 1 year	0	0%
1-2 years	0	0%
2-5 years	0	0%
>5 years	6	100%
Total	6	100%

Respondents were asked a number of questions to determine their satisfaction with the teachers and training organisation (Table 20). The overall results indicate that participants were satisfied with the organisation of the training. The participants evaluated good (4.33) the substantive preparation of the teacher for the training. In comparison to other partners, it is the lowest level of satisfaction in this part of the study. The participants evaluated the clarity and understandability of the communication as good (4.66). Trainees were also satisfied with the quality of the teaching materials (4.66). The accuracy, professionalism, and involvement of the answering to the participants' questions were evaluated on good level (4.33). They agreed that the training program implementation was good (4.66). Trainees were satisfied with the atmosphere of the training (4.66). The level of communication of the teacher with the group was also rated at a high level (4.83). Participants evaluated organisation of the work during the training (4.00) and the training background (classroom, tools, etc.) (4.33) at the lowest level in this part of the study. Total results in this part of the questionnaire (4.51) indicate that participants were satisfied with the teachers and the training organisation.

Table 20. The evaluation of the teachers and the training organisation (the level of satisfaction).

I part. The evaluation of the teachers and the training organisation (the level of satisfaction)	Level of satisfaction (5-very good, 4-good, 3-satisfactory, 2-unsatisfactory, 1-bad)
Substantive preparation	4.33
Clarity and understandability of the communication	4.66
Quality of teaching materials	4.66
Accuracy, professionalism and involvement of the answering to the participants' questions	4.33
Ability to attract participants to the topic and engage them to the training	4.66
Level of training programme implementation	4.66

I part. The evaluation of the teachers and the training organisation (the level of satisfaction)	Level of satisfaction (5-very good, 4-good, 3-satisfactory, 2-unsatisfactory, 1-bad)
Atmosphere of the training	4.66
Teacher's communication with the group	4.83
Organisation of the work during the training	4.00
Training background (classroom, tools, etc.)	4.33
Total	4.51

Table 21 presents participants' evaluation of the usefulness of the training for participants. The results show that the training rather fulfilled trainees' expectations (3.83). The participants agreed that the training improve their abilities in the topic of the training (4.33) and improve their knowledge within the topic of the training (4.66). Furthermore, it was not agreed highly that the training will be useful for trainees in the job. The results show that trainees found it possible to use acquired knowledge and skills in everyday work (3.83), but the answers were not so optimistic in comparison to others. Overall assessment of the training was good (4.23). The last question was about opinion, what kind of changes should be considered in such type of trainings in the future. There were no answers and suggestions in this part of the study.

Tabel 21. The evaluation of the usefulness of the training for the participant

II part. The evaluation of the usefulness of the training for the participant	Level of satisfaction (5-very good, 4-good, 3-satisfactory, 2-unsatisfactory, 1-bad)
Did the training meet your expectations?	3.83
Did the training help you to improve the abilities in the topic of the training?	4.33
Did the training improve your knowledge within the topic of the training?	4.66
How do you assess the possibility of using the acquired knowledge and skills in everyday work?	3.83
How do you evaluate the training program in general?	4.50

II part. The evaluation of the usefulness of the training for the participant	Level of satisfaction (5-very good, 4-good, 3-satisfactory, 2-unsatisfactory, 1-bad)
In your opinion, what kind of changes should be considered in such type of trainings in the future?	<i>No answer</i>
Total	4.23

3.22 SURVEY OF TEACHERS

Count of cases: 1

Research tool: Written survey of all teachers using at the end of the face-to-face training.

Teachers were asked a number of questions to evaluate participants' knowledge and engagement during the training (Table 22). The results indicate that the teacher was very satisfied with the trainees' knowledge at the beginning of the training (5.0). On the other hand the trainer was very satisfied with the level of the trainees' knowledge at the end of training (5.0). Moreover, she was content with trainees' work and learning organization (5.0). The cooperation with trainees (5.0), trainees' engagement (5.0) and trainees' preparation to work independently (5.0) were evaluated highly by the teacher. She was very satisfied with the overall atmosphere of the training (5.0). According to the opinion of the teacher, there are any changes they should be considered in such type of trainings in the future.

Table 22. Evaluation questionnaire for teachers (PP6 IBC)

Teacher evaluation of the training	Level of satisfaction (5-very good, 4-good, 3-satisfactory, 2-unsatisfactory, 1-bad)
How do you evaluate the level of the trainees' knowledge at the beginning of training?	5.00
How do you evaluate the level of the trainees' knowledge at the end of training?	5.00
How do you evaluate trainees' work and learning organization?	5.00
How do you evaluate the cooperation with trainees?	5.00
How do you evaluate trainees' engagement?	5.00

Teacher evaluation of the training	Level of satisfaction (5-very good, 4-good, 3-satisfactory, 2-unsatisfactory, 1-bad)
How do you evaluate trainees' preparation to work independently?	5.00
How do you evaluate overall atmosphere of the training?	5.00
In your opinion, what kind of changes should be considered in such type of trainings in the future?	No answer
Total	5.00

Total results (5.00) in this part of questionnaire indicate that the teacher was very satisfied with the training overall. As part of the proposed changes in the training for the future, there was no answer.

The training organizer IBC also added other observations and feedback from lecturers in the training summary:

“A good course with good and eager to learn. Interesting and exceptional good learning environment. Perfect materiel, exercises and presentations. Good food. The participants were “hungry” for more learning.”

IBC and their teachers always give an opportunity to operate an online counselling / coaching depending on what the needs/challenges are for the participants. Here the student and companies always can, afterwards, contact the teacher and ask for more help. One of the biggest challenges for the participants is the time and the opportunity. Many of the participants do not have the power to improve new technologies in their companies because they are apprentices. But some of the students are allowed to improve some of the digital thing in their organizations/companies. Many of those participants are working in daily days operations with personally and teams KPIs where digitalization is a part of their daily work and therefore with a high focus.

3.23 INTERVIEW AFTER 1-3 MONTHS FORM THE TRAINING

Count of cases: 1

Research tool: Interview with selected enterprises after 1-3 months from the training

1. Usefulness: Was the participation in the training „Digitalization“ useful for your company? Why? Which skills and abilities you improve after participation in the training?

In general, is it difficult already to express whether it has yielded anything. Measured in terms of the individual innovation skills of those participants, the answer is yes. But transferred to their teams/organizations, the answer is limited.

And why; simply because we still did not have the time or/and opportunity to arrange a workshop regarding innovation. (But when the time and opportunity is there, we will).

For the persons who participant we are ready to improve an innovation workshop for their colleges/teams.

2. Content: Did the training contain issues and topics needed in your business? Was something missing? If, what?

It could of course be more industry oriented, but the basic innovative skills to carry out an innovative process have been acquired.

Nothing was missing.

3. Implementation: Have you introduced the solutions proposed during the training to the activities of your company? If not, what were the difficulties?

No unfortunately because there was no time and opportunity.

4. Future activities: What skills, knowledge and resources do you need for your company to implement the solutions presented during the training?

A great idea will be to arrange together with IBC to managing the process.

5. Training: What could have been done differently? What should have been done differently? What should not be changed?

The training could have been longer, but in general everything was good, perfect and not least - funny.

In order to assess the effectiveness of the training and obtain feedback in the period after 1-3 months from the training, an interview was conducted with selected participants of the training. As part of the study, the usefulness of the training for the company, the content of the training and possible suggestions for the future, implementation and identification of possible barriers that may have appeared at this stage and possible additions of knowledge in order to successfully implement the concept were assessed.

The IBC project partner conducted 2 interviews from 1-3 months after the end of the training. The questions were open-ended. The structured interview tool was used to conduct the study.

The way this "feedback after 3 months" was carried out was through a digital invitation on Facebook or/and by e-mail to an online workshop where we used the software; TEAMS. The participants had after 3 month the opportunity to participate in a semi-structured feedback-meeting on the 2-day innovation course.

Only 2 participants showed up for this digital workshop.

It is considered that two participants are better than none, but that the answers from the participants present were probably of limited validity.

3.3 TRAINING MEASURE: IPARTESTÜLETEK ORSZÁGOS SZÖVETSÉGE, HUNGARY

Training measure: Digital competence training programme

Test of the training measure: Ipartestületek Országos Szövetsége, Hungary (PP7 IP-OSZ)

Scope of the training: 4 days of training, 5 lessons a day + 1-2 months of self-study with minimum 10 hours of individual coaching

Conducting training – 1 teacher

Data collection: by PP7 IPOSZ

3.31 SURVEY OF PARTICIPANTS

Research tool: Written survey of all participants at the end of the face-to-face training

Participants: 10 people (8 male, 2 female)

Age: from 30 to 60 years old

Count of cases: 10

They were representatives of 10 enterprises from different sectors:

- Individually designed textile products
- Quality assurance consulting, robotics, mechanical engineering
- Real-estate agent, home staging
- DIY decorations
- Coach, and story therapist
- Textile products for children with a zero-waste approach, sew training
- Individually designed textile products, sew training
- Publishing book on speech therapy
- Lodging in rural tourism
- Selling special painting substance with consulting, induction

Table 23 presents the number and gender of participants who took part in the training. The online survey questionnaire was answered immediately after the face-to-face training by 10 respondents; 20 percent (2 participants) were male and 80 percent (8 participants) were female.

