

# Pedagogical Manual

for Teachers working with  
the Principles of  
*Productive Learning*  
in the Frame  
of Vocational Education



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



August 2016

Published by:

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Created in the frame of the Erasmus+ project PROVED

[www.iple.de/PROVED](http://www.iple.de/PROVED)



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# Pedagogical Manual

## for the work with the Principles of *Productive Learning* in the Frame of Vocational Education

### 1 Introduction

“What would be useful to have for my daily work in *Productive Learning*?” – this question is the basis of the collection you will find here in the Pedagogical Manual.

The main aims to build up a “folder” with ideas, methods and instruments are to support

- the teachers in their pedagogical work, and
- the students in their learning process.

Therefore the following materials were collected and developed from all the partners of the ERASMUS+ Project PROVED (October 2014 – September 2016) while preparing and implementing the ideas of *Productive Learning* in the following five vocational education institutions: OMNIA / Finland, The Georg-Schlesinger-School / Germany, The 2nd Laboratory Centre Patras / Greece, The Kedainiai Vocational Education Training Center & the Kedainiai Adult and Youth Education Center / Lithuania.

These examples were used in the teacher training, developed in the partner meetings or created in the process of writing a conception. Also some materials used in the “first steps” at the classes of *Productive Learning* in the implementation phase of the PROVED project are part of the Pedagogical Manual.

The character of this collection is a kind of “folder” – it is not a finished product rather it might be a platform which should be continuously updated and improved by the staff realizing *Productive Learning* in vocational education. In this “fixed version” – summarized in one file – the examples will be reduced on three attachments per chapter in English language. On the project’s (current) working-platform Google-Drive and later on at the public access are more example materials also in the languages of our partners available!

This collection of information, methods and instruments might be interesting for all people working in the pedagogical field to give impulses in a “productive direction” but it is generated in a special pedagogical setting: *Productive Learning*.

In the following passages you will find a short description of important aspects of *Productive Learning* (similar to the topics of the teacher training) to give a short overview to the pedagogical concept and to explain the background of this collection.

The short descriptions of *Productive Learnings* topics will also list some methodical examples. Concrete descriptions of these methods and working tasks are collected in the annex. This collection of examples will hopefully expand by filling it with new ideas/experiences made by *Productive Learning* -educators in the future.

## 2 The topics

Regarding these basic preconditions/targets, the pedagogical work in *Productive Learning* is marked by typical processes and participant's activities. The following pages will give you a short introduction to these topics and give you an idea on which questions will be focused:

### 2.1 Being a teacher in *Productive Learning*

How to explain my pedagogical work in *Productive Learning*?  
What are the new roles as educator in *Productive Learning*?

### 2.2 Admission and orientation in *Productive Learning*

How to acquire students?  
How to realize admission interviews  
How to organize the 'orientation phase'?

### 2.3 Learning in practice

How to open up productive situations?  
How to develop 'individual curricula'?  
How to cooperate with the companies / institutions (practical places)?  
How to link practice and subject-oriented learning?

### 2.4 Learning workshops

How to equip the learning workshops?  
How to learn in the learning workshops?  
How to support the presentation of the learning results?

### 2.5 Individual counselling and group counseling

How to counsel the students individually?  
How to work in the 'communication group'?

### 2.6 Documentation and evaluation

How to document the learning process  
How to document the project development

### 2.7 "Digital Learning / Mobile Devices" in *Productive Learning*

How to support the learning process in *Productive Learning* with i-Pads?

### 2.8 Personal-, Self-management- and Social-Skills

What kind of skills student need?  
How to support the development of personal and social Skills?

