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PROCEEDINGS OF THE FINAL CONFERENCE



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EVROPSKÁ UNIE



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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE FINAL CONFERENCE OF THE

MENTORING OPENS DOORS PROJECT

Registration number: CZ.1.04/5.1.01/77.00012

held on 7 November 2014 in the Harmony Club Hotel in Ostrava



Contents

Foreword.....	4
Introduction of the Mentoring Opens Doors project.....	6
Ing. Hana Matoušková.....	6
Complex Mentoring Program Methodology.....	8
PhDr. Ing. Hana Danihelková.....	8
Diamonds – a successful story from Finland.....	12
Ritva Nyberg.....	12
Mentoring in Lithuania – examples of activities of the Social Innovation Fund.....	14
Anželika Sliačkiene.....	14
Individual professional mentoring.....	17
Ing. Jana Mecnerová.....	17
The value of oneself.....	19
Ing. Michaela Holíšová.....	19
Conclusions of the Study of Active Employment Policy.....	24
PhDr. Ing. Hana Danihelková.....	24
Conclusions of round tables and conference discussion.....	29
PhDr. Ing. Hana Danihelková, Ing. Hana Matoušková.....	29

Foreword

Dear readers,

You are opening conference proceedings containing contributions which were presented during the final international conference of the MENTORING OPENS DOORS project under the Operational Programme of Human Resources and Employment, registration number CZ.1.04/5.1.01/77.00012. The theme of the conference was a presentation of the project results and benefits which are presented in these proceedings in a well arranged manner.

The conference was held on 7 November 2014 in the Congress Hall of the Harmony Club Hotel in Ostrava, and it was organized by both of the Czech partners of the project:

- ATHENA – Association for Education and Development of Women (co-ordinator)
- Centrum mentoringu, o.p.s.

The conference was attended by representatives of both foreign partners who gave a presentation there:

- Sabini Consulting (Finland)
- Social Innovation Fund (Lithuania)

The Mentoring Opens Doors project dealt with the issues of employability of women over 50 in the Czech labour market, possibilities of how to help this disadvantaged group and how to enhance its chances of permanently succeeding in the labour market. Thanks to the long-term cooperation of the company ATHENA with partners from many European countries it was possible to use some methods which have not been widely used in the Czech Republic or which have not been systematically used for increasing employability of women. Finland and Lithuania are countries which have for this purpose been successfully and efficiently applying a method called mentoring for a number of years.

The foreign partners shared their experience in the use of mentoring during work with unemployed women and the Czech partners then brought the know-

-how to the Czech Republic and adjusted it to the conditions in the Czech labour market. Both Czech associations also contributed with their know-how so the resulting outcomes are very efficient and innovative tools for improving employability of women over 50.

The principal outcome is the Complex Mentoring Process Methodology. As emerged from the discussion at the conference, for the women from piloting it meant a very effective, but also humanly pleasant tool which allows them to explore themselves and work actively on improving their competences which are beneficial to the labour market. This Methodology contains so many different elements that it is effective for other groups of people too.

In these conference proceedings you can find contributions from the Czech partners regarding the project and its outcomes, as well as contributions from the foreign partners regarding the use of mentoring in their countries.

The conference also included a presentation on the experience from the piloting and experience with the use of mentoring. The presentation was given by mentors, as well as by people who use mentoring in their practice and pass on their experience and opinions regarding the use of mentoring to the readers in this way.

All of you who devote your time and energy to published contributions will probably agree with the statement that the extent of the use of mentoring, which is presented by the individual authors, is wide. The conference proceedings are an educational tool and the groundwork for introducing system changes implemented by people in managerial positions, employers, politicians, union representatives, employment office representatives, etc.

Our wish is that these conference proceedings will help to expand the use of mentoring, not only for improving competences, which are beneficial to the labour market, but also for working on personal development of all those who are interested in actively influencing their future in both personal and professional life.