Table 23. Participants by gender

Gender	Number of participants	%
Female	8	20%
Male	2	80%
Total	10	100%

Table 24 presents the age of participants. Out of all respondents 70 percent were age 21-50 (7 participants), 30 percent were aged over 51 years old (3 participants).

Table 24. Participants by age

Age	Number of participants	%
< 20	0	0%
21-50	7	70%
>51	3	30%
Total	10	100%

Table 25 presents the structure of participants in terms of employment status. Out of all respondents 1 participant is business owner/manager (10%), 40 percent are employee (4 participants), 40 percent participants are contractor/starter contractor (4 participants), 1 participant has others employment status.

Table 25. Participants by the size of the enterprise

The size of the enterprise	Number of participants	%
Business owner/manager	1	10%
Employee	4	40%

Contractor/starter contractor	4	40%
Others	1	10%
Total	10	100%

Respondents were asked a number of questions to determine their satisfaction with the training organisation (Table 26). The overall results indicate that participants were very satisfied with the organisation of the training. The participants evaluated very good the training venue (location, room, etc.) and environment which evaluated as comfortable and conducive to the learning process. They agreed that the duration of the training was appropriate. Trainees were very satisfied with overall atmosphere of the training. The training met participant's expectations. Also high level of satisfaction in this part of the study is the usefulness of the training for the work. Trainees were completely satisfied with the training and they would recommend this training course to others. Total results in this part of the questionnaire indicate that participants are very satisfied with the teachers and the training organisation.

Table 26. The evaluation of the teachers and the training organisation (the level of satisfaction).

I part. Organization	Level of satisfaction (1-absolutely agree, 2-somewhat agree, 3-neither agree not disagree, 4-somewhat disagree, 5-absolutely disagree)
The overall organization was good.	1,3
The training venue (location, room, etc.) and environment was comfortable and conducive to the learning process.	1,4
The duration of the training was appropriate.	1,2
The overall atmosphere of the training was good.	1,0
The training met my expectations.	1,4
The training was useful for my work.	1,5
I am completely satisfied with the training I would recommend this training course to others.	1,3

I part. Organization	Level of satisfaction (1-absolutely agree, 2-some-what agree, 3-neither agree not disagree, 4-somewhat disagree, 5-absolutely disagree)
Comments related to the organization of the training...	<i>"I would be able to follow the theme better if I could see in advance what it would contain. The interactive form is practical, the time flew by almost imperceptibly"</i>
Total	1.30

Table 27 presents participants' evaluation of the content and methods of the training. The results show that the training fulfilled trainees' expectations in this area. They agreed that the content of the training was interesting and informative. Furthermore, it was not agreed highly that the training contents were relevant to the needs of participants.

The results show that trainees found it possible to use the knowledge and skills gained from this training Overall assessment of the training was very good. The last question was about comments to this part of evaluation. In answers there were opinion about more *"The comparison of online and offline approaches and differences could be clearer"* and *"More individual training, please"*.

Extremely high level of satisfaction was noted by evaluation of teachers.

Tabel 27. The evaluation of the usefulness of the training for the participant

II part. Content and methods	Level of satisfaction (1-absolutely agree, 2-some-what agree, 3-neither agree not disagree, 4-somewhat disagree, 5-absolutely disagree)
The content of the training was interesting and informative.	1,4
The methods of the training were suitable.	1,2
The training contents were relevant to my needs.	1,7

II part. Content and methods	Level of satisfaction (1-absolutely agree, 2-some-what agree, 3-neither agree not disagree, 4-somewhat disagree, 5-absolutely disagree)
I expect to use the knowledge and skills gained from this training.	1,4
Comments related to the content and methods of the training....	<i>“The comparison of online and offline approaches and differences could be clearer”.</i> <i>“More individual training, please”</i>
Total	1,43

II part. Lecturers/Trainers	Level of satisfaction (1-absolutely agree, 2-some-what agree, 3-neither agree not disagree, 4-somewhat disagree, 5-absolutely disagree)
The lecturers/trainers were communicative, friendly and approachable.	1
The lecturers/trainers were goal- and result-oriented.	1,1
The lecturers/trainers were competent and well prepared.	1
The lecturers/trainers responded well to questions and queries from the participants.	1
Comments related to lecturers/trainers...	<i>“Personalized and very interactive training”.</i> <i>“Practical examples”</i>
Total	1,03

3.32 SURVEY OF TEACHERS

Count of cases: 1

Research tool: Written survey of all teachers using at the end of the face-to-face training.

Teachers were asked a number of questions to evaluate participants' knowledge and engagement during the training (table 28). The results indicate that the teacher was very satisfied with the trainees' knowledge at the beginning of the training (5.0). The trainer was also very satisfied with the level of the trainees' knowledge at the end of training (5.0). Moreover, he was content with trainees' work and learning organization (5.0). The cooperation with trainees (5.0), trainees' engagement (5.0) and trainees' preparation to work independently (5.0) were evaluated highly by the teacher. She was very satisfied with the overall atmosphere of the training (5.0). The teacher also noted, that the with a homogeneous group of participants with a basis, progress could be more systematic.

Table 28. Evaluation questionnaire for teachers

Teacher evaluation of the training	Level of satisfaction (5-very good, 4-good, 3-satisfactory, 2-unsatisfactory, 1-bad)
How do you evaluate the level of the trainees' knowledge at the beginning of training?	5.00
How do you evaluate the level of the trainees' knowledge at the end of training?	5.00
How do you evaluate trainees' work and learning organization?	5.00
How do you evaluate the cooperation with trainees?	5.00
How do you evaluate trainees' engagement?	5.00
How do you evaluate trainees' preparation to work independently?	5.00
How do you evaluate overall atmosphere of the training?	5.00
In your opinion, what kind of changes should be considered in such type of trainings in the future?	<i>"With a homogeneous group of participants with a basic, progress could be more systematic."</i>
Total	5.00

Total results (5.00) in this part of questionnaire indicate that the teacher was very satisfied with the training overall. The satisfaction with the increase in the knowledge of

the participants of the training indicates its effective conduct and the effectiveness of the training methods used.

3.33 INTERVIEW AFTER 1-3 MONTHS FORM THE TRAINING

Count of cases: 10

Research tool: Interview with selected enterprises after 1-3 months from the training

In order to assess the effectiveness of the training and obtain feedback in the period after 1-3 months from the training, an interview was conducted with selected participants of the training. As part of the study, the usefulness of the training for the company, the content of the training and possible suggestions for the future, implementation and identification of possible barriers that may have appeared at this stage and possible additions of knowledge in order to successfully implement the concept were assessed.

The project partner IPOSZ conducted 10 interviews from 1-3 months after the end of the training. The questions were open-ended. The structured interview tool was used to conduct the study.

The results

1. Usefulness: Was the participation in the training „Customer-centered Innovations“ useful for your company? Why? Which skills and abilities you improve after participation in the training?

1/ “Yes, it was very useful, especially in terms of raising awareness. Developed communication to meet the needs of the client.

The training pointed out that there are three phases: I make the products I think I need, I'm at this point at now, secondly, if I know my target audience and their needs, I make the products they are looking for and thirdly, I expand the range of products I offer to what they are looking for.”

2/ “Yes, it was useful. I came to the training in a dual role, as a storytelling therapist and as a coach. I put storytelling on the back burner after the training because I started a coach training and I want to continue to do this as my main business.

I came to the training with a technical and attitudinal deficit. During the coaching session Tamás (the trainer and coach) pointed out why my website is not good: it's about what's in my head: I know this, do you like it? it worked on the basis of what I know, what I want, but it didn't focus on what the customer/client's problem was. When we talked through the structure of my business it turned out that there was no long-term goal either. I lacked a long-term mindset. We talked about how to write text on my website that would appeal to the customer, so that they would recognise their problem, describe what the problem is, what the feelings are associated with them so that they are more easily recognisable. Then, once that's done, I must

guide the customer through my website: describe what happens when they come to me for a consultation. I've also learned that it makes sense to write a blog post where I put myself in the customer's perspective, describe exactly what the problem is and provide a solution. This is also a way of building trust in myself in the eye of my would-be clients."

3/ "Yes, it was useful. It opened the possibility of getting customers. I came to the presentation with a dual role, my mother's business and opening my own new business. My mother's business remained in its original position because that generation is no longer open to the world of digitalisation. She is stuck doing business based on personal relationships. But the training has been extremely useful for me as a start-up, as it has strengthened me in offering my own web development business.

The coaching made me realise that I was approaching my clients in a forced way: I knew something, and I wanted to impose it on them. I learnt how to listen to the customer, how to welcome them and how to sell my knowledge by giving what the customer needs, not by propagating what I know and pushing it on them. I have learned what a good website is: the customer's need is recognized by the fact that the searchers see their own problems on the website. They can identify with them and with guiding them through the website, they can find solutions to the problems. Through the so called "trust points", the visitors are confirmed that they are visiting the website of a good professional ("trust points" e.g. with references on people with similar problems have been helped here). The visitors get confirmed that we know what we are doing here and they realise that our product/service is the answer to their problems so they will contact us.

I have learned that different types of customers need to be addressed differently within the website. The presentation of my expert status can be different. e.g. some people are convinced by case studies, others by the numbers of "results".

After the training I started my website maintenance and website editing business. The training gave me knowledge that I can use in my daily work. One of them is to show in the language of the buyer what my business can do. That is how buyers and sellers find each other. The training also taught me that it is necessary to specialise and to communicate in the language of the customer.