## 2.1 Being a teacher in *Productive Learning*

To learn differently also means to „teach differently“. To learn differently also means to “teach differently“. According to Petruškevičiūtė (2015)<sup>1</sup>, *Productive Learning* is an original educational system that is characterized by original perception of education and methodological concept. It takes place in a new educational environment – practice placements and involves new participants to the educational process – mentors from practice placements. All participants in *Productive Learning* – students and teachers – are faced with huge challenges. Students must learn how to be responsible for their own educational process and to structure and evaluate it independently on the basis of their personal interests for education and activities. In accordance with this objective, (special needs) teachers must re-define their own roles, make themselves familiar with new tasks, reflect on their previous actions and have to acquire the competencies that are required for a professional course of action. Teachers have a very significant role to play as they have the difficult task of teaching the theoretical concept of *Productive Learning* to the students. The quality of the educational work depends on them and, by implication, the success of each and every individual student in *Productive Learning*. The re-definition of the role and the many novel tasks pose numerous questions – with varying intensity and varying degrees of importance.

In their role as educational counsellors, educators accompany and advise students during the development of interests for education and activities, during the process of opening-up *Productive Situations*, during the planning of the learning process and during the evaluation of their individual learning processes.

An important counterpart of the individual educational counselling is the group counselling. Through group counselling, the individualised learning at places of practice becomes comprehensible and important questions which are of concern to all students can be dealt with together.

As “Mediator of a Situation” they have to support the students in establishing a relationship between activity and learning, in formulating questions that serve as a bridge between experiences and education. They also have to make sure that students encounter conditions at places of practice which are conducive to learning.

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<sup>1</sup> Petruškevičiūtė A. (2015), Redistribution of power during the educational interaction in the context of productive Learning. Summary of the doctoral Dissertation. Vilnius: Lithuanian University of Educational sciences, p. 25

The ideas of Carl Rogers concerning the “Non-directive counselling” and also Ruth C. Cohn's Theme-Centred Interaction approach (TCI) are important methodical basics for being successful in *Productive Learning*.

When it comes to the student’s task of formulating questions and interests, the ensuing task of finding answers makes it very quickly clear that the teachers must part with their subject-based principles and their role as subject teachers – and that the “specialists” must embrace a more general approach.

Last but not least, by conceiving and evaluating the educational opportunities educators contribute considerably to the development of the whole project.

Examples of materials you find in the attachment:

**2.1 Being a teacher in *Productive Learning***

1 a) Information about *Productive Learning*

1 b) Overview of educator’s roles in *Productive Learning*

1 c) Short introductions to the concept of Carl Rogers and Ruth Cohn

**2.2 Admission and orientation in *Productive Learning***

For young people starting their participation in *Productive Learning*, this form of education is completely new and therefore they need the opportunity to find out by themselves, if this is the right way of learning for them. This process is very important for students, because most of them failed already in school and *Productive Learning* is their second attempt to obtain a school certificate.

Normally the students already have some information about *Productive Learning*: from friends, teachers, parents and so on. But in order to make the right decision it is necessary for them to experience the spirit of learning at first hand.

The whole phase is divided into two parts: the **admission procedure**, which starts nearly four months before the school year starts and the ‘**orientation phase**’, which starts with the beginning of the school year, taking 4 to 8 weeks, depending on the conditions in each school. After this period of time students and teachers decide together, if *PL* is the right way or not.

Organization of admission

A first and very important step is the public relations work to win participants, mentors and multipliers like teachers, parents, social worker. Every student who is interested in the project gets an invitation for an admission interview, which has to be prepared by the applicants

in different ways (“special task”). This admission interview is the basis for the temporary admission.

The applicants will be chosen by an admission committee. Students from *Productive Learning* may also play an important role in this committee, because they should learn to assume responsibility for the project and learn to regard themselves as active subjects, they can explain *Productive Learning* more authentically and they have another perspective, other admission criteria.

Criteria are developed by the admission committee: **formal criteria** (criteria of the public authority, e.g. not being successful in regular school), **individual criteria** (criteria, which are based on the education principles of *Productive Learning*, e.g. sufficient independence, responsibility, career choices and learning interests, dealing successfully with a ‘task’), **group-related criteria** (criteria, which relate to the composition of the group, e.g. age and gender, success or failure in school).