Editor: PhDr. Ing. Hana Danihelková

ATHENA – Association for Education and Development of Women

Ostrava, November 2014

Introduction of the Mentoring Opens Doors project

Ing. Hana Matoušková

Abstract

The Mentoring Opens Doors project dealt with the transfer and adjustment of foreign know-how, its use for the creation of an innovative tool – the Complex Mentoring Program Methodology. The aim is to use the method of mentoring for improving the chances of the target group which comprises women over 50 in the labour market. This possibility was tested by piloting in the course of the project. Observations were incorporated into the final version of the Methodology so as to make it most efficient. The individual activities were carried out gradually in the project and they purposefully lead to achieving the best possible quality of the final outcome. The project was also continuously publicized so as to familiarize as many potentially interested people as possible with the project outcomes.



3 PROGRESS OF THE PROJECT



1. Paying a 5-day study visit at the foreign partners of the project
2. Transfer and adaptation of processes to local conditions
3. International workshop
4. Pilot testing of their practicality with active cooperation of the target group
5. Implementing subsequent changes and developing the final version of the Mentoring Program
6. Implementation in practice



4 PROJECT PILOTING



- 1. COURSE
- Time period: November 2013 – May 2014
- Attendance: 8 women (2 groups)
-
- COURSE
- Time period: February 2014 – August 2014
- Attendance: 13 women (2 groups)



4.1 STRUCTURE OF PILOTING



1. Initial consultancy
2. 15 hours of individual mentoring (videomonitoring: 2 mentors)
3. At least 45 hours of group mentoring



4.1 STRUCTURE OF PILOTING



Group mentoring topics:

- Memory training
- Confidence in oneself (the skill of communication)
- Methods of coping with difficult situations
- Preparation for a job interview
- How to make one's voice heard
- Employment vs. enterprise
- Stress management
- How to organize time and how to harmonize family and professional life
- Efficient use of job-seeking tools
- The skills of self-presentation (drawing up CV)
- Using life experience and coping with changes
- Self-confidence, personal encouraging
- Development of hidden skills
- Creation of digital stories



5 OUTCOMES OF THE PROJECT



- Complex Mentoring Program Methodology
- Study of AEP tools in Lithuania and Finland
- Conference Proceedings



Complex Mentoring Program Methodology

PhDr. Ing. Hana Danihelková

Abstract

The Complex Mentoring Program Methodology is the principal outcome of the Mentoring Opens Doors project. It consists of several parts. It starts by explaining the study method for this manual which has been compiled in such a way so that each interested person could study with it independently and could also assess whether he or she understands the individual parts. It explains the purpose and reason for the use of mentoring for the target group, as well as the reasons for work and relationships of 3M agents. The main part contains an analysis of the types of mentoring and the mentoring process, mentoring process management and monitoring tools. It is followed by digital story-telling and the art of change. In the end there is a chapter called the “Methods for the identification of personal resources for coping with difficult situations”. The entire manual is interspersed with examples like “learning through experience”, so as to enhance its practical use as much as possible.

Presentation on the Complex Mentoring Program Methodology.



Complex Mentoring Program Methodology

Creation of digital stories

The skill of change

The method of identifying personal resources

Conclusion



How to learn with the Complex Mentoring Program Methodology

Exercise 4.6: Choose the correct answers.

Mentor is not a
consultant
teacher
discussion partner
critic

Correct answer: consultant, teacher, critic

Exercise 4.7: Is the following paragraph true?

The mentor needs to know everything about the mentee so that she could give her further guidance. She does not show her model at the beginning of her enterprise or at the beginning of her career, or her everyday life, because it is long gone.

Correct answer: No, it is quite the opposite. Read the paragraph once again and clearly perceive the opposite.



Reason for using mentoring for the target group

Cvičení 3.1: Vyberte správné odpovědi.

Mentorka, využívající mentoring k podpoře nezaměstnaných osob pro vstup na trh práce a udržení se na něm (v tomto případě žen 50+), se snaží pro jejich zaměstnatelnost:

Naučit šeny vynést se samy v sobě

Posilovat jejich sebevědomí a prezentační schopnosti včetně argumentace

Vybavit je na dlouhodobou práci na sobě s cílem udržet jejich zaměstnatelnost

Naučit je odlišit od konkurence a být stále úspěšné na trhu práce

Správná odpověď: všechny odpovědi správně



3M agents in mentoring



Forms and course of mentoring

Classical mentoring – personal contact

e-mentoring

Blended mentoring



Forms and course of mentoring

Individual mentoring – 2 different focuses

Group mentoring – thematic richness



Individual mentoring

Personality mentoring
videomonitoring

Professional mentoring



Individual mentoring

* What makes it characteristic, even though it does not seem so at first glance?