4/ "Yes, it was useful. It developed communication skills and strategic thinking".

5/ "Yes, it was useful because it developed marketing strategy, business approach, insight into the entrepreneurial world, self-reflection.

I would like to deal with speech therapy (private practice of speech therapy) and publishing a book with speech therapy content as a start-up.

During the coaching we looked at how to start building the business in the background, starting with book publishing first, while maintaining the status of being an employee, and then introducing afternoon sessions for private logopaedic

development while maintaining the status of being an employee at on other work-place. We also looked at the pitfalls of book publishing.

There was also a very instructive lesson: we went through the pricing with Tamás (the trainer and coach): I confessed that because of negative feedback that I was expensive from a mother, I had not raised the price of private speech therapy sessions for three years. We calculated how much profit I lost because I was intimidated by a negative review. Even though the same Mum was so pleased with me that she brought her other child to me for development. I learned that I should not be discouraged by an opinion.”

6/ *“Yes, it was useful. It improved the relationship with the clients, and the communication with them.*

There are three areas of my business: robotics, quality assurance and training. I would like to include robotics in training and quality management: Where can zero-waste productivity be achieved, e.g. programming the robot into production in such a way that there is no waste of time and raw materials. I believe, this should also be taught as an approach.”

7/ *“Yes, it was useful. We have reviewed my website. Tamás (the trainer and coach) suggested that I should have a basic one-page digital business card-like website (custom textile products and sewing courses).*

With the keyword research we established what I could build my website on, for improving my business.

We went over the basic budget that my business needs to run on. We also priced the sewing courses. We looked at what my expenses would be with them, what price I would have to charge for them.”

8/ *“Yes, it was useful, especially the business communication, the ways of contacting with the customer. It developed the ability to think with the customer’s mind when designing a website and marketing. But it’s also important to think with other people’s heads like your competitors.*

I run a long-established village catering guesthouse, which I complement with custom cooking and programmes. I came to the training with the intention of stretching out the season, which is a two-way process: on the one hand, I could give up the very strong summers to have time for my family, and on the other hand, I would have to strengthen the spring and autumn seasons, which have been very weak so far, so that the work is stretched out in terms of both workload and income within the year.”

9/ *“Yes, very much so. After the training, but especially after the coaching, I implemented all the suggestions that Tamás (the trainer and coach) and I had formulated and it became a real success story for me. Shortly after restructuring of my business and website in this way, I achieved the first month of 7 figures income from my business.*

What skills has it developed? Building self-confidence and improving communication.”

10/ “Yes, it was useful because during the coaching we were able to talk about how my business was going to be presented in the online space. I do real estate and home staging. My social media presence has become stronger after doing what was suggested during the coaching. I took the advice to showcase why home staging is good, which I have displayed posts about. I also wrote about the effectiveness of 3D tours in properties.”

2. Content: Did the training contain issues and topics needed in your business? Was something missing? If, what?

1/ “Yes, a lot. Basically, I started selling my decorations with an online store, in addition to doing fairs and exhibitions.

During the coaching, Tamás (the trainer and coach) pointed out that I didn't have the background work in the web shop to make it more profitable. I couldn't see how I could reach my target audience, how I could advertise. With Tamás I had defined my target audience, which was missing and how I could differentiate myself from other decorators, so I didn't have an image-creation.

About the web shop, we talked about structuring and expanding the product range as the next step. Scaling, building a product pyramid, e.g. with linked products is needed. This is not yet developed.

Extreme example, but e.g. for worship products, candle could be offered. Traditional or led. If traditional is chosen a lighter could also be offered. So to guide the customer through all the needs that arise. Even wreaths made from recycled materials could be offered because more and more people are interested in this.

I have to think about the same thing with wedding decorations, for example, reminding them that I can do the car decoration and the so called “thank you bouquet” for the bride's and groom's parents so with this all the floral decorations will be uniform. I can also offer delivery on top of that. So I need to think about and expand my services. I also need to assess the needs of the market so that I can offer the right ones.”

2/ “Yes, absolutely. First, it highlighted that there shouldn't be lecture-like writings on my website, simpler wording is better. Tamás also said that I can create a product pyramid from my services.”

3/ “Yes, a lot for my web development work. E.g., “what the customer prototypes look like”.

It's important to incorporate online connectivity into the life of a business because the environment has changed (which is why it's bad to see my mother's business stuck at the previous level).

To stay up to date in this changing world, entrepreneurial awareness and adaptability is essential. To build up the online presence of your business, you need to gather what positives you have and present them (e.g. customer reviews on your website).

What was missing? A customer language course. I would love to learn more about how to write customer-responsive texts on the website.

I really liked the structure of the training, training + coaching. I would have liked more coaching.”

4/ *“Yes, it did. It was very helpful in the coaching part that there was personal follow-up.*

Tamás (the trainer and coach) pointed out that my website is unstructured and not user-friendly (I am dealing with zero waste textiles, eco-friendly, life-enhancing, helpful textiles and sewing courses).

Tamás pointed out that you have to click a lot to get the information you need. There were also too many products and visitors could not find anything.

What was missing was not guiding the visitor through the website and my services. It was about me and not about the people for whom my products are made. But now I see that it is important to highlight the customer needs that my products are meeting. This was because I wrote my website with a professional approach and not an entrepreneurial one.

It also became clear during the coaching sessions that I was doing too much of everything. I should flag up the zero-waste nature of my products and build my entire online presence and products around that.

I would now like to promote my sewing courses first and foremost.

What I was missing was how to reach the target group that doesn't use social media, maybe through events and clubbing, but how?”

5/ *“I didn't miss anything because I got some very useful ideas: he (the trainer) outlined the possibility of opening my own business, the paths I can take to get started both online and offline.”*

6/ *“Nothing was missing. It contained a lot of things that I can use.*

Tamás (the trainer and coach) pointed out that I was not making progress because I was micromanaging everything. I can't dedicate time and money to assign tasks to get my online presence going.

We talked through the three areas of what I have in mind and how we can spin it up so that it sells. What I need to advertise after what to make it profitable. I realized that I get stuck in prioritizing tasks, which is why I suffer from a constant lack of time. It's also clear that the problem is that I'm reluctant to delegate tasks to someone else because I don't think they'll do it to the standard I would. I don't have the financial means to do it, but this attitude makes it difficult for me to move forward.”

7/ *“Yes, it was very useful. We went through what are the keywords that people are searching for from the products that I offer. “Felting”, “special gifts” and “sewing classes” came up in the keyword research.”*

8/ *Yes, it did, in terms of how I can meet the needs of the guest in the digital world. How to present my accommodation in a way that the guest realises their own needs. For example, I offer not only accommodation but also individual home cooking as a service. In addition, on the advice of Tamás (the trainer and coach), I map out the activities in the area in spring and autumn, so that the customer can see that I can answer the question of “what to do” when he comes here.*

I have introduced long weekend offers, also on Tamás's advice, which include accommodation, home-cooked meals and activities, so it's a complete package.

The other line I've outlined with Tamás is team building. It's not worth firing up the kiln for one or two people, it's more profitable to have more guests to cook for.

We also looked at how to implement all these into my communication on szallas.hu. (Accommodation advertising website I Hungary) How to advertise in a way that the would-be guests find out that yes, this is what they want, what I offer. It's important to present their own needs, with answers why I can answer his questions the best (e.g. what can I do there? What programmes are there? What can I eat there?).

9/ *“The main change that Tamás has proposed is to narrow the product range and specialise. Besides wallcoverings, I started to do textile graphics and digital printing, so I can work with unique patterns, which is unique in the market. Encouraged by Tamás, I continued my training, so I study computer graphics and work with computer graphics, designing the patterns myself, publishing them for printing and using the resulting raw material as a metre-grade material for the wallcoverings, creating truly unique products. It is unique but as I have the raw material made to order, mass production is also possible.*

I also managed to discuss practical problems during the coaching that brought immediate success, e.g. I found the raw material expensive, Tamás asked me why I didn't bargain, I answered, because I hadn't thought of it. Later I asked and I could bargain, since then I can get the raw material cheaper.

Tamás and I also looked at my website and we redesigned it: we captured the feeling of why the wall covering is good, what is the feeling that is associated with it: storytelling, cuddling and we built the whole website around these feelings.

We also introduced the web shop; it didn't exist before. That also increased my income a lot.

I also introduced the possibility to pay by card, which my customers like.

It was my idea to offer an extra, cheaper product, when adding the chosen article to the basket (e.g. a picture with the wallcoverings patterns and Tamás supported this.”

10/ *“Overall, it has been a challenge for me to be online because the real estate market has so far required me to use offline channels professionally, which I have successfully done through my extensive network of contacts.*

To get started, Tamás (the trainer and coach) suggested a digital business card-like one-page website with my services and contact details.”

3. Implementation: Have you introduced the solutions proposed during the training to the activities of your company? If not, what were the difficulties?

1/ *“Not yet because I don't have the time with a small child, and I'm employed to make a living. I don't trust the business enough yet to just be on my own income. It's just a supplementary activity for now.”*

2/ *“Only partly, because I've started this coach training. When it's done, I want to focus more on building my own business.”*

3/ *“Yes, in web development. I applied it on my own, then integrated it into the first clients I knew. Now I've got to the point where I've gone out into the market, I'm selling this knowledge to the public and the feedback is very positive, several clients have been left satisfied, they found my advice useful, which is a big thing, a real success story for me.*

As a result of all this I have enrolled in a web development course. It is interesting to be still in learning, but already doing web development.