### Organization of the orientation phase

After the start of the school year students enter into an ‘orientation phase’, that introduces *Productive Learning* and its most important characteristics and give to the participants an idea of their new role in the educational process (as a learning subject who can control the own educational process). The work is based on an educational contract, which establishes the commitments made by both parties.

After the ‘orientation phase’ student and teacher decide together, if *Productive Learning* is the right way or not (if necessary showing other educational ways).

Examples of materials you find in the attachment:

#### **2.2 Admission and orientation**

- 2 a) Example of info- and advertisement-material
- 2 b) Structured 4-weeks-program of orientation
- 2 c) “Reader”: collection of methods and activities of the orientation phase

### **2.3 Learning in practice**

#### **How to open up productive situations?**

The aspect of „opening up of productive situations" is an essential requirement to separate the productive activity from the practical doing. It is important to put the student more and more into the position to explore the productive situation himself.

„Opening up of productive situations“ includes the whole process of preparation, accompanying and reflecting. It is divided into four phases:

Phase 1: Developing and specifying interests

Phase 2: Searching for a resource

Phase 3: Clarifying conditions at the practice place

Phase 4: Evaluating the experience at the practice place

### Developing and specifying interests

Before starting activity there should be an intensive phase of developing and specifying interests. In this phase the students can evaluate their interests and check them regarding their possibility to be realised. Sometimes it's important to reflect upon present interests first (is that really interesting for me or is it only familiar to me?). The teacher tries to support this process by using creative methods, methods which refer to the past, to the family, e.g. time lines, yesterday interviews, pictures, mentoring (“older” students), experiments, exploring practice places, the city etc.

### Searching for a resource

The subsequent searching of a practice place should be intensively prepared and continuously accompanied in single-, partner- and teamwork. For example by the development of criteria which are important for applications and for telephone calls, the making of a portfolio, practicing conversation with the employer by role plays, exploration of the town and its districts etc.

It seems to be useful to establish a practice place index including all practice places which already exists and which can be extended by new ones. Essential information about the practice place should be collected in this index (e.g. the size of the company, the working fields, the structure of organisation, explanations how to get there).

### Clarifying conditions at the practice place

If the student has the feeling, that he has found the right place, it's very important to clarify the conditions. The practice place has to guarantee a stimulating and *Productive Learning* situation. His activity should be also determined by his educational process.

It is important to name a responsible and practically experienced person as a mentor. This substantially supports the student in his learning process and eases the cooperation between the companies and the school. Student, teacher and mentor form a „triangle“ in the learning process.



## Evaluating the experience at the practice place

If the students start activity at the practice place, there will be a permanent evaluation. Important aspects in this evaluation process are:

- **Counselling:** The goal of learning has to be developed in cooperation with student, teacher and expert at the practice place (mentor) with respect to the requirements of the situation and the emotional and intellectual abilities of the student.
- **Reflection in the 'communication group':** The results of the individual learning should flow back into the group.
- **Self-reflection:** The student must be able or must be willing to learn how to explore the situation and the conditions at the resource. This is easier for an independent student who acts curiously and attentively in the situation. He also must be critical and willing to acquire contents by himself. Besides the individual abilities and attributes the learning process also depends on the motivation of the student, on the concrete conditions at his resource and his momentary living situation.

The evaluation of the practical place is the basis for the learning process in the upcoming place.

## How to develop individual curricula?

The main tools used to realise the concept of the curriculum for *Productive Learning* are *Individual Learning Plan* and *Individual Curricula*. The *Individual Curriculum* of a participant is the sum of all of his or her learning processes in *Productive Learning*. It includes his or her educational aims, topics, tasks and activities including the pedagogical support within a certain period of time (usually a term) and furthermore the learning outcomes and their evaluation. At the same time the individual curricula refers to the national curricula and its main requirements. Although it is naturally impossible to record all the processes and results in full, it is necessary to record important stages and events using both: words and pictures. This continuously documentation which has been compiled by the participant and the educator forms the basis for the further development of the *Learning Plan* but also shows the quality and quantity of learning.