It is an elaborate set of steps and activities

It works

It does not waste time



Individual mentoring – personality

Mentoring and human personality:



Individual mentoring – personality



Individual mentoring – personality

Mentor's estimate – mentee's type

Empathizing with her situation

Not to be misled, remain impartial

Know how to praise, as well as how to provide constructive criticism



Individual mentoring – personality

Schedule of activities, as well as content freedom

Half-time and final monitoring and assessment

Support materials (written and on-line)



Individual mentoring – profession

Motivate women to get to know their skills (even the hidden ones)

New areas of suitable professions

Guiding towards change in thinking and acting



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Group mentoring

Meeting women of similar age and with similar problems

Networking, new contacts

Actual topics – develop soft skills



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Managing mentoring efficiency

Tools (profiles, objectives, questionnaires, notebook, contract, continuous monitoring)

Efficiency of e-team work

Dealing with conflicts



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Monitoring of the mentoring process

Tools (profiles, objectives, questionnaires, notebook, contract, continuous monitoring
Initial and final monitoring questionnaires – for mentors and mentees

Half-time monitoring questions



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Creation of digital stories

Digital story-telling

Original self-presentation

Idea, film creation and story sharing



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The skill of change

The process of change

Team work with changes

Six steps for implementing a change



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Diamonds – a successful story from Finland

Ritva Nyberg

Abstract

Mrs Ritva Nyberg is the founder and first chief executive officer of the Women's Enterprise Agency in Finland (1996 – 2009) and "DIAMONDS" is a network of 7 mentees and one mentor.

A story about introducing mentoring in Finland initially for women, later for men, too. How does mentoring work? What is the reason for its success? What are its key elements? Did it prove to be useful for the start of women's enterprise?

The Women's Enterprise Agency started with its first programme of mentoring for women, which was funded by the Finnish Ministry of Trade and Industry and by the European Social Fund, in 1998. The mentoring model, developed by the Agency, has been awarded twice by the European Commission as an example worthy of emulation.

All mentoring projects lasted one year and the selection of mutually suitable male and female mentors and mentees had been made very carefully, often using psychological tests. Furthermore, a mentoring manual has been created to help work in pairs.

One of the first mentors was Mrs Ann B, a successful businesswoman in the area of leather products and design of handbags, purses and similar products. She wanted to become a mentor because when she had started doing business 18 years ago having started up a company, she encountered many problems and obstacles that needed to be overcome; therefore she wanted to help others so that they could avoid problems if possible. Over time Ann has probably become the best mentor for women in Finland ever. Mrs Nyberg and Mrs Ann B. often travelled abroad together to introduce the Finnish model of mentoring.

Over the course of years, Ann has had 7 mentees. The first one of them, Titte V., worked in a large design company, where her colleagues were almost without exception men. She had very low self-esteem and lacked courage to find another job or set up a business. Ann was a good example and a good listener with a wide range of contacts who were able to help Titte out. Today, Titte has a company through which she provides consultations.

The second mentee is Mrs Liisa S., who lost her job in a small design firm and wanted to set up on her own, but did not know how. With the help of Ann and her example, she set up her own firm producing silk scarves and ties with a special de-

sign. When the mentoring process was over, she started to cooperate with Ann also in business.

The third mentee is Teija M., who has just started up her own firm, also in the area of design – large collections of art glass. However, she did not know how to find customers and how to manage the firm. Together with Ann, she found new ways of how to manage the firm and how to sell glass fashion jewellery, which turned out to be a very successful business in the end.

Ann invited these three mentees to her home to help them learn from one another, network and boost their confidence. It was a success! The “Diamonds” network was established and over the course of years it increased by another 4 mentees who joined it.

Another mentee was Katja A., a journalist who wanted to set up a business and find a supporting pillar for her enterprise. Thanks to the network and Ann’s support, she got a chance to try to offer a training course which today is her main area of business. Katja thus assisted other mentees in writing texts representing their firms and in designing web pages.