An important principle that we learned in the training was that there are three pillars to success: knowledge of the business, knowledge of marketing and professional knowledge (in my case, web development).”

4/ *“Yes, I have partially implemented it. The home page of my website has changed, and I'm getting a lot of positive feedback.*

What was difficult was that I was left alone with any questions after the coaching. I know that I should pay a professional, but I also need some expertise to be able to filter out who the professionals are I can trust with my website and not just be ripped off because they don't have real professional knowledge. I have had several (albeit cheap) professionals or acquaintances developing my website and each one berates the previous one. But I don't have the money to pay a reputable developer.

Tamás and I have talked about a web shop, but I am not ready for that yet, I don't want to start that yet.”

5/ *“I haven't started the business of my own yet because as a mother of a young child, it is still comfortable being an employee. Although I feel that I have outgrown my current job. But as a school employee my summers are free and school holidays are also which mean more to me now.”*

6/ *“Not because of the internal constraints I just mentioned, and because I am now concentrating on other areas. Unfortunately, I don't have a partner in the company, I do everything on my own and so I can't think about organisational development, although I know, I should in order to move up a level in my business.”*

7/ *“I'm not in a financial position to start yet, so the website update is still on hold..”*

8/ *“Because of the rising prices of overhead, we have not fulfilled it yet. Our gas expenditure has risen 10 times, which is an unpayable in this transitional period of spring and autumn, which we wanted to raise as economically active months. Because of these high prices, I cannot reduce the summer activity because I must cover the heating costs for the transitional and winter period. The goal was to operate for the whole year, but with this overhead, that is in jeopardy. This year (winter 2022) we have not closed for winter, but if it stays like this, we may have to close in winter 2023. Even though the improvement plan is ready with the lessons learned from the coaching, I cannot implement it for reasons beyond my control (increase in overheads).*

9/ *“Yes, as I said in the previous question. Beyond that, it was very useful to learn how to think about my business: I need to invest time and money to make it profitable. I learned humility, I had to work on the website and the business to be successful and it worked, it was worth it. It was very difficult to go through all this without my spouse supporting me in the process.*

I also had to learn that I didn't have to do everything myself. I can outsource some tasks to others, e.g. I hired a company to do online advertising, which became very profitable. It was not cheap, but it was worth it.”

10/ *“In part, yes, I use social media to share my expertise with visitors of my site through posts, building a relationship of trust.”*

4. Future activities: What skills, knowledge and resources do you need for your company to implement the solutions presented during the training?

1/ *“Time and money would be needed to develop it. First of all, I would need to assess market needs in order to scale my offer.”*

2/ *“I have some technical gaps: website backend management, how to send a newsletter, automatic newsletter sending, how to edit a pop-up window. I also learned that it is very important to publish feedback on the website, because this is how a potential new visitor can identify with my old customers.”*

3/ *“Skills: systems thinking, (which I am lucky to have); attention to details, precision, compliance.*

Knowledge: Professional knowledge (web development) and marketing training.

Resources: time and money”

4/ *An ongoing help or coaching that I can always use consultancy in the future.*

Free media exposure on a platform that brings together local businesses offering similar target audiences. This could be run by the city or even the chamber of commerce. Cross referrals could also be operated here. There are some, but they are all subject to fees, I don't have the budget for that.

Basically, the problem is the lack of cross-referencing and bringing together providers for the same target groups.”

5/ *“Financial strength, entrepreneurship and my own strong will to change.”*

6/ *“Time and money. I would like to pay a professional to develop the website. I need additional knowledge in the field of communication.”*

7/ *“Boosting my confidence will be essential if I want to develop my own business.”*

First and foremost: reducing overheads. I have introduced the idea of renting out the house not at the price “per person per night”, but at the price “per house per night” during the heating season, because it is simply not possible to calculate exactly how much you could realistically charge if you only have to heat the house for instance for two people.

Any future activities of mine are beyond my control. There is a lot of uncertainty in our country, I mean that the Government's actions are unpredictable. If I start something, I don't know if it will pay off. For example, I would go into solar power, to reduce my overhead, but the Government has limited its use, so it's not worth it anymore.

Right now, air conditioning seems like a good solution, but there's no guarantee that it won't be regulated as well, or that the grid can even deal with it, if everyone switches to air conditioning. There are no real subsidies to help small businesses and it is unpredictable which steps will be regulated so that it is no longer worthwhile to apply. So there is no long-term economic certainty for me now.”

9/ *“Additional marketing knowledge and systems knowledge (website: technical structure of the website, email and newsletter sending systems, automation to facilitate my work).*

The next step is writing a newsletter. That is why I need the background knowledge.”

10/ *“I Financial resources and time.”*

5. Training: What could have been done differently? What should have been done differently? What should not be changed?

1/ *"I wouldn't change anything, the coaching part was very useful, I learned a lot."*

2/ *"I would not change anything. The structure of the training was very good, that there was group work and coaching part as well, where individual problems could be discussed with the trainer."*

3/ *"You should not change the fact that it is interactive. This was very useful in the training. I learned a lot from this and from the example of others. The structure should not be changed either, so that there is a coaching part in addition to the training."*

What I would change: More detailed topic description when announcing the course, so that I can prepare what I have to present about myself in the training, although it might have been intentional, warranting us this way to be spontaneous."

4/ *"I would suggest longer coaching and more marketing knowledge transfer."*

*Shorter training would be more useful, not 4 hours once, but rather 2*2 hours to get more in-depth knowledge.*

I would vote on the time of the training, when would be good for who and the training could be held in the time that gets the most votes, of course it is always difficult to find a time that suits everyone.

What I would not change is the training + coaching structure.

Also, the group composition was very good, I learned a lot from the others, I wouldn't change this composition."

5/ *"I would not change the group cohesion. It was useful to have so many participants with so many different backgrounds. I learned a lot from other people's stories. It was good to have such a group session and it was complemented by the coaching part where we just dealt with our own stuff. This structure should definitely stay."*

Both the group session and the coaching were very useful, more of them could be held."

6/ *"I would recommend more time for coaching because it was very useful. The rest was good."*

7/ *"I would not change anything. I really liked that there was a coaching part in addition to the training part. Here I could talk about my own potential in more depth, both financially and professionally."*

8/ *"It was very well structured, so that after gaining a general knowledge, we could concentrate on our own things during the coaching. I would definitely keep this and even add more coaching because it was very useful."*

The only thing I would change is that I would tell the participants at the announcement that it is not a lecture but a training with active input. But it was OK with me this way, that I didn't know, but if I had known I would have prepared myself for what I was going to say. But it is also true, that this way everyone was spontaneous, which was also instructive in the end."

9/ "I wouldn't change anything; it was good as it was. The individual coaching was very useful."

10/ "The coaching was very useful, I would put more of it in the next training, otherwise I wouldn't change anything."

The analysis of responses received from enterprises in the period of 1-3 months after the training shows the high effectiveness of the training. The assessment of the usefulness of the training for the company's operations was assessed very positively. In particular, attention was paid to the introduction of digital tools in the functioning of the company in terms of better communication with customers.

The training showed the company how they can encourage customers to provide feedback. The usefulness of the training was confirmed in the statement that the acquired skills are used in dealing with digital tools to ensure good and professional service. The respondents also showed that they became interested in the topic of digitalization in general and want to deepen their knowledge in this area.

The comments emphasized the importance of introducing digitalization in the enterprise. It was recognized that the training was also useful in the context of many interesting discussions on the needs of customers communication and reaching customers and exchanging this information between the participants of the training. The interlocutors also emphasized the acquired knowledge, which they use in the field of innovation and digitization.

In assessing the content of the training and possible shortcomings, most of the interlocutors indicated that the issues and topics discussed during the training were in line with the needs of the company. Entrepreneurs indicated that the training was interesting and broadened their knowledge in the subject. None of the participants of the training reported proposals for changes or possible deficiencies in the training.

In the next part of the interview, the question was asked whether the proposed concept had been implemented in the company of the training participant. In this regard, opinions were divided. Some of the respondents definitely stated that the learned solutions were implemented in the company's operations. The limitation resulting from the size of the enterprise is noteworthy. Small enterprises emphasized that not all solutions can be implemented in their operations due to the typical service activity and because they run a small plant. Another indicated limitation is the low digitalization of enterprises.

Some of the respondents are in the phase of preparing to implement the solution learned during the training.

The next part of the interview was devoted to future activities. The question was what skills, knowledge and resources are needed for companies to implement the solutions presented during the training. Most of the training participants indicated that they needed more knowledge about new technologies and financial resources to implement innovative solutions. Entrepreneurs also expect funds allocated for co-financing innovative activities. Attention was also paid to the ability to quickly adapt to the technological trends.

The last question in the interview was about suggestions for changes and improvements to improve the training in the future. The vast majority of interviewees expressed very positive opinions about the training. It was pointed out that in the future it is worth paying attention to industry diversity and tailoring training to specific industries.