The *Individual Learning Plan* precedes the *Individual Curriculum*. A participant's *Individual Learning Plan* is a written agreement between him or her and the educator stating the planned activities in *Productive Learning*. It contains specific information about the topics and tasks (which can usually be chosen by the participant) and about the methods and means of study. Furthermore, relations are drawn to specific subjects, also to traditional school subjects, and expectations about results are stated.

Counselling for the purpose of planning and accompanying learning relates both to the present learning situation and to the participant's entire educational development. Planning and accompanying learning is meant to eliminate the risk of the educational process taking an arbitrary or accidental course; instead it pursues the educational interests of the participants or leads to a conscious revision of them. For this reason the educators must assist the participants to link *Productive Learning* to previous experiences and interests, extend and deepen them if necessary, revise them, place them in a new context and enable the development of perspectives. Stimuli arising from the productive activity must be taken up and converted jointly into activity exploration and academic tasks.

Examples of materials you find in the attachment:

### **2.3 Learning in Practice**

- 3 a) Basic information about Learning in Practice
- 3 b) Examples of mindmaps
- 3 c) Preparation of Learning in Practice

### **2.4 Learning Workshops**

Precondition for the realization of individual- and group-learning processes is an adequate learning environment. Working in and with a learning workshop means for *Productive Learning* educators being ready to actively change one's attitude to education and to oneself as a professional. The learning workshop can be a place where participants actively acquire the "world", where learning experiences can be made with the most various learning materials, where the learning persons independently and creatively work on, themes and problems.

Learning experiences in the learning workshop can encourage the participants to risk the step "outside" when they have developed confidence in their own abilities. Similarly, the experiences of activity which they have gained on the "outside" can be actively further developed and reflected, either alone or in the group. Participants learn to assume responsibility for their own actions, they discover creative abilities, develop their imagination by coming into contact with and through the use of media and material, and get to know their own more active and more passive learning strategies.

In the learning workshop various activities can be carried out by young people at the same time, different kinds of learning behaviour can be recognised and developed, various themes can be dealt with in accordance with individual associations. So the learning workshop can be used as an important place of communication where personal or academic exchanges, individual counselling, group counselling with or without educator, can take place in an open situation.

The educational work in a learning workshop is completely different from school lessons or similar forms of direct educational influence on the learning person. The educator, with respect to both the themes and methods of tackling the themes, is, for the most part, external to the participant's learning process. The form of learning follows, as strictly as possible, the developing thoughts of the learning person, who in turn is stimulated into a process of reflection through concrete experiences and considerations. The organisation and direction of this process of reflection by the learning person depends on examining the results of one's own learning interests, if one wants to avoid falling back into the unproductive piling up of abstract information.

For this reason the educator must acquire a new attitude and new forms and rules of communication in order to accompany educational processes in learning workshops. The educator is in a new educational situation. He or she should neither run ahead of the learning person, nor leave her/him alone with difficulties she/he cannot cope with. The educator must develop a special sensibility for detecting to what extent, in what respect and in what form the learning person requires educational help and advice, which persons are able to assist one another and when group communication is helpful and necessary etc.

Examples of materials you find in the attachment:

#### **2.4 Learning-workshop**

- 4 a) General information
- 4 b) Organization of group-work
- 4 c) Equipment of a learning workshop

#### **2.5 Individual counselling and group counselling**

As one important process in *Productive Learning* the consultations between students and educators are essential for the development and controlling of the learning process. There are two different types of counselling in *Productive Learning*: individual educational counselling and group counselling. Group counselling mainly takes place within the communication group.

*Individual Educational Counselling in Productive Learning* is holistic educational counselling and can be divided into the following four aspects:

- Personal counselling,
- Opening-up of *productive situations*,
- Planning learning and assisting learning,

- Evaluation of educational processes.

Educational counselling takes place not only on an individual basis but also within the 'communication group' and with the mentors at the places of practice.