The fifth mentee is Eeva W., who had lived in Sweden for 20 years and had to move back to Finland because her father had passed away and she had to become the director of his company. Eeva did not know much about business, about Finnish companies, about Finnish society, etc. Thanks to Ann’s experience and her contacts, she found experts on all areas of business and got support, guidance and help from the “Diamond” network of other mentees, so she and her children were able to start a new life in Finland.

Another mentee is Leena L., photographer, who lost her job and wanted to set up a business. And again – Ann was the one who helped her and opened a network of contacts for other mentees. Today, Leena has her own firm where she is, and does business, on her own. She can assist other mentees with taking photographs for their promotional materials, designing web pages, etc.

The seventh mentee is Inna M., newly-wed Ukrainian who has married a Finnish husband and moved to Finland. She did not have a job, did not know anyone and could not speak Finnish. With her wide network, Ann helped her find a job and “Diamonds” became a very important network for Inna. At the time, the other mentees underwent a very thorough training in English.

To this day, Ann, an ex-mentor, is available for her ex-mentees – after so many years of mentoring, she is still willing to help each of them personally, individually as a good listener who stays on top of things “like a helicopter”. All of the 7 former mentees continue mentoring one another; they also mentor their mentor Ann, as she confirms. Over the years, all of them have been polished into “real diamonds”.

Mentoring in Lithuania – examples of activities of the Social Innovation Fund

Anželika Sliackiene

Abstract

The Social Innovation Fund organisation from Kaunas in Lithuania celebrated 20 years in existence this year. The group of very active women implements projects helping disadvantaged groups in the labour market, occupies itself with equal opportunities for women and men, initiates amendments of Lithuanian legislation towards equality of women, participates in European educational projects. It has been engaged in mentoring for a long time. At the conference of 7 Nov 2014, there was a presentation of the results of the e-mentoring project which was part of the know-how transferred to the Czech Republic under the Mentoring Opens Doors project.



Since 1994...

- More than **5000 participants** (unemployed and socially disadvantaged) completed the SIF's training courses and workshops on social inclusion and employability; about 60% of participants have got employment or decided to continue their education;
- More than **300 staff members** from municipalities and politicians were trained on mainstreaming the gender equality into local government policies and strategic plans;
- Representatives from more than **100 private companies** were trained to implement gender equality plans at workplaces;
- **68 projects** have been implemented at national, European and international levels;
- Partners' network containing around **200 international** and **200 national partners** (including NGOs, universities, VET organisations, public bodies and private companies) has been established and maintained;
- **4 Alternative Reports** were presented to the UN: 3 on implementation of the UN Convention of Elimination of all kind of Discrimination Against Women – CEDAW (in 2000, 2008, 2014), and 1 – on implementation of the UN Convention on Economic and Social and Cultural Rights – CESCR (in 2004);
- **12 European** and **6 national conferences** have been organised;
- **9 Resolutions** submitted to Lithuanian Seimas (Parliament).

Since 1994 the SIF has been involved in **68 different national, European and international projects** in the following directions:

- Social inclusion and employability (17 projects);
- Gender equality and diversity (21 project);
- Promoting entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship (3 projects);
- Promoting adult education policies and practices (11 projects);
- ICT and e-learning (4 projects);
- Combatting violence against women (6 projects);
- Intercultural and language training (2 projects);
- Strengthening capacities of NGOs (2 projects).

MENTORING WITHIN THE PROJECTS

- ESF project „Social incubator“, 2012-2015
- ESF project „Better a Job than a Dole“, 2012-2014
<http://www.darbas-sekmi.lt>
- LLP KA3-ICT project “e-Mentoring: New skills and competencies for new jobs” (eMENTOR), 2011-2013
www.e-mentor.eu
- LdV Transfer of Innovation project Ignite Europe - Training trainers to develop and support social entrepreneurs, 2011-2013
<http://ignite.eu/project.org>
- ESF project “Social mobility model for women” (MIMS model), 2009-2012.
www.mims.lt/
- LLP Grundtvig project “Innovative Methods and Practices to facilitate Social Inclusion: LIGHT”, 2009-2011.
www.socialmobility.eu
- EQUAL project „Give me a hand“, 2005-2008.
<http://www.istatdarska.lt>

Varieties of Mentoring within SIF activities

1. Social mentoring (pair/individual) <http://www.istatdarska.lt>
<http://www.darbas-sekmi.lt>
2. Group social mentoring
www.mims.lt/ www.socialmobility.eu
3. e-Mentoring (groups and pairs) on employment-related issues:
• Mentoring on entrepreneurship www.e-mentor.eu
• Mentoring on employability
4. Mentoring on social entrepreneurship
<http://www.ignite.eu/project.org>

The main target groups:

- Socially disadvantaged persons
- Long-term unemployed women
- Single mothers
- Senior citizens
- Last year students of universities and VET schools

In addition to Mentoring itself...

- Various courses:
 - Computer literacy
 - Accountancy (theory and practice)
 - Development of communication skills
 - Administration and record-keeping
 - English language
 - Development of employability skills
 - Development of entrepreneurial skills
 - Social care
 - ...
- Individual consultations:
 - Psychological
 - Gender equality
 - Evaluation of personal and professional needs
 - Professional orientation
 - ...



Individual professional mentoring

Ing. Jana Mecnerová

Abstract

Case studies of a mentee. Mrs Alena was not happy with her job. A mentor got information about her, estimated her type and established objectives with her. She motivated the woman to make a change and they jointly examined her qualifications for her dream career as a care assistant. It is clearly explained how mentoring opened doors. The mentor shows what she does as a mentor, why she finds mentoring useful and necessary, and what is mentoring good for.

Alena



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Information about the client

- Female
- Age group: 54 and over
- Education: qualified
- Job: handing out lunches in a company canteen

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Client's objectives

- Achieve a change in profession – change the field of activity and profession
- Work in social services

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Client's motivation to a change

- In one profession for too long, without a possibility of professional growth
- Low salary
- Tired of the stereotype and getting up early in the morning
- Worried whether she will be able to do such a physically demanding job when she is older
- Desire to help people
- Wants to study and develop as a personality
- Increase her personal prestige

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Client's prerequisites for her chosen profession as a care assistant

- * Personality prerequisites: positive attitude, single-mindedness, modesty, humbleness, endurance, maturity, communicative skills
- * Experience with looking after old people in family
- * Friendship with disabled people – realizing why they can be admirable, they are an example
- * Informal education – cultured language



HOW MENTORING OPENED DOORS

1. Meeting 1 – personal motivation, what can I offer
2. Meeting 2 – change of profession – how to become a care assistant – specific step – go and seek information at an employment office
3. Meeting 3 – filling in the form for the chosen re-training together
4. Meeting 4 – seeking other ways to get re-training – e.g. through projects – specific step – register with an employment office as an interested person and submit a request for re-training
5. Meeting 5 – way to a dream job might lead through volunteering – specific step – prepare for an interview in the non-governmental organization ADRA



How mentoring opened doors

6. Meeting 6 – Specific date for registration with ADRA, ready for the interview
- 7.
8. Meeting 7 – What mentoring brought to me – assessment of results so far
- 9.
10. Result: In autumn, Mrs Alena started re-training and at the same time, she started volunteering in a charity, she attends a nursing home. She is a step closer to her objective.



WHAT DO I DO AS A MENTOR

- * Help people overcome inner obstacles on their way to achieve their objective
- * Help people answer some questions which they ask themselves
- * Provide feedback
- * Provide psychological support
- * Share experience and information with them
- * Learn from them and they learn from me

WHY DO I FIND MENTORING USEFUL AND NECESSARY

- * It is a relatively cheap and efficient method of help in difficult situations
- * It is a substitute for family support when it is lacking
- * Boosts client's confidence
- * It is a natural and generally applicable method
- * It raises new mentors out of clients who had undergone mentoring
- * Provides necessary stress-free social contact in an informal setting
- * Often helps clients very efficiently to resolve their life situation or brace their energies to do so

WHAT IS MENTORING GOOD FOR

- * For the long-term unemployed
- * For people in difficult life situations
- * For students and workers who want to succeed in their new profession
- * For companies trying to make the transfer of experience between senior and junior workers easier
- * For exchange of experience between generations
- * Prevention of socio-pathological phenomena

The value of oneself

Ing. Michaela Holišová

Abstract

Each of us has value but sometimes we do not realise it properly. When we were children we knew it clearly but life and civilization has put paint on us which has hidden this knowledge from us. This produces a state of mind when we do not believe in ourselves and do not know what is within us. What happened? We were brought up, studied, read and listened. All the information which we face causes us confusion, and we then see things and people differently to what they in fact are. Let us analyse it and get to know our own values and possibilities. We have 3 ways of discovering our values and their processing.

WHAT? ME?



THAT SHOULD (NOT) WORK ...

No! Really not me!

- I do not have any experience
- Wrong age
- I do not have a baby-sitter
- What should I be saying to them?

Of course! Why not me?

- Of course I have – I am a coach, manager, I create and lead teams
- I have something much better than age – story
- I will get one, worst case scenario: we will deal with it together
- Exactly this, what has happened to me?

But I do have a value!!!

ALL OF US DO.

WHAT IS VALUE ACTUALLY?

Value is a figure which is established by objective or subjective assessment of tangible or intangible essence, expressed in measurable or non-measurable units, determined comparatively in relation to generally accepted units

Who are you, what your values are, what position you maintain ... these are your anchors, your fixed, unalterable prominent landmarks. Books will tell you nothing about them.

You must search for them in your own soul.

Anne Mulcahy
Managing director of Xerox

WHAT WILL YOU BE, VERUNKA?



HE/SHE LOVES ME



IT IS GREAT

- ... to love oneself
- ... know who you are
- ... not to worry about "What if ..."



WE HAVE ONLY FORGOTTEN
ABOUT IT.
WHAT HAPPENED?

WE WERE TAUGHT



WE WERE TAUGHT



WE READ AND LISTEN

UPOZORNĚNÍ: MŮŽE BÝT
S VÁMI MANIPULOVÁNO

Česká televize

REFLEX

IHNED.cz

lidovky.cz

iDNES.cz

BLESK

.... AND ...



AND WHAT ARE YOUR VALUES??

THIS DOES NOT WORK

- Black-and-white thinking
- Labelling
- Generalizing
- Presuming – reading minds, foretelling
- Arguing with emotions
- Holding firm to negatives
- Rejecting positives
- Negative comparison
- Inner orders
- Disaster-thinking
- Touchiness
- Blaming others

WHEN YOU WERE ABLE TO GET THERE, YOU CAN ALSO GET BACK



WHEN FORCE IS OF NO HELP



What is it that I actually want?

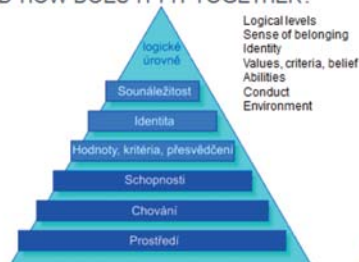
WHAT YOU ARE WHEN...



WHAT ARE YOUR VALUES?



AND HOW DOES IT FIT TOGETHER?



WE ALWAYS HAVE THREEE OPTIONS

- Leave
- Accept
- Change



WHAT IS USEFUL FOR EACH OF THE THREE WAYS

- o Patience
- o Acceptance
- o Sympathy
- o Not to evaluate
- o No attachment
- o Beginner's mind
- o Sense of humour
- o Determination
- o Infinite space
- o Generosity

HOW TO FIND ONE'S VALUE THEN?

- o Recall
- o Do stocktaking of your beliefs
- o Get rid of habits that do not work
- o Know where I am going and why
- o Know your values



What lies behind us and what lies ahead of us are tiny matters compared to what lives within us. The moment we give it a chance to see the light of the day, miracles will start happening.

Henry David Thoreau

Conclusions of the Active Employment Policy study

PhDr. Ing. Hana Danihelková

Abstract

The full text of the entire document called the “Study of other tools of the Active Employment Policy in Lithuania and Finland, including policy tools contributing to the fulfilment of objectives of the Lisbon Strategy in Lithuania” is available from the project coordinator – ATHENA – Association for Education and Development of Women. It deals with the most important concepts and elements. This study was used for creating tools in the Mentoring project and for work with women, and as such it was also introduced at the final conference of the Mentoring Opens Doors project.

The Lisbon Strategy devised in 2000 in order to improve the competitiveness of the European Union is a basis for a whole range of measures, including the Active Employment Policy. It is applied in all the countries of the European Union. Because of the transfer of the Complex Mentoring Process Methodology from Finland and from Lithuania, we looked into the introduction and implementation of measures to fulfil this aim in both of the aforementioned countries.

Lithuania

In Lithuania, the following employment support tools are used:

- general employment tools
- tools of the active labour market policy, and
- employment support schemes.

An Active Employment Policy tool which assists the unemployed in finding work is:

- Vocational training
- Informal training
- Subsidized job placement
- Support in obtaining job skills
- Public works

- Job creation support
- Job rotation
- Financing of vocational training and informal training
- Job creation support in the form of a subsidy
- Advantage of social insurance in unemployment
- Local employment initiatives
- Occupational rehabilitation schemes
- “Job Clubs” scheme
- Social businesses
- Senior bank

Most of these tools are also applied in the Czech Republic. However, a combination of these tools and mentoring has initiated a number of very interesting innovations in methods of work.

An important feature is the fact that the most popular tools of the active labour market policy in Lithuania in the group of women over 50 include subsidized employment, subsidies for obtaining job skills and public works. Training for the labour market has a positive impact on older people’s return to work. It emerged that women are better capable of using the opportunities of the measures that are available. It is worth noticing that active labour market policy measures are more frequently used in groups which are vulnerable in terms of the labour market. Unemployed people with a disability used to be viewed pessimistically as regards their chances of finding a job (the disabled, older women). Owing to Active Employment Policy tools, their employability shows good results.

Another part of the study deals with the unemployment rate and status of women approaching retirement in Lithuania. All people approaching retirement are expected to have additional support in the area of employment:

- additional notice periods for termination of employment apply to them (up to 4 months);
- they have a priority right to stay employed if their business or institution downsizes (this applies to people who have less than 3 years before they become entitled to claim old age pension);
- the period for the payment of unemployment benefits is extended to 8 months;

- socially most vulnerable groups from these people can be employed in subsidized job positions;
- preliminary social pension is a type of benefit paid to unemployed people who have been registered with the employment office for at least 1 year, and who had worked for 3 and more years while paying social security contributions, and there are no more than 5 years remaining before they can start claiming old age pension.

Finland

In Finland, the following Active Employment Policy (AEP) measures have been introduced and continue to be supported:

- Adult education centres
- Schemes of open universities of the third age
- Enhancing computer skills of senior citizens
- Non-profit organizations supporting unemployed people are supported in increasing their computer-literacy. This is one of the AEP measures.

Active Employment Policy tools in Finland helping unemployed people to find jobs:

- Employing people being educated;
- Training in the labour market;
- Subsidized job positions
- Business start-up subsidies;
- State subsidies;
- Subsidizing job positions in private companies;
- Subsidizing job positions in municipalities

Based on the analysis of Active Employment Policies in Lithuania and Finland, we recommend that the following experience should be used in the Czech Republic in order to improve the employment rate of older people, women in particular:

First of all, Active Employment Policy should be interpreted as a **creation of complex measures**, which can help to increase employment of older workers:

- **Encourage institutions and organizations** to contribute to employment. Discuss their suggestions and decide in the most courageous way.
- Increase **social integration of the older population**, boost functional capacity of non-governmental organizations.
- Various associations and non-governmental organizations must **work actively with older people**, plan and see solidarity between generations as a set of various activities. A long-term objective is also to actively acquire necessary resources.
- Support women in **networking for employment**, i.e. creating a network of contacts with other people who can mutually help one another to find a job.
- Support **women's enterprise** by providing a maximum amount of information and support when creating new job positions.
- Develop **psychological counselling and support** for older people.
- Make **learning, training and work** easier for older people.
- Raise awareness of the older generation about opportunities for **education and employment**, develop measures for an "active retirement" and support local communities.
- Develop programmes and the number of their forms so as to improve the older generation's approach to studying.
- Improve the opportunities of older people for **re-training**, ensure its variety, especially at women's request, in reaction to the needs of the society.
- Inform older people about **re-training opportunities**.
- Actively **support women's organizations** engaged in the issues of employment of older women, as well as help establish non-governmental organizations focused on the issues of employment in accordance with the greatest needs of the market and target groups.

- Improve the spread of information to women who need help and support so that they know at all times where they can contact someone free of charge in order to obtain information and advice.
- Depending on the situation, give preference to those projects which deal with employment of older people.

Conclusions of round tables and conference discussion

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Abstract

A number of group activities took place in the course of the project, during which different labour market agents got together: employment office representatives, female mentees from the target group, mentors, foreign partners, advisers and consultants, local administration representatives and employers. Many of them provided interesting information and stimulating opinions regarding the issues in question.

The most important feature of mentoring is personal contact. It is crucial to create an atmosphere of absolute trust, confirmed by a pledge of secrecy about shared information. Male or female mentors are doctors of the soul and therefore they also perceive mentees as human beings in the first place.

At the beginning there was nothing and therefore it was difficult to create a coherent set of mentoring activities.

(Finland)

E-mentoring is more exacting because personal contact is lacking, or is very limited, here. It is substituted by a variety of online activities and virtual audio-visual meetings between mentors and mentees. <http://www.e-mentoring.eu>

(Lithuania)

The possibility to apply a comprehensive mentoring process in an employment office is not easy because employment offices do not have the same structure and lack interconnection with other activities. Regular members of staff do not have the time or space for such a time-consuming activity. It can currently be implemented only by employed specialist advisers and Job Clubs. If mentoring were to be implemented as a purchased service, a duty arises for its providers to be chosen in an open competition which is rigid and complicated.

(representatives of employment offices)

The discussion turned to the database of ESF projects which is available to employment offices. They pursue ongoing projects themselves, or they are contacted by recipients of subsidies. However, there is no unified database.

(representatives of employment offices)

The long-term unemployed are a very difficult group of people. There are work programmes for them but it is often difficult to distinguish who wants to work and who has adapted to welfare benefits, i.e. does not care to have a job and therefore does not want to participate in various existing projects.

Furthermore, many people do not know how to work with information.

The problem is:

- 1) How to find out with a high probability who wants to work and who does not?
- 2) How to link long-term unemployed people with projects which are available to them?
- 3) Would it not be worth it to work with them even before they come to a job centre?
- 4) Would the use of mentoring be worth psychologically and financially?
(The initial interest often fades away.)

Much depends on the unemployed – if he/she wants to work or not, but majority of people do want to work.

However, the attitude of employment offices to people is not systematic and complex (this regards the frequency and efficiency of work sessions and passing on information). During the meetings between employment agents and unemployed people, the Action Plan is regularly recapitulated (15 min!!!) and suitable job positions which are available are surveyed. Those who need more care and those who make an effort use the services of specialist advisers who have more time. In any system or non-system, the human factor is an important feature (on both sides of the dialogue). This must always be taken into account.

Even here the use of mentoring would have its place as an initial method of work with the unemployed.

(representatives of employment offices)

Employment offices must supervise the purposefulness of educational and retraining courses and monitor the economy and efficiency of the funds spent. Even job subsidies sometimes pose a problem because some people then do not appreciate work and job positions. A subsidized job is intended for people who have a certain disadvantage and it certainly is not a solution just for the six months during which the employee is with a new employer “free of charge”. The primary objective of an employment office is that the employer makes an effort to create suitable conditions of work for the subsidized employee and participates in the employee’s integration into the labour market. The employer thus has a certain amount of extra work with this employee but obtains the employee’s work in return.

Even here the human factor plays an important role – one employer in the discussion pointed out her very bad experience with two employees who had got subsidized jobs with her company. Even during a selection of employees for subsidized jobs, mentoring could be helpful in shedding light on the real motives of people who get a job this way. On the other hand, some employers have unrealistic requirements regarding employees, and their notion of the ratio of the employee’s quality to the price of his/her work is also unrealistic.

A lot of people search for a job for a long time, because they do not want to shoulder the responsibility and they are often not willing to do anything to raise employers’ interest in them. Some people really do not want to work but they are obliged by the system to be registered with an employment office. There they only fulfil activities so as to “avoid problems”.

Employment offices have good experience with informative meetings between project investigators and their employees: Thus they know quite well what awaits the unemployed in a specific project and what is expected from it.

Participation in a project is an interruption of life at home in isolation, and it is an opportunity to meet people with a similar fate. Sharing a fate and a joint journey of searching for a job motivates people to do something about themselves.

(unemployed woman)



www.mentoringoteviradvere.cz