3.4 TRAINING MEASURE: DOLNOŚLĄSKA IZBA RZEMIEŚLNICZA WE WROCŁAWIU, POLAND

Training measure: Digital competence training program

Test of the training measure: Dolnośląska Izba Rzemieślnicza we Wrocławiu, Poland (PP9 DIRW)

Scope of the training: 1-day face-to-face training: 8 lessons of 45 minutes

Conducting training – 1 teacher

Data collection: by PP9 DIRW

3.41 SURVEY OF PARTICIPANTS

Research tool: Written survey of all participants at the end of the face-to-face training

Participants: 17 people (5 male, 12 female)

Age: from 30 to 70 years old

Count of cases: 9

They were representatives of different sectors: hairdresser, artistic jewelry, artist, sworn translator, tailor, car mechanic, construction industry, coach, stonemason, renewable energy, deracination company, business consulting.

Table 29 presents the number and gender of participants who took part in the training. The online survey questionnaire was answered immediately after the face-to-face training by 17 respondents (9 correctly completed questionnaires were returned); 11,1 percent (1 participant) was male, and 88,9 percent (8 participants) were female.

Table 29. Participants by gender

Gender	Number of participants	%
Female	8	88,9%
Male	1	11,1%
Total	9	100%

Table 30 presents the age of participants. Out of all respondents 88,9 percent were age 21-50 (8 participants), 11,1 percent were aged over 51 years old (1 participant).

Table 30. Participants by age

Age	Number of participants	%
< 20	0	0%
21-50	8	88,9%
>51	1	11,1%
Total	9	100%

Table 31 presents the size structure of the company from which the training participant came.

Out of all respondents 11,1 percent represented small enterprises (1 participant), 88,9 percent participants came from micro enterprises (8 participants).

Table 31. Participants by the size of the enterprise

The size of the enterprise	Number of participants	%
micro	8	88.9%
small	1	11.1%
medium	0	0%
Total	9	100%

Table 32 presents the length of the company's activity on the market. 55,6 percent of respondents work in enterprises operated longer than 5 years on the market (5 participants), 33,3 percent work in enterprises operated between 2 and 5 years on the

market (3 participants), 11,1 percent work in enterprises operated between under 1 years on the market (1 participant).

Table 32. Participants by the length of the company's activity on the market

The length of the company's activity on the market	Number of participants	%
< 1 year	1	11.1%
1-2 years	0	7.7%
2-5 years	3	33,3%
>5 years	5	55.6%
Total	9	100%

Respondents were asked a number of questions to determine their satisfaction with the teachers and training organisation (Table 33). The overall results indicate that participants were very satisfied with the organisation of the training. The participants evaluated good (4.88) the substantive preparation of the teacher for the training. They agreed that the clarity and understandability of the communication were very good (4.88). Trainees were rather satisfied with teaching materials relevance in everyday work (4.55). The accuracy, professionalism and involvement of the answering to the participants' questions were evaluated also on the high level (4.88). The lowest level of satisfaction in this part of the study would be the level of training program implementation (4.66). This may be due to too few hours devoted to the training, which was pointed out by the training participants in additional suggestions. Trainees were satisfied with the atmosphere of the training (5.00). The level of communication of the teacher with the group was also rated at a high level (4.88). Participants evaluated also very high the arranging of work and training (4.88) and the training background (classroom, tools, etc.) (5.00). Total results in this part of the questionnaire (4.83) indicate that participants were satisfied with the teachers and the training organisation.

Table 33. The evaluation of the teachers and the training organisation (the level of satisfaction).

I part. The evaluation of the teachers and the training organisation (the level of satisfaction)	Level of satisfaction (5-very good, 4-good, 3-satisfactory, 2-unsatisfactory, 1-bad)
The substantive preparation	4.88
The clarity and understandability of the communication	4.88

I part. The evaluation of the teachers and the training organisation (the level of satisfaction)	Level of satisfaction (5-very good, 4-good, 3-satisfactory, 2-unsatisfactory, 1-bad)
Teaching materials relevance in everyday work	4.55
The accuracy, professionalism and involvement of the answering to the participants' questions	4.88
The ability to attract participants to the topic and engage them to the training	4.66
The level of training programme implementation	4.66
The atmosphere of the training	5.00
The level of communication of the teacher with the group	4.88
The arranging of work and training	4.88
The training background (classroom, tools, etc.)	5.00
Total	4.83

Table 34 presents participants' evaluation of the usefulness of the training for participants. The results show that the training fulfilled trainees' expectations to a good degree (4.55). They agree that the training improve their abilities in the topic of the training (4.55) and improve their knowledge within the topic of the training (4.55). Furthermore, it was not agreed highly that the training will be useful for trainees in the job. The results show that trainees found it possible to use acquired knowledge and skills in everyday work (4.55), but the answers were not so optimistic in comparison to others. Overall assessment of the training program was good (4.66). The last question was about opinion, what kind of changes should be considered in such type of trainings in the future. In answers there was one opinion: *"I believe that nothing needs to be changed in this type of training, but there should be definitely more of them to update the data."*

Tabel 34. The evaluation of the usefulness of the training for the participant

II part. The evaluation of the usefulness of the training for the participant	Level of satisfaction (5-very good, 4-good, 3-satisfactory, 2-unsatisfactory, 1-bad)
Were your expectations fulfilled with the training?	4.55

II part. The evaluation of the usefulness of the training for the participant	Level of satisfaction (5-very good, 4-good, 3-satisfactory, 2-unsatisfactory, 1-bad)
Did the training help you to improve the abilities in the topic of the training?	4.55
Did the training improve your knowledge within the topic of the training ?	4.55
What is your assessment of the possibility of using acquired knowledge and skills in everyday work?	4.55
What is your assessment of the training programme?	4.66
In your opinion, what kind of changes should be considered in such type of trainings in the future?	<i>"I believe that nothing needs to be changed in this type of training, but there should be definitely more of them to update the data."</i>
Total	4,57

3.42 SURVEY OF TEACHERS

Count of cases: 1

Research tool: Written survey of all teachers using at the end of the face-to-face training.

The organization of the implementation was carried out by DIR staff employed by the project together with the teachers leading the workshop. The organization of the implementation was handled by DIRW staff employed by the project, together with the teachers leading the workshops. The workshop on digitization was led by Mr Daniel Mikrut, owner of It Solves. He has a great deal of experience and knowledge related to the implementation of IT systems and their administration. He implements IT solutions resulting from assumptions developed in tailor-made business models based on:

1. administration of IT systems based on hardware: Dell, IBM, HP, Cisco, Vmware;
2. Management of central backup system based on: Veeam, Tivoli Storage Manager, SEP;
3. Technologies: Navision, Novell GroupWise, eDirectory, SLES, Active Directory and SUSE.

Teacher was asked a number of questions to evaluate participants' knowledge and engagement during the training (table 35). The results indicate that the teacher was

rather satisfied with the trainees' knowledge at the beginning of the training (4,0). On the other hand, the trainer was very satisfied with the level of the trainees' knowledge at the end of training (5,0). Moreover, he was content with trainees' work and learning organization (5,0). The cooperation with trainees (5,0), trainees' engagement (5,0) and trainees' preparation to work independently (5,0) were evaluated highly by the teacher. She was very satisfied with the overall atmosphere of the training (5,0). According to the opinion of the teacher, there are any changes they should be considered in such type of trainings in the future.

Table 32. Evaluation questionnaire for teachers

Teacher evaluation of the training	Level of satisfaction (5-very good, 4-good, 3-satisfactory, 2-unsatisfactory, 1-bad)
How do you evaluate the level of the trainees' knowledge at the beginning of training?	4.00
How do you evaluate the level of the trainees' knowledge at the end of training?	5.00
How do you evaluate trainees' work and learning organization?	5.00
How do you evaluate the cooperation with trainees?	5.00
How do you evaluate trainees' engagement?	5.00
How do you evaluate trainees' preparation to work independently?	5.00
How do you evaluate overall atmosphere of the training?	5.00
In your opinion, what kind of changes should be considered in such type of trainings in the future?	No changes
Total	4,86

Total results (4,86) in this part of questionnaire indicate that the teacher was very satisfied with the training overall. The satisfaction with the increase in the knowledge of the participants of the training indicates its effective conduct and the effectiveness of the training methods used.

The trainer made a note of the consultation process. The following is a statement by Mr Daniel Mikrut regarding the observation and feedback after the consultation and training.

"From my point of view, cyber security online is one of the most important concerns of micro, small and medium-sized business owners for customer acquisition through social media. Entrepreneurs, especially those who have so far used more traditional methods of customer acquisition such as whisper marketing, banner ads, flyers, among others, are very apprehensive about online customer service and have reservations about the effectiveness of this type of business activity. They do not see the need for social media activity and branding as they have a regular customer base. In addition, they report concerns about personal data being taken over by online fraudsters and do not know how to deal with the so-called heit." Daniel Mikrut

3.43 INTERVIEW AFTER 1-3 MONTHS FORM THE TRAINING

Count of cases: 11

Research tool: Interview with selected enterprises after 1-3 months from the training

In order to assess the effectiveness of the training and obtain feedback in the period after 1-3 months from the training, an interview was conducted with selected participants of the training. As part of the study, the usefulness of the training for the company, the content of the training and possible suggestions for the future, implementation and identification of possible barriers that may have appeared at this stage and possible additions of knowledge in order to successfully implement the concept were assessed.

The project partner DIRW conducted 11 interviews from 1-3 months after the end of the training. The questions were open-ended. The structured interview tool was used to conduct the study.

The results

1. Usefulness: Was the participation in the training „Digitalization“ useful for your company? Why? Which skills and abilities you improve after participation in the training?

1/ *“It was useful, interestingly delivered training. I was most interested in artificial intelligence AI. I will make use of its resources.”*

2/ *“Yes. Capabilities and skills - showcasing the company's existence online.”*

3/ *“Yes, a broader view of customer needs.”*

4/ *“No, because I have not heard of any innovations needed by my company.”*

5/ *“Yes.”*

6/ *“Yes.”*

7/ *"Of course."*

8/ *"Yes. I manage the company better."*

9/ *"Innovative content."*

10/ *"Yes."*

11/ *"Yes, there are differences in the approach to online vs. traditional purchasing, which were discussed at length in the training course."*

2. Content: Did the training contain issues and topics needed in your business?
Was something missing? If, what?

1/ *"Yes, it contained the necessary issues. Nothing was missing It was substantive. Super."*

2/ *"Topics interesting, no time to go in depth."*

3/ -

4/ *"The training was too general."*

5/ *"Yes, definitely the content of the training contained the necessary topics."*

6/ *"Yes."*

7/ *"Yes, very useful."*

8/ *"Yes."*

9/ *"Yes. Topics needed."*

10/ *"For me it was enough."*

11/ *"No."*

3. Implementation: Have you introduced the solutions proposed during the training
to the activities of your company? If not, what were the difficulties?

1/ *"We implement. We build the team."*

2/ *"Yes, I had no difficulties."*

3/ *"No, because I had nothing to implement."*

4/ *"The company is still in the process of building a website. It plans to apply digitisation strategies in the next step."*

5/ *"No."*

6/ *"During."*

7/ *"We work with our IT specialist."*

8/ *"Yes. Mainly website positioning."*

9/ *"No difficulties."*

10/ *"Yes. A google browser has posted information about the company, also on google maps. The company is developing its profile on FB."*

11/ *"No, time is needed."*

4. Future activities: What skills, knowledge and resources do you need for your company to implement the solutions presented during the training?

1/ *"Facebook, Instagram."*

2/ *"Implementing and learning new artificial intelligence."*

3/ *"During."*

4/ *"We implement."*

5/ *"Specific information on internet positioning e.g.."*

6/ *"Human resources."*

7/ *"Management of advertisements and sponsored posts on FB."*

8/ *"1:1 or more workshop-based training on introducing innovation and digitisation solutions, follow -up."*

9/ *"Not applicable."*

10/ *"More people understanding innovation and digitalisation."*

11/ -

5. Training: What could have been done differently? What should have been done differently? What should not be changed?

1/ *"The gentleman in charge has extensive knowledge and presented it in an interesting way. I enjoyed it very much, thank you."*

2/ *"Everything is ok."*

3/ *"More training hours."*

4/ *"The final survey should be online."*

5/ -

6/ *"I have no comments."*

7/ *"More practical activities. More hours of training so that the material is spread over a longer period of time."*

8/ *"No."*

9/ *"Longer practical exercises were missing."*

10/ *"For me it was enough."*

11/ *"The training was very interesting but would have been more effective if there had been more time for individual trades or companies, more concrete exercises or mentoring."*

The analysis of responses received from enterprises in the period of 1-3 months after the training shows the high effectiveness of the training. The assessment of the usefulness of the training for the company's operations was assessed very positively. In particular, attention was paid to the introduction of improvements in the functioning of the company in terms of better communication with customers.

The training showed the company how they can encourage customers to provide feedback. The usefulness of the training was confirmed in the statement that the acquired skills are used in dealing with customers to ensure good and professional service. The respondents also showed that they became interested in the topic of innovation in general and want to deepen their knowledge in this area.

The comments emphasized the importance of introducing innovations in the enterprise. It was recognized that the training was also useful in the context of many interesting discussions on the needs of customers and reaching customers and exchanging

this information between the participants of the training. The interlocutors also emphasized the acquired knowledge, which they use in the field of innovation and digitization.

Only one of the respondents had a negative opinion on the usefulness of the training for their business, which was justified by the fact that their company is not very innovative.

In assessing the content of the training and possible shortcomings, most of the interlocutors indicated that the issues and topics discussed during the training were in line with the needs of the company. Entrepreneurs indicated that the training was interesting and broadened their knowledge in the subject. None of the participants of the training reported proposals for changes or possible deficiencies in the training.

In the next part of the interview, the question was asked whether the proposed concept had been implemented in the company of the training participant. In this regard, opinions were divided. Some of the respondents definitely stated that the learned solutions were implemented in the company's operations. The limitation resulting from the size of the enterprise is noteworthy. Small enterprises emphasized that not all solutions can be implemented in their operations due to the typical service activity and because they run a small plant. Another indicated limitation is the low innovativeness of enterprises. One of the respondents emphasized that his company is not very innovative, and the recipients are people who rarely use innovative novelties. Some of the respondents are in the phase of preparing to implement the solution learned during the training. For this purpose, a team was formed to deal with the topic and prepare a plan for future action. In addition, the team has started collecting customer feedback and intends to create personalized services.

The next part of the interview was devoted to future activities. The question was what skills, knowledge and resources are needed for companies to implement the solutions presented during the training. Most of the training participants indicated that they needed more knowledge about new technologies and financial resources to implement innovative solutions. Entrepreneurs also expect funds allocated for co-financing innovative activities. Attention was also paid to the ability to quickly adapt to the needs of new customers. In addition, it was indicated that it is necessary to involve employees from lower levels of the organization in this type of training.

The last question in the interview was about suggestions for changes and improvements to improve the training in the future. The vast majority of interviewees expressed very positive opinions about the training. It was pointed out that in the future it is worth paying attention to industry diversity and tailoring training to specific industries.

4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusions of the evaluation research will contribute to improve the quality and especially the effectiveness of training, show the limitations of the training model and indicate the direction for further activities.

Interpretation of data based on the survey results we can conclude that the final results of the training, by the scope of the evaluation questions, indicate that the trainings were very successful, and teachers and students were totally satisfied with the training program.

All aspects that were evaluated improved after the end of the training and then after 1-3 months from the training. The overall atmosphere was encouraging in all trainings (trainees 4.92, teachers 5.0)¹⁹ for all project partners. In all trainings participants were satisfied with the training program at all partners (4.82). In addition to that, the organization of the training was satisfactory (4,87). Respondents' opinions indicated that the training fulfilled the expectations of the trainees (4.72) and the skills acquired during the training can be useful to trainees' everyday work (4,31). The trainees in every training agreed that the training improved trainees' knowledge within the topic of the training (4,77). The teachers were satisfied with trainees' knowledge at the end of the training (5.00).

In the analysis of the answers obtained, it is worth paying attention to the rather low level of satisfaction regarding the use of the acquired knowledge in everyday work. It can be considered that these were the lowest scores compared to other evaluated aspects. The lowest score in this area was obtained by partner PP6 IBC – 3,83. Participants of the training at PP4 WIRP assessed the prospect of using the acquired knowledge in everyday work at the level of 4.55. Similar results at the level of 4.55 were recorded in PP9 DIRW also in Poland in the assessment of the possibility of using acquired knowledge and skills in everyday work. This may be due to other limitations indicated in the study conducted 1-3 months after the training. Only participants from PP7 IPOSZ from Hungary agreed that the training was useful for their work, and they will use knowledge from the training in everyday work. In this case there were also some comments according to future possibility for implementation new solution: *“The training was interesting, but i did not enter anything in the company, payments are made by an accountant and by computer, because everything is more clear and safer.”*

The trainees pointed changes, which should be considered in such type of trainings in the future. The main comments concerned the current topics in future training: *“Digitization of production and advertising processes (youtube, tiktok), membership in purchasing and sales groups”* and other comment: *“I would be able to follow there better if I could see in advance what it would contain. The interactive form is practical, the time flew by almost imperceptibly”*.

¹⁹ average result calculated on the basis of all trainings.

The trainees expected fast economic results after training: *With the keyword research we established what I could build my website on, for improving my business. We went over the basic budget that my business needs to run on. We also priced the sewing courses. We looked at what my expenses would be with them, what price I would have to charge for them.*” and other comments: *“Yes, it was useful, especially the business communication, the ways of contacting with the customer. It developed the ability to think with the customer’s mind when designing a website and marketing. But it’s also important to think with other people’s heads like your competitors. I run a long-established village catering guesthouse, which I complement with custom cooking and programmes. I came to the training with the intention of stretching out the season, which is a two-way process: on the one hand, I could give up the very strong summers to have time for my family, and on the other hand, I would have to strengthen the spring and autumn seasons, which have been very weak so far, so that the work is stretched out in terms of both workload and income within the year.”*

The teachers were rather satisfied (4.85) with trainees’ knowledge at the beginning of the training, which is actually presumable. Teachers were very satisfied with the close cooperation with trainees (5.0) in the beginning of the training. All the teachers were convinced that trainees acquired enough knowledge (5.0). The training improved trainees’ ability (total trainees 4.84). This declaration is important taking about practical using of the concept.

The trainers were contented with the training program in total (4.68), but in contrast in some trainings like in PP4 – 4.88, PP6 – 4.50, PP7 – 1,7 (agree), PP9 – 4.66. Participants of the training, apart from the indicated comments regarding the current topics, did not indicate any other proposals for changes that should be introduced in the training program in the future.

The effectiveness of the training was also evaluated in the perspective of 1 - 3 months after the training. This approach was aimed at evaluating the effects of the training, which translated into practical results in the company's operations.