Guideline for the educational counselling in *Productive Learning* may be the non-directive counselling approach developed by Carl C. Rogers (first published in 1942<sup>2</sup>), see the attachment 1c). The method was developed from various theoretical sources but lays especial emphasis upon the *relationship* between counsellor and client. This method is markedly different from psychoanalysis to the extent that it was developed from practice and emerged within the context of educational work where it has also proved its usefulness. A basic assumption of psychoanalysis has been retained i.e. that emotional influences determine the individual's behaviour which cannot be set aside by employing rational explanations. For this reason Rogers seeks to support the individual in recognizing her/his emotions, accepting them, making use of them and reflecting upon their significance for a possible change of direction.

In his later work Rogers defined what he believed to be the necessary and sufficient conditions for positive evaluation<sup>3</sup> of the counsellor's personality for a positive change in the client personality, namely, empathy, which is not tied to conditions and congruence. A variety of discussion techniques lend themselves to counselling situations, and this extends to situations where the person to be counselled has not even requested this. Rogers distinguishes between **acceptance**, active listening, **mirroring** and **empathy**.

**Acceptance** refers to the general attitude of the counsellor during the course of a counselling conversation and it is, therefore, the foundation of a confiding and trustful conversation. The aim of *acceptance* is to fully acknowledge and to unconditionally respect the person receiving counselling. In order to achieve this, the counsellor must not judge immediately every word said during a conversation or start a discussion about it. She/he ought to listen first and let the person receiving counselling speak. Through *acceptance* the counsellor communicates understanding and warmth. In this way, it becomes easier for the person receiving counselling to open up and to let go of a potentially defensive and oppositional attitude towards counselling.

Through **Mirroring** the counsellor is able to adjust to the person receiving counselling. Repeating of what has been said, summarizing it or asking questions about it are tools for the

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<sup>2</sup> cf. Carl C. Rogers, *Counselling and Psychotherapy*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston 1942. recently published in: *The Carl Rogers Reader*, edited by Howard Kirschenbaum and Valerie Land Henderson, Houghton Mifflin, Boston/New York/London 1989, pp. 63 - 77

<sup>3</sup> cf. Rogers, Carl, The necessary and sufficient conditions of therapeutic personality change. *Journal of Counselling Psychology* 21 (1957), pp. 95 - 103

counsellor to find out whether he or she understood correctly (e.g. ‘Do you think...I suppose....You gave me the impression that....That is what you are thinking...’). It is the aim of *mirroring* that the person receiving counselling realizes what the counsellor has understood so that he/she can correct him/her if required. In this way, misunderstandings during the counselling process are minimized.

**Empathy** during the counselling process happens on an emotional level. *Empathy* requires intuition on the part of the counsellor as factual remarks indirectly express emotional messages too. *Empathy* enables the counsellor to respond to the feelings of the person receiving counselling and to verbalize these feelings. Via *Empathy* the counsellor tries to interpret and to express the feelings which lie at the bottom of various factual remarks (e.g. ‘This must be a difficult situation for you...You are afraid of... I think that this is what your mother wants...’). This requires that the counsellor is able to relate to the emotional world of the person receiving counselling and that he/she pays attention to non-verbal signals such as mimic, gestures, voice or body posture too. It is the aim of *Empathy* that the person receiving counselling feels being taken seriously with her or his frequently contradictory feelings.

Educational counselling takes place not only on an individual basis but also within the “communication group” and with the mentors at the places of practice. In **group counselling** the pedagogue becomes a moderator having in mind all the aspects influencing the consultation. Following Ruth C. Cohn's Theme-Centred Interaction approach (TCI) as a methodical basis for *Productive Learning* group work the pedagogue has to keep the balance between

- the I (each individual participant),
- the We (the group),
- the Theme (the common learning material or the task to be performed in common).

