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Harnessing the Learning Assets within the SME Business Community

Welcome

Harnessing the Learning Assets in SMEs

SYNERGY is a B2B initiative aimed at connecting business owners with other business owners and in so doing creating high-value and quality long-term relationships. Through the use of social networks, SYNERGY will bring together business owners, trainers, mentors and enterprise support agencies to foster a culture of learning within the micro-enterprise sector promoting smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

In consultation with small business owners across Europe, the project team will;

- develop a series of mini-learning training courses,
- provide free to use information resources and toolkits,
- facilitate online networking and mentoring,

addressing the real training needs of the micro-enterprise and SME sector.

Overall, SYNERGY aims to minimise business failure, strengthen operational capacity and tap into the wealth of knowledge and expertise amongst business owners across Europe.

The SYNERGY project commenced in September 2014 and will operate until August 2016.

SYNERGY is funded by the Irish National Agency, Léargas through the Erasmus+ Programme

The People behind the Project

Project Partners

SYNERGY is promoted by a project consortium of 7 organisations from across Europe, namely Ireland, Italy, Romania, Cyprus, Greece, Germany and Finland.



Pictured here at the first partner meeting held in Campobasso, Italy, members of the project team are working directly with micro-enterprise owners and VET professionals locally to shape, influence and direct the development work of the project.

Partner information can be found on www.projectsynergy.eu

Project Research Results

Sustainable Networking for SMEs and VET

Between December 2014 and February 2015, project partners conducted a pan-European audit of 132 business owners of which 84.8% were micro-enterprises with less than 10 employees.

Key Findings

- Of the 132 MEOs audited, on average 53.16% had attended some type of vocational training related to the management of their business
- The most common types of training completed was in the areas of business management, IT, marketing and communications
- Training was typically offered in either a class-room format or team-work setting
- On average, 54% of MEOs have shared skills, experiences and expertise with others, in an organised manner (23% in Germany to 85.7% in Italy)
- Core barriers to training were cost, relevance and location of training on offer; followed by duration, class size and methods used
- 1 to 3 hours per week was the optimum amount of time that the majority of business owners wished to commit to training
- Priority training themes for successful businesses were identified as Management, Marketing, Communications & Teamwork and Negotiation
- 81% of business owners were willing to share information, skills and knowledge with others

The complete version of the Summary Research and Summary Audit Report can be accessed at www.projectsynergy.eu

Getting the Message Out!

Starting the SYNERGY Conversation

The first SYNERGY public event took place in Paderborn, Germany on 26th March 2015, to share the research and audit results and to outline the key development aspects of the project with an audience of 47 business owners, VET students and tutors, project managers and local business associations. Copies of all presentations and a proceedings report are available on the project website www.projectsynergy.eu.



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