The analysis of responses received from enterprises in the period of 1-3 months after the training shows the high effectiveness of the training. The assessment of the usefulness of the training for the company's operations was assessed very positively in every country. In particular, attention was paid to the improvements in the functioning of the company in terms of better using of the digital tools in context of cooperation with customers by innovation development. Some participants from training PP4 stated that: *“Yes, useful. The training provided me with information on what digital tools I can use in my company to encourage customers to join the process of creating innovations and how to increase the reach of the company.”*

Entrepreneurs emphasized in their statements the need to introduce digital knowledge taking into account the awareness of the consumer. This approach ultimately leads to

the optimization of the company's innovation strategy, because new solutions are designed to meet the needs of the consumer. Often it is the consumer who initiates the creation of a new solution: *“Yes, it was very useful, especially in terms of raising awareness. Developed communication to meet the needs of the client. The training pointed out that there are three phases: I make the products I think I need, I'm at this point at now, secondly, if I know my target audience and their needs, I make the products they are looking for and thirdly, I expand the range of products I offer to what they are looking for.”*

By PP6 IPOSZ participants already implemented some ideas they learned during the training: *“Yes, a lot for my web development work. E.g., “what the customer prototypes look like”.*

It's important to incorporate online connectivity into the life of a business because the environment has changed (which is why it's bad to see my mother's business stuck at the previous level).

To stay up to date in this changing world, entrepreneurial awareness and adaptability is essential. To build up the online presence of your business, you need to gather what positives you have and present them (e.g. customer reviews on your website).

What was missing? A customer language course. I would love to learn more about how to write customer-responsive texts on the website.

I really liked the structure of the training, training + coaching. I would have liked more coaching.”

Similar opinion has polish enterprises from PP9 DIRW. All answers about usefulness of the training were positive. All interviewee use knowledge and ability from the training in business activity. Some enterprises have chosen topics they were interested in that e.g.: *“It was useful, interestingly delivered training. I was most interested in artificial intelligence AI. I will make use of its resources.”*

The training showed the company how they can encourage customers to provide feedback. The usefulness of the training was confirmed in the statement that the acquired skills are used in dealing with customers to ensure good and professional service. The respondents also showed that they became interested in the topic of digitalization in connection of innovation activity in general and want to deepen their knowledge in this area. Participants from PP7 IPOSZ stated: *“Yes, it was useful, especially the business communication, the ways of contacting with the customer. It developed the ability to think with the customer's mind when designing a website and marketing. But it's also important to think with other people's heads like your competitors. I run a long-established village catering guesthouse, which I complement with custom cooking and programmes. I came to the training with the intention of stretching out the season, which is a two-way process: on the one hand, I could give up the very strong summers to have time for my family, and on the other hand, I would have to strengthen the spring and autumn seasons, which have been very weak so far, so that the work is stretched out in terms of both workload and income within the year.”*

The comments emphasized the importance of introducing digital tools in the enterprise. It was recognized that the training was also useful in the context of many interesting discussions on the needs of customers and reaching customers and exchanging this information between the participants of the training. The interlocutors also emphasized the acquired knowledge, which they use in the field of innovation and digitization.

Only one of the respondents had a negative opinion on the usefulness of the training for their business, which was justified by the fact that his company operate in different industry.

In assessing the content of the training and possible shortcomings, most of the interviewee indicated that the issues and topics discussed during the training were in line with the needs of the company. Entrepreneurs indicated that the training was interesting and broadened their knowledge in the subject. None of the participants of the training reported proposals for changes or possible deficiencies in the training. Participants from PP7 IPOSZ for the question, if is something missing, almost all answered: *“Nothing was missing. It contained a lot of things that I can use. Tamás (the trainer and coach) pointed out that I was not making progress because I was micromanaging everything. I can't dedicate time and money to assign tasks to get my online presence going. We talked through the three areas of what I have in mind and how we can spin it up so that it sells. What I need to advertise after what to make it profitable. I realized that I get stuck in prioritizing tasks, which is why I suffer from a constant lack of time. It's also clear that the problem is that I'm reluctant to delegate tasks to someone else because I don't think they'll do it to the standard I would. I don't have the financial means to do it, but this attitude makes it difficult for me to move forward.”*

Participants of the Polish PP4 WIRP training drew attention to the current technological trends and new solutions that can be added to the next editions of the training, e.g. : *“Yes, the training contained very useful topics and issues for the development of my company.”*

In the next part of the interview, the question was asked whether the proposed concept had been implemented in the company of the training participant. In this regard, opinions were divided. Some of the respondents definitely stated that the learned solutions were implemented in the company's operations, e.g. participants form training realized by PP4 WIRD stated: *“The process of innovating is very difficult, but together with the team we pored over the topic and prepared a roadmap for the future, which assumes collecting feedback from customers and creating personalized services.”* The enterprises form PP7 IPOSZ from Hungary try to implement new solution known from the training, but there is other barriers: *“We start to plan the content marketing. Time is the biggest difficulty. Inflation and price increase in the raw materials and overheads mean a great problem now.”*

Similarly, to Hungarian partner, also polish enterprises try to introduce new solution in their business activity. Participants form PP9 DIRW stated: *“Yes. A google browser*

has posted information about the company, also on google maps. The company is developing its profile on FB.”

Less optimistic were participants from PP6 IBC from Denmark and answered for the question about implementation: *“No unfortunately because there was no time and opportunity.”*

The limitation resulting from the size of the enterprise is noteworthy. Small enterprises emphasized that not all solutions can be implemented in their operations due to the typical service activity and because they run a small plant. Another indicated limitation is the low innovativeness of enterprises. One of the respondents emphasized that his company is not very innovative, and the recipients are people who rarely use innovative novelties. Some of the respondents are in the phase of preparing to implement the solution learned during the training. For this purpose, a team was formed to deal with the topic and prepare a plan for future action. In addition, the team has started collecting customer feedback and intends to create personalized services.

The next part of the interview was devoted to future activities. The question was what skills, knowledge and resources are needed for companies to implement the solutions presented during the training. Most of the training participants indicated that they needed more knowledge about new technologies and financial resources to implement innovative solutions. Participants from PP4 WIRP stated: *“I believe that we need skills on how to use the potential of the Internet to provide all employees with e-learning opportunities and improve their competences.”*

Entrepreneurs also expect funds allocated for co-financing innovative activities. Attention was also paid to the ability to quickly adapt to the needs of skills. In addition, it was indicated that it is necessary to have professional knowledge and marketing training: *“Skills: systems thinking, (which I am lucky to have); attention to details, precision, compliance.*

*Knowledge: Professional knowledge (web development) and marketing training.
Resources: time and money”*

The last question in the interview was about suggestions for changes and improvements to improve the training in the future. The vast majority of interviewees expressed very positive opinions about the training. The participants of the training in Hungary PP7 IPOSZ pointed that: *“I would not change anything. I really liked that there was a coaching part in addition to the training part. Here I could talk about my own potential in more depth, both financially and professionally.”; “It was very well structured, so that after gaining a general knowledge, we could concentrate on our own things during the coaching. I would definitely keep this and even add more coaching because it was very useful.*

The only thing I would change is that I would tell the participants at the announcement that it is not a lecture but a training with active input. But it was OK with me this way, that I didn't know, but if I had known I would have prepared myself for what I was going

to say. But it is also true, that this way everyone was spontaneous, which was also instructive in the end.”

Generally, opinion about training in every country was very optimistic, e.g. in Hungarian participants from PP4 WIRP stated: *“The training was interesting, it provided me with new knowledge that I will use in practice. Interesting topic, interesting way of conducting.”* The participants of the training in each country did not report any changes to the substantive scope and program of the training.

Based on respondents' opinions the „ Digital competence training program“ is effective, adaptable and sustainable and it can be implemented whether as a whole or by set of modules. There is recommended to continue implementing further training program “Digital competence training” in tested countries and chambers/educational institutions and recommend the training and curriculum to other chamber and educational institutions. There must be kept in mind that the survey results of teachers' reflect usually only one teacher's opinions and cannot be taken as a final conclusion.

Current curriculum and training program for “Digital competence training program” training can be used not only nationally but also internationally. Country's specifications and regulations need to be followed. Into consideration must be taken different demands in regards practical training quality expectations in different countries. The motivation of training the participants in the company is directly related to level of digitalisation in different countries.

Implementing the curriculum entirely will raise the number of true professionals in the field of digitalization. Knowledge-based learning outcomes indicate that a person possess after graduating the training successfully professional job-related knowledge and business and managerial skills for digitalization, which can be used for co-creation customer innovation. This kind of ability is extremely necessary and awaited in building competitiveness and improve innovativeness of the SMEs in the tested countries.

Training process needs to be effective, and the practical tasks should be in accordance with theory. According to the survey results, definitely carry on using not only theoretical but also practical methods. The participants highly evaluated discussions, practical cases and real-life examples as teaching methods.

Definitely must be consider matching the training topics to the sector and the continuation through coaching of the ideas submitted by the participants of the training.

The results also indicated topics that should be added to the curricula and trainings e.g. *“Digitization of production and advertising processes (youtube, tiktok), membership in purchasing and sales groups”*. By selecting future training topics, the specificity of the sector and industry in which potential training participants operate should also be taken into account.

Some suggestion for improving effectiveness of the training from this topic gave also project partners. According to the opinion from PP9 DIRW, key aspect within the ICI-inSME project is the compatibility with the implementation of the fourth industrial

revolution program, the so-called Industry 4.0, related to the digitalization of the economy, in particular industry.