Also the so called “Globe” – other influences like place, time atmosphere etc. – must be mentioned. (see also annex 1 c: “Short introductions to the concept of Carl Rogers and Ruth Cohn”)

Examples of materials you find in the attachment:

**2.5 Individual counselling and group counselling**

- 5 a) Educational counseling - structure
- 5 b) Individual counselling - topics
- 5 c) Examples *individual learning plans*

**2.6 Documentation and Evaluation**

In *Productive Learning* assessment not only means the feedback on learning results but, more importantly, the feedback on individual learning developments. The evaluation of the education is carried out through the dialogue between the teacher and the student, between teacher, mentor and student and student's self-assessment is part of the overall assessment.

The individual experiences in practice may be documented in a daily/weekly report and – in combination with the *individual learning plans* – make clear the connection between practical and theoretical learning processes outside and inside the school. The documentation of these individual practical experiences gives a better understanding about the range of practical tasks of personal activities outside the school and the motivation of the student's "learning questions" mentioned in the *individual learning plans*.

In the *individual learning plans* the personal learning process of each student is documented, starting with "questions out of the practical activities" to the "learning tasks" and the description of "learning ways" – and last but not least the time-line for the tasks. At the same time the contents of the *individual learning plans* (mostly connected to the general (national) curriculum) are describing the *individual curricula* of the students.

Summarizing documentation may also be realized in an "individual task folder" describing the steps according to the *individual learning plan* and showing the way of "solving the task" and at the end also the presentation of the results in the learning group.

Besides *individual learning plans* and *curricula* the most important instruments for the common evaluation of educational processes are oral reports and observations during the counselling discussions as well as personal reports, diaries or other documentary material compiled by educators and participants in the course of a learning project. The evaluation leads to an *educational report* at the end of each trimester.

The evaluation of *Productive Learning* projects is, for several reasons, an indispensable component of this educational form.

- To begin with, *Productive Learning* aims at a number of educational effects i.e. among other things it aims at establishing the personal aspect, the activity aspect, the cultural aspect, the specialist aspect, (cf. 3<sup>th</sup> and the 8<sup>th</sup> *Study Letter*). The extent to which these aims are pursued in a methodical way and realised in the individual educational processes must be examined, in order to improve and develop the methods of this new form of education.
- The evaluation of *Productive Learning* is, at the same time, an essential component in the qualification of the educators. If one takes seriously the basic ideas of *Productive*

*Learning* i.e. if one applies them to the educators' learning process as well as to that of the learners, then educators can likewise be expected to plan, evaluate and improve their practice systematically.

- Moreover, the educational policies debate demands solid arguments based on results which have been systematically acquired.
- Last but not least, the development of *Productive Learning* is dependent upon financial, political and specialist support and must be able to justify itself in relation to potential backers on the basis of achieved results.

The involvement of the young people in the evaluation of the project may at first seem extremely difficult. Nevertheless, we tend to underestimate the interest and abilities of the participants in this activity. In our experience, the commitment of the participants depends on the general atmosphere of participation in the project. To the extent that the participants are stimulated through transparency and discussion to become involved in shaping "school life", they also participate in the abstract and significant work of evaluation.

Examples of materials you find in the attachment:

#### **2.6 Documentation and Evaluation**

- 6 a) Evaluation of educational development in *Productive Learning*
- 6 b) Example of documentation of practice
- 6 c) Feedback questionnaire for mentors

#### **2.7 "Digital Learning / Mobile Devices" in *Productive Learning***

The framework and setting of learning processes in *Productive Learning* is based on a huge range of methods and activities and the development of new innovative ideas is part of the pedagogical process. Following the very fast development of communication technology also *Productive Learning* may use the new possibilities.

The widely spread use of digital tools (smartphones, tablets, internet ...) in the daily routine for communication and exchange means also a wide range of possibilities using these tools for the learning processes in *Productive Learning*. Connecting on experiences of one PROVED Partner (Omnia, Finland) "first steps" were made in the PROVED project by all partners. It became clear that "Digital Learning" will be part of the *Productive Learning* in future and the use of "mobile devices" in the pedagogical work shall be one focus in the development of the *Productive Learning* concepts. Especially in the individualized learning process of *Productive Learning* the "Digital Learