



Over – national standard of training  
adults aiming at support and  
encouraging of entrepreneurship



**The National Association  
for Supporting Entrepreneurship**

Staszica Street 2A

26-200 Końskie

Phone number: 41 375 14 55

fax: 41 375 14 56

[kswp@kswp.org.pl](mailto:kswp@kswp.org.pl)

[www.kswp.org.pl](http://www.kswp.org.pl)

## Introductory

Encouragement of the idea of entrepreneurship means working out effective methods of educating and training people to be ready to start up own business. The standards do not imply setting a duty to follow some strict frames or activities beyond which people must not go further. It is the opposite to this; innovative methods of training entrepreneurship aim at development of the process of adult training through applying many different components and building dependence between them in the way which allows to finally achieve the most effective and awaited result. Because of this setting a standard letting achieve the highest quality of training is so popular among institutions acting in the field of adult training.

The present standard of adult training in the field of entrepreneurship has been created as a result of the project “European competences and quality of adult training in the age of globalization” (Erasmus+). The project enabled an exchange of experience and working out collaborative solutions for the Polish market together with the partners from Italy, Spain and Great Britain.

## Who are you? – or initial evaluation

Entering every of the three foreign institutions where we were supposed to have trainings, we had a warm hearty welcome. It was not a usual gesture of politeness, though. It was an introductory to awake in us trust to the trainer conducting the trainings. When we felt like someone exceptional (as a commercial would describe this state), it was easier for us to reveal a few essential details about ourselves. These do not only included what we do professionally but also our expectations to the training, motivation to gain new knowledge, way of thinking and seeing the world. The short conversation at coffee before the training itself became a so called initial evaluation of the participants.

## You are important not only during the course!

At entering the classroom, we received questionnaires which like in Poland were meant to asses our knowledge and competences in the field in which the training was meant to be conducted. After a while, it turned out that we also received some more very important things in a folder. Those were: leaflets of the biggest attractions of the area, a map with the most important dining places, a timetable of the public transport, such obvious information for the natives but essentially needed for us. It was an unusual care of a client as far as in Poland when you come to a training course, you are more likely to receive a good quality training rather than other gadgets.

### Flexible at every moment

When we finally completed all the questionnaires and needed forms, on the basis of which our expectations and aims were supposed to be assessed, we were expecting to listen to a kind of a lecture about the issues interesting for us. The trainer went further than just informing us about the subject of the training. Of course, like in Poland, he told us what subjects, issues and problems he suggested to be discussed but it was us who he finally let choose what we wanted to concentrate on and what would be needed for us just to have a general idea of. During every session some subjects turned out to be more important than others which were eliminated by the trainer and such a solution gave us a feeling that not a single minute of the meeting was wasted. Every part was useful and full of the information needed to us.

### Practice and become a master!

It was not the end of flexibility to the way of conducting a training abroad. When the organizers had found out that we were aiming at gaining knowledge through experience, we were given exactly this kind of training. Of course, there was a short lecture as an example of a presentation method but what the trainers really concentrated on was interactive training (discussion, case study, brainstorming, making conclusions). It turned out that educating or training in every of the visited countries is based first of all on practice rather than academic knowledge. For example, the training firm from Italy running trainings for future start-ups divides a group into subgroups which in the process of brainstorming create an idea for a future business. The idea is further discussed in the group. The main principle is: you must not criticize anybody's idea. First of all, the discussion aims at motivating, showing possibilities and opportunities of the idea which the presenting subgroup has not foreseen. The remaining subgroups say why they would use of such a business and how, how they would like to get to know about it, or why they think this business has a chance to be successful on the market. In Spain such a discussion is conducted with participation of specialists or people who have a similar or identical business. To discover and develop a potential of the trained person, they are often sent to an entrepreneur acting in a similar branch to the one such a person wants to start a business in to teach him to achieve his goals and to develop such traits which are needed to become successful as a businessman. In this way, we were clearly shown that business people in the partner countries are not afraid of applying such methods as mentoring or coaching based on asking questions, concentrated on achieving goals, motivating to thinking and maximum application of the personal skills. Our attention was also drawn to the free style of conducting trainings, informal contact of the coach with the participants, empathy, mutual listening

and exchange of the views. The coach was not an authority from who we were supposed to learn, but he was certainly a listener who was ready to hear our point of view and treat it respectfully in a relaxed atmosphere and express his for us to get ready to change or enrich our knowledge under his influence.

### Differentiated process of training

In all the three visited countries the main tool of training was an e-presentation with different slides showing the subject supposed to be taught, examples, diagrams, photos etc. This tool is really useful from the point of view of its potential strength in keeping the listeners' attention which leads to a possibility to render a lot of information in a short period of time. Presentations are widely used not only during trainings themselves but also while i.e. presenting business projects by people applying for a bank loan. In this situation an applicant has 5 min to persuade a bank clerk that his idea will be successful enough and he will be able to pay it back. A presentation here becomes an example of initiative and creativity of the applicant.

E-learning is also widely spread in the visited countries. It is not the main form of educating people, though, just additional to the traditional one. E-platforms are used to teach people or to exchange experience as well as provide beneficiaries with additional information which was not included into the stationary part of the training. The above-mentioned method must be assisted by the use of computers, tablets or other e-devices along with the Internet. To make access to the above-mentioned means easier, some institutions offer a rent of such with the needed programmes and training materials.

### Systematic monitoring of progress and effects

For foreign institutions it is not only important to assess a listener's knowledge at the beginning of the training and at its end. Monitoring during the training is important as well. Systematic evaluation of the progress and effects is not aimed at assessment of the degree of gaining knowledge but the degree of meeting the listener's educational expectations identified at the beginning. An interesting form of exchanging information between the coach and the listeners is the tool with colorful cards on which participants can write their comments or questions to the training, the coach or other participants at any moment of the training. Due to this shy people can also express their concerns or ask questions. An important element of each day of the training is self-assessment of the participants when they answer the questions: what have I learned? What was the most interesting part of it? What else do I have to learn?

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Getting to know the practices of conducting trainings worked out by the visited institutions has been a valuable experience for NAEF. It gives an opportunity to see entrepreneurship in a wider dimension than before. Application of the learned tools and methods in Poland will enable our institution to work more effectively encouraging innovation, creativity and initiative among adults. Although the system itself is much alike the one in Poland, it is more based on empathy and exchange of experience.

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