The widespread digitization and digitalization of customer-facing solutions is the result of the creation of innovative solutions by market leaders and the diffusion of these innovations not only in the sectors from which they originate. Ubiquity simultaneously means accessibility in terms of place, time and cost. It also refers to the ubiquity of technologies that change the needs and expectations of customers and the rules of supplier markets. Thus, digitalization creates the economic environment of modern companies, and it can also be a valuable resource and knowledge of the potential of technology a unique value for small and medium-sized enterprises. In principle, there is no escape from the digitalization and digitization of enterprises - changes in business models, the way market relations are shaped, or the offer built. Nor is there much of an alternative to it. The old, legacy ways of acquiring customers in the age of ubiquitous social media are insufficient and ineffective. Certainly, however, the digitalization of business is a long-term process, one might even say an evolutionary one, and the incorporation of individual solutions-technologies should take place in stages. Therefore, the sooner entrepreneurs are able to define the configuration of a wide range of different digital technologies (or, in fact, their potential) in relation to the adopted market strategy, the easier it will be for them to respond to customer expectations in the near future. The initial diagnosis of innovativeness carried out during the training makes it possible to conclude that the Polish entrepreneur from the micro, small and medium-sized enterprise sector (with few exceptions) is de facto at the third stage of development among those indicated earlier in the figure, i.e. still before the stage of digitalization and digitization. Considering the fact that Poles are perceived as a very entrepreneurial nation (micro, small and medium enterprises generate 60% of GDP), and the development of digitalization has a universal dimension, it is puzzling that the relatively low innovativeness of micro, small and medium enterprises, which constitute over 99% of companies in Poland, is a matter of concern. It therefore becomes extremely important to search for the reasons for this situation and, more importantly, to propose adequate solutions enabling support for entrepreneurs in improving their competitive advantage not only within the sector in which they compete, but also on an international or global scale. This is also an important area enabling the Polish economy to shift its place from the group of efficiency-oriented countries (i.e. creating more efficient production methods and improving the quality of goods and services) to innovation-oriented countries. The increase in the level of knowledge, on the other hand, is strongly dependent on the internal initiative of entrepreneurs and business owners and the way in which the organization is managed.

From the individual interviews conducted during the consultation, it appears that about half of the companies participating in the training do not have digitization and digitalization tools in place. However, this is not synonymous with the non-application of modern technologies by these companies. 20% of the companies have included in their strategy the use of modern solutions, mainly in the technological area. In these companies, innovative technological solutions were implemented primarily to reduce

costs and gain a competitive advantage. The survey indicated that 85% of SME companies do not have human resources capable of implementing the proposed tools in the area of innovation and digitalization. There is a barrier in the belief of entrepreneurs that the main benefits of implementing modern technologies relate to improving the quality of the products offered, improving productivity and reducing costs, and gaining new customers.

The most important barriers limiting the adoption of technology are related to lack of financial resources for such activities, lack of time and lack of qualified staff. Among the external factors inhibiting the process of innovation with the use of technological solutions, the trainees indicated bureaucracy, difficulties in obtaining competent employees and lack of support from public authorities. Among the actions taken or planned to be taken for the implementation of technology, investing own funds, improving the competences of employees through training and hiring new qualified people were mentioned. The responses point to the increasing role of competencies as an important resource in shaping a company's level of innovation.

When asked by the presenters what support they expect from government institutions in improving innovation, participants indicated tax incentives, the adaptation of the training of future personnel to the needs of companies and the clarity of innovation regulations. Unfortunately, public data indicate that only about 47% of companies allocate between 10 and 30% of their revenues to the implementation of technologies supporting production processes, about 30% of companies allocate less than 10% to this purpose, and about 13% do not spend any money on this.

The presenters also discussed what would be the factors influencing the decision to implement innovative solutions in their company. Participants included among the most important determinants of such choices the need to reduce costs of running a company (1/3 of responses) and the need to gain a competitive advantage in the market (1/5 of responses). Customers' expectations of an increase in the quality of the products offered were indicated as the third very important factor (1/10 of responses), followed by customers' expectations of lower product prices.

Analyzing the statements of training participants, we can conclude that the implementation of each new solution in the enterprise is aimed (in a shorter or longer period) at improving the competitive position of the enterprise and increasing its profitability. When analyzing the expected economic benefits resulting from the implementation of innovations, participants pointed to a very wide range of effects. The most important expected benefits in this respect include an increase in the profitability of the enterprise, an increase in revenue and the acquisition of new customers.

In terms of factors located outside the enterprise and at the same time constituting the greatest barriers to the pace of innovation implementation in an SME enterprise, participants indicated bureaucracy. This is also a "traditional" obstacle indicated at the interface between the private and public sectors in Poland. Managers coming from the group of the smallest enterprises, point to problems lying outside the organization as

an obstacle to innovation. In addition to bureaucracy, they indicate e.g. the lack of support from public administration, difficulties in obtaining EU subsidies or unfavorable regulations e.g. the ineligibility of VAT as a cost in EU projects. In addition, participants indicated difficulties in obtaining competent employees.

In summary, companies develop and gain competitive advantages because of their ability to respond to or create customer needs and expectations. This is therefore always done in relation to events taking place in their environment - especially changes on the demand side. Today's customers expect not only innovative products, but also new forms of delivery, an innovative form of communication. Thus, no company wishing to remain on the market in the future can be indifferent to widespread digitalization. Indicating more specific areas of influence of technological solutions in the context of competitiveness, participants singled out the possibility of improving the quality of products offered, increasing productivity, or improving the efficiency of resource use. Due to the application of modern technologies, pre-entrepreneurs expect an increase in the profitability of their own operations through increased revenues. These results show the key role that technological solutions can play in competing through innovation. Business owners and management have a special role in the potential for strategic change. Their knowledge of the potential for technology implementation therefore determines the progress of Polish companies towards digitization and innovation.

Among the measures taken and planned to be taken for the implementation of innovation and digitalization tools, investing own resources, raising staff competences through training and hiring new qualified people were mentioned. In the area of plans to raise competencies and hire qualified staff, participants showed a decreasing trend, and the same applies to investing own resources. This indicates an increasing problem of lack of human and financial resources in shaping the level of innovation. In addition, the administration and settlement of projects from Operational Programs significantly reduces the application for this type of support.

Guidance for future use, suggestions for possible improvements or further development

We recommend starting a year-long series of industry-specific training courses with pre- and post-training competency testing.

Project partner PP7 IPOSZ also emphasized some observation during the realization of the training named as strengths and weaknesses of the training as seen by the participants. *“Based on the completed evaluation forms, it can be concluded that the participants were largely satisfied with the training. The training was rated as useful what encouraged them for further development plans.”*

Talking about weaknesses of the training project partner noticed that according to our assessment, one of the peculiarities and not a weakness of the training was that it was attended by the smallest enterprises. In this way, we were able to get to know their reactions and test the training at their level of development. It is likely that in companies with more employees, the training could provide many other experiences. We were

glad that such small businesses took part in the training, because in Hungary businesses without employees and those with very few employees make up the largest part of businesses. The use of offline and online digital marketing processes at the same time in the case of such small businesses usually exceeds their financial capabilities, although it is clear that the simultaneous use of both can be really effective. There is still a need for many more similar trainings offering industry-specific solutions in order to convince the masses of micro-enterprises. For this, it would be very important to start state support programs in this area as well. “According to our assessment, one of the peculiarities and not a weakness of the training was that it was attended by the smallest enterprises. In this way, we were able to get to know their reactions and test the training at their level of development. It is likely that in companies with more employees, the training could provide many other experiences. We were glad that such small businesses took part in the training, because in Hungary businesses with very few employees make up the largest part of businesses. The use of offline and online digital marketing processes at the same time in the case of such small businesses usually exceeds their financial capabilities, although it is clear that the simultaneous use of both can be really effective. They often do not understand the use of digital tools in a small business. For such digital tasks, they need external service providers who can provide immediate assistance. But short-term, practice-oriented training courses, where small businesses can improve their digital skills, can help a lot here. Having a young person in the family who can bring these digital skills into the operation of the business can help a lot also. There is still a need for many more similar trainings offering industry-specific solutions in order to convince the masses of micro and small enterprises. For this, it would be very important to start state support programs in this area as well.”

In opinion of Hungarian Project Partner, it would be a great step forward in training if we could strengthen this knowledge even with an online service period and thus reach a significantly wider circle of entrepreneurs.

They recommend writing a project that could facilitate the operation of such an online service for organizations like ours. Organizations that include family, micro and small businesses do not have a team of experts that can provide specialized services, so we have to use these experts on a contract basis from the outside. They also recommend thinking in the direction of how the generally proven digital procedures could be effectively supplemented with the special needs of larger professional sectors.

According to the Danish partner, one of the strengths were that there were participants from many different companies. But this was also the challenge. An ideal wish is to design a scoop only for one company and their customers to come closer to “digital customer-centric Innovation”-idea. In this case, weaknesses of the training as seen by the participants was that the training was too short. Beside this, it could be interesting to have a digital process only with one company (and their employees) and then some

customers (B2B or B2C – end users) to this one company. And then in combination with the innovation course. It could be interesting to see what the output would be?!

The quoted observations show, on the one hand, the weaknesses of smaller enterprises, and on the other hand, a certain advantage in flexibility and speed of operation. It can be concluded that the SME sector will still need a lot of educational support, in particular with the fast-paced technological changes.