

Summary Research Results

Synergy Multiplier Event

Presented by CARDET and AOA Arges



Overview

- CARDET created the SYNERGY Research Framework to ensure that the learning tools and resources developed, are relevant to the needs of VET and business communities.
- The research framework developed questions that were addressed by the desk-based research, including the criteria for accessing relevant best practice examples
- The objectives of this research process addressed three thematic areas:
 - Best practice where the provision of VET in-service training is concerned and the issues to be addressed in the proposed in-service training programme to enhance the role of VET providers servicing the micro-enterprise sector
 - The issues to be addressed in the induction to pedagogy training for micro-enterprise owners to facilitate their role in the proposed peer-to-peer learning environment
 - Best practice initiatives that strive to develop partnerships between VET and the business community



Overview

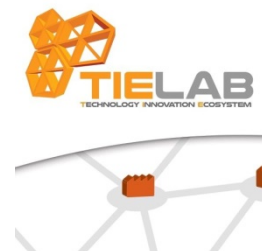
- This research has been conducted by the six implementing project partners, by providing:
 - An overview of the current environment for entrepreneurship and the SME sector and introduces the role of the VET sector at national, regional and local levels in Ireland, Italy, Germany, Romania, Greece and Cyprus
 - Profile of national strategies for entrepreneurship and business development, and the training programmes and supports currently available to the business community.
 - Methodology followed by project partners in researching and assessing two best practice examples aligned with the project's core themes.
 - An overview of the outcomes of these best practice examples, with a comprehensive list of recommendations that will use to inform the development work of the project.



Methodology



Best Practice Examples



2connectBusiness



soufflearning Learning face-to-face



udemy for business



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Recommendations: Online Platform

- Develop new learning environments and infrastructures by using and adapting the e-Learning / Virtual Learning Environment as well as developing different kinds of content and different approaches
- Should also be used for purposes of sharing news, information and knowledge
- A methodology and a process mechanism that can reliably capture, measure and benchmark the training needs of companies.
- Create a database of mini-learning format resources that can be used by MEOs and VETs for training. A bespoke training should consider each individuals preferences and needs.
- The platform should establish mechanisms to foster knowledge and information exchange between the users

Recommendations: Train the Trainer

- The Train the Trainer programme will need to acknowledge the professional experience of established VET tutors and should support their new role as learning facilitators to the business community
- Train the Trainer curriculum could include additional modules to train non-business tutors to support the business community
- Guidelines should be set to ensure that all VET tutors taking part in the Train-the-Trainer programme have a minimum of 2 years' experience
- The network participants could arrange seminars and conferences which will be helpful to deliver appropriate information to the interested communities
- VET professional trainers and organisations may collaborate closely with chambers of commerce and other institutions in order to support the development of future entrepreneurs



Recommendations: B2B Networks

- When establishing networks, regional or local, we should consider connecting both experienced and less experienced MEOs in a mentoring relationship. Therefore, the more experienced network participants could guide the less experienced and help them to enter the market and to reduce risk of failure.
- MEOs appreciated attending the workshops and given the opportunity to network face-to-face with other business owners and VET professionals
- The content provided within training should be based on authentic problems of MEOs and their employees. Thus, the training gains relevancy for the target group and the learning transfer.

Summary Audit Results

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Overview

- Working with the SYNERGY Research Framework as developed by CARDET, AOA Arges formulated a common audit tool comprising 24 questions, with the expressed aims of:
 - Identifying specific skill assets and knowledge within existing micro-enterprises that could be harnessed to support the development of the sector as a whole
 - The learning preferences of micro-enterprise owners and the most appropriate learning platforms and environments for the proposed peer-to-peer learning;
 - What are the learning areas where gaps in provision exist that need to be addressed with the proposed mini-learning-format resources;
 - What are the skill assets within the micro-enterprise community that could be used to inform the train-the-trainer course-ware to ensure that the skills developed within the VET sector reflect the needs of business.



Methodology and Profile

- Conducted in the six implementing countries, partners were free to chose a mixed methodology to complete the audit process:
 - Online questionnaire, focus group meetings, face-to-face and telephone interviews
- The audit was conducted with 132 small- and micro-enterprise owners
- Key characteristics of audit participants:
 - 84.8% were indeed micro-enterprises with less than 10 employees
 - Predominately operating in the Services and ICT sectors across all partner countries (food, agriculture, construction and engineering)
 - In Ireland, Greece, Romania and Cyprus the majority (54%) were in operation between 1 to 5 years
 - However in comparison in Germany and Italy, 51.8% of respondents were in business for more than 15 years

MEOs experience of VET

- Of the 132 MEOs audited, on average 53.16% had attended some type of vocational training related to the management of their business
 - 21.05% in Romania
 - 78.6% in Italy
- 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
 - Many benefits to this type of training in terms of networking, information and knowledge exchange, peer2peer learning and input from experienced subject experts
- On average, 54% of MEOs have shared skills, experiences and expertise with others, in an organised matter (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

Future Requirements of MEOs

Key characteristics for Synergy Partners to consider:

- 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 followed:
 - Management, Marketing, Communications & Teamwork and Negotiation
- Gaps in currently provision were universally identified by
 - Business Law, Logistics, Supply Chain Management
- MEOs were willing to share information, skills and knowledge with other MEOs (81% on a non-fee basis) and this is reflected in the numbers that are already engaged in this activity
- Value to mixed methodology of online and face to face to be considered by SYNERGY based on the preference of MEOs – online, blended and/or face to face



Future Requirements of MEOs

- MEOs stated that they had expertise in the areas of **Strategy and Business Growth, Marketing, Communications and Networking** and are in a position to share these with VET in order to enhance the relevance of training designed and developed
- Core themes for the learning resources and content development have been identified and outlined by MEOs audited – there is a diversity of requirements and skills available – therefore we will design for local flexibility and appropriateness
- The role of the local members of the focus groups will be key going forward in order to further define and identify the key components of each learning area
- The preferred format, mode and type of learning resources have been highlighted by the MEOs and they have also stated the barriers that we should avoid if SYNERGY is to be successful

Thank You for your Interest and Attention

Any Questions?



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