



Learn.Empowerment

Self-directed Learning for Low-skilled Unemployed People

Guidelines

Learning Materials, Methods and Implementation Models for Self-Directed

Executive Summary

Self-directed learning enables and supports the development of personally and socially relevant self-management competences. It strengthens self-confidence and leads thus to the ability to act in an emancipated and secure way in the social and work environment.

Especially target groups who have no affinity to and no experience with learning – and these are the target groups the project is focussing upon – connect “learning” with failure, imposition and with no perspective, because they could not experience learning as useful and valuable for themselves. It is at this point where self-directed learning can start, at the individual person and his/her interests and ideas: it activates present competences, helps to develop perspectives and promotes the development of professional methodological, social and personal competences as tools for self-control.

Self-directed learning imposes at the learners responsibility for their own learning process. They are integrated into the design of their learning process and thereby experience the fact that learning has something to do with the personally. If learners are supported and accompanied in their self-control by trainers, tutors and/or by fellow learners in a learning group, learning can become a valuable and sustainable experience.

In terms of dissemination the partner consortium of „Learn.Empowerment Self-directed Learning for Low-skilled Unemployed People“ has published the following outcomes.

- The **Toolbox** describes self-directed learning as didactic concept as it has been jointly elaborated by the partners in this project. The Toolbox reflects the situation and understanding of the partners and their ideas of teaching and learning on which this concept is based. It describes the organisational aspects of SDL, the role of the trainers as tutors, provides links and is illustrated by cases of good practice

- The **Guidelines** reflect the background of self-directed learning and comprise theoretical and conceptual aspects as well as the consideration of Gender Mainstreaming, Diversity Management and target group oriented aspects.
- Chapter 1 describes several types of models for self-directed learning focussing on the process oriented aspects of SDL, represented by mixture of conceptual, empirical, and experientially derived views.
- The transition to a flexible and individual design of the learning/training process demands openness and flexibility from all actors involved, such as the learners, the advisors and the institution itself. At the same time it requires orientation and supporting elements in order to structure the individual and collective learning processes and to clarify necessary responsibilities and commitments - Charter 2 describes the principles of CoL, the "Concept of Learning" via SDL. These principles are points of orientation for actual professional action. They form the core, out of which context-specific concepts of self-directed learning can be developed.
- The target groups benefiting directly from the outcomes of the project "Lern.Empowerment" are multifaceted. There is a broad range of potential users as key actors, training organizations as well as trainers, adult educators and teachers throughout Europe, who are empowered to deliver training themselves and to disseminate the idea and the concept of self-directed learning, its principles, tools and methods.

But chapter 3 focuses on the beneficiaries, who often suffer from individual barriers to (lifelong) learning. It broaches the issues of the target group related aspects of self-directed learning and discusses relevant attitudes of socially disadvantaged groups such as working-class people with limited schooling, single parents, women returners, migrants, elderly people, disabled people and residents of rural areas who, due to their situation, have difficulty gaining access to adult education programmes, .

- Experiencing failure in the world of work in many cases results in loss of self-confidence, which can also lead to resignation. Chapter 4 "Working with low skilled and unemployed", underlines specific potentials, methods and techniques within the concept of self-directed learning, which are contributing to the empowerment of adult learners. SDL strengthens self-confidence and leads thus to act in an emancipated way, to extend the competences contributing to employability and the re-integration into labour market.

- Research shows that gendered roles still largely shape the vocational development of both sexes and unless assumptions about gender roles are challenged they risk being perpetuated. It counts into the challenges of the tutoring process to provide learners with information, advice, guidance and active support preserving the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to vocational training and promotion, employment and working conditions - chapter 5 provides with information according the general background of the European strategy and labour market oriented realities and measures concerning Gender Mainstreaming.
- Many trainers, adult educators and teachers think that "fairness" means "treating everyone the same". Chapter 6 focuses on aspects of Diversity Management. Acknowledging the target groups' differences and recognizing these differences as valuable enhances good tutoring and counselling practices by preventing discrimination and promoting inclusiveness.
- The glossary (chapter 7) contains some 20 terms relating to the concept of self-directed learning, which the partners of the project have developed and to its framework.



Education and Culture

Leonardo da Vinci



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Project promotor and coordinator: BEST Institut für berufsbezogene Weiterbildung und Personaltraining GmbH, Dr. Wolfgang Eisenreich, Mariahilfer Straße 8, 1070 Wien

Web: www.best-training.com

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