



Lifelong Learning Guides

- *Salt training days*



We want lifelong learning in this community !!

Xploit Transversal 4 Action 2010-2013
www.Xploit-EU.com

Coordinator December 2010 – *draft for discussion*

INTRO

This paper is the first paper about the planning of the first round of the training and inspiration of the project's and communities' *lifelong learning guides* (in this paper short: *guides*).

The community guides can be defined in many ways: a special resource, a specific job, a mosaic of competences acquired by people working in the public administration, etc.

The most important is that that the community has at its disposal human resources directly working with the community's lifelong learning needs and how to meet these needs.

This work is quite demanding, and people engaged in this work are expected to develop such competences throughout many years, as many of the work tasks are very much related to experience and networking skills, which cannot be acquired in a short period of time.

The role of the Xploit training offer is to start this process and to sustain it through the project lifetime, and hopefully within the framework of the network expected to follow the Xploit project.

The paper is expected to be reviewed by the project partners, also by the QA partners!, and perhaps by local network partners, in January 2011. The partners are invited to respond to the paper to allow the coordinator to produce the final design of the training days before the 1st of March.

part 1 *principles*

WHAT IS A LIFELONG LEARNING GUIDE

- › Networking between the policy level and institutions and groups of citizens working with lifelong learning
- › Monitoring European lifelong learning policies and funding opportunities
- › Identifying strong European lifelong learning resources, based on community needs and interests
- › Facilitating community resources and stakeholders working with lifelong learning
- › Identifying special needs among citizens in the community and making this knowledge available to the authorities and the educational stakeholders
- › Building small networks of people with special skills useful to lifelong learning, like media people, people with cultural or language skills, people with empowerment skills
- › Exchanging knowledge and experience with other lifelong learning “guides” in other communities, domestic and European

WHAT COULD BE THE GUIDE PROFILE

- › A mature person with some life experience
- › Strong values allowing the person to work with all kinds of people and their needs
- › Networking skills and enjoying networking
- › Strong general language competences, including English
- › Experienced in using modern communication technology
- › Knowledge about and a strong interest in learning about lifelong learning in general, including the European policies and initiatives
- › Ability to communicate with and collaborate with all levels in the community
- › A strong entrepreneurship spirit for taking new initiatives
- › A strong interest in being a lifelong learner herself

TRAINING PRINCIPLES

- › The participants will prepare themselves before the course, guided by the coordinator; background papers should be read before the course, not in the course
- › The trainers will act as guides to empower the participants to act independently and in teams: the training guide will be to the participants what the community guide will be to the community
- › The participants will be *producing* knowledge, not passively *receiving* knowledge
- › The participants will work in small teams to allow the further qualification of their team skills
- › The training activities will produce concrete results to the project, not just offer discussions
- › The participants will be challenged by the training guides all along the process

GUIDE LONG-TERM OUTCOME COMPETENCES

- Act independently in the community, take new and relevant initiatives and help provide the needed framework for the initiatives
- Identify learning needs among groups of citizens, with a strong focus on disadvantaged citizens, and formulate these needs in the community, as well as support actions to meet these needs
- Help implementing the community's lifelong learning policies and further develop these
- Contact relevant organisations, stakeholders and individuals to help build collaboration around the identified needs and initiatives
- Support learning practitioners in providing relevant lifelong learning opportunities for people in need of basic and further skills
- Analyze how different kinds of initiatives can be financed through local funding, consortium funding, national or European funding
- Help the key players in the community to further develop the community into a learning community or city
- Build a relevant and useful European contact net of learning communities and help the local community in exploiting such a network
- Help the community and the key players in lifelong learning identify and exploit useful European learning resources
- Monitor and analyze the development of the European lifelong learning policies and make this knowledge useful to the community
- Help community players to develop new initiatives and projects and provide guidance on project development and project management
- Use the acquired knowledge and experience to peer train other colleagues in the community

The overall aims of the guide training

→ COMMUNITY

To empower the participants to be able to guide the community towards a systematic approach to lifelong learning and help the community become a learning community

→ PROJECT

To form the group of training participants into as a special resources group in the Xploit project, through which they can share knowledge and experience and support each others' local work

part 2 training days

The training and inspiration days in Salt will last for 2½ days.

The group is expected to count around 15 participants, including possible additional local colleagues, from very different contexts across Europe.

The training will include a lot of practical work and a lot of independent work through which the participants can start developing the competences needed.

The training days must be prepared carefully by simple but important online dialogues. The training days will build on and depend on such preparations.

(See part 4).

The training will be based on problem based and explorative principles: the participants learn by being invited to define, elaborate on and produce solutions to challenges in their own communities.

Thus the training will avoid the traditional deductive method: first we learn what to do and then we go do it...

The training will be based on practical community challenges, and will combine theory and practice flexibly throughout the work days.

The training must also be taking into consideration that these days are a first step in a long process: the Salt days will be followed up along the project progression, and a step two training will be offered later in the project, also inviting external participants.

(See part 5).

[Preparatory scenario: the participants have worked on community profiles and the questions and answers in these profiles, as well as key lifelong learning challenges and texts before the Salt training; participants have introduced themselves online]

Morning sessions: 09.00-13.00

Afternoon sessions: 14.00-17.00

Additional sessions: Special requests for dialogues with the training mentors in the evening

WORK PROGRAM

Day 1 (full day)

Morning sessions

- Introduction

- Participants are asked, individually or in country teams, to identify the 3 most important challenges to education and training among disadvantaged citizens in their community from 2010 to 2020

- The participants discuss the results in plenum

- The training group identifies the challenges common to most communities and discusses the reasons and background to these challenges

- The participants are invited to explain how the community has met these challenges, and to join an evaluation of the main community initiatives

Afternoon sessions

Input from training mentors 1:

- How does the European Commission approach the learning challenges for disadvantaged citizens? What policies, what visions? What programs and funding?

Discussion

Input from training mentors 2:

- How can we find and use European learning resources to meet our needs?

Search methods, network methods, community methods

- "Go search relevant resources to meet the most important challenge identified during the morning sessions"

Additional sessions

Special requests for dialogues with the training mentors in the evening – needs, interests...?

Day 2 (full day)

Morning sessions

- Participants present the resources identified

Critical discussion on search methods and identified resources

Input from training mentors 3:

- How can European learning resources be used in the community?

Introduction to different exploitation methods

- Joint discussion on identifying the main obstacles to use European learning resources in the community

- The discussion produces a list of obstacles to lifelong learning in the communities

Open questions on: how can these obstacles be overcome? How can we work with them?

Afternoon sessions

Theme: practical work in the community

- The participants explain how they will approach the community, when trying to implement useful learning resources for disadvantaged groups of citizens

Discussion: what kind of networking methods can the guides apply?

Input from training mentors 4:

- Inspiration: how can the communities create their own resources to meet lifelong learning challenges?

- How will the group of lifelong learning guides work in the Xploit project?

- Preparing next day's productions

Additional sessions

Special requests for dialogues with the training mentors in the evening – needs, interests...?

Day 3 (½ day)

Morning session

- Producing material for the project, the communities and the second step guide training

Participants produce small materials based on the discussions during the work days. The material will be integrated in the project website.

The themes of the material will be discussed with the participants, but examples of small production might be:

- What are the most important challenges to lifelong learning in the communities? Why?
- In what ways are the communities addressing these challenges? Critical reflections?
- Do the European policies and resources address these challenges?
- How can the communities exploit relevant European resources?
- What are the roles of lifelong learning guides in the community?
- What are the obstacles to exploiting European learning resources in the communities? How can they be overcome? What can local networking do?
- What are the most important training needs of lifelong learning guides?

The participants will produce this material individually, in small teams or in country groups.

The material could be text documents, text interviews, text + photo montages, video interviews, or other creative forms of presentation.

The participants will start the productions during the morning sessions. Some might be finalized on location, others could be finalized after the training days.

PS! Part of the training period might be done as split sessions, as the discussions might reveal different interests and needs among the participants.

It is, though, expected that the preparatory dialogues will make such diverging interests visible.

part 3 training material

As the guides are going to act in both the realities of the community and the European programmes, it is important that we work with live material. This means that the most important material is knowledge about the communities (the Community Profiles), the knowledge and experience of the participants, and the papers on lifelong learning and accompanying programmes, as well as the European quality and qualifications instruments, from the Commission.

Thus the training days will work with 3 different forms of material:

1. The training material provided by the training mentors and introduced during the preparatory phase
2. Material established during the training days, such as material about useful European learning resources
3. Material resulting from the training days and produced by the participants themselves

All this material will be placed in a special guide training section in the project's website. This section should develop into a small resource centre for lifelong learning guides throughout the project.

The preparatory material will be available on the website during the preparatory dialogues. The coordinator and the training mentors will provide short and easy-to-read version of relevant papers, as the participants should not be burdened with heavy Commission papers.

NB!

The host partner should ensure access to computers, printers, internet and normal software during the training days. Technical assistance should be within reach. Technical shortcomings should not influence the participants' work during the training days.

The coordinator will bring photo and video equipment to the training location.

part 4 preparations

Proper preparation is key to a productive and useful training. Proper preparations can double the outcomes of the training.

Therefore the training mentors will approach the participants around 2 months before the Salt training.

The participants will be introduced to the agenda and its topics and challenges, but first of all the preparations are about the participants.

They will be invited to:

- present themselves to the group
- explain their training expectations, needs and interest
- briefly explain about lifelong learning and learning needs in their communities

The training mentors will introduce some of the training topics, and from time to time the mentors will challenge the participants with small problems to work on.

The preparations will be carried out by simple mail lists, as most participants are not willing to start learning to use a complicated platform. The dialogues will be realistic and take into consideration the participants working life.

The training mentors might decide to summarize part of the dialogues and use it in the project.

part 5 ...and then, what?

Lifelong learning and learning community competences take years to develop.

Therefore it is most crucial to the Xploit project and to the communities that the project allows and supports a qualified follow-up to the training days.

A discussion of this is included in the training sessions.

The project will at a later stage establish the second round of lifelong learning guide training. This time the project will invite colleagues from outside the project consortium to participate, along with the project's own guides.

This means that the second training will take the activities to a higher level: from guide activities to facilitating learning communities.

The second training event will be based on two sources:

1. The experience from the project's action phase(s) with a special focus on the roles of the guides in the local practice
2. The material produced by the participants in the first step training in Salt
The material produced will be confronted with the practical experience from the communities, and the invited participants will learn from this, as well as from the already trained guides. The participants from the Salt training days will therefore add a new role to their profile: they will contribute to the learning of the invited colleagues and learn through the role as "mentors".
To make this happen, the project must ensure a continued collaboration and dialogue in the guide group, even if most likely online. The contact between the project's guides is crucial to the success of the second training event, but also to the success of the Xploit project at large.
Facilitating and supporting the group of guides, established in Salt during the trainings days, is of major concern to the coordinator and to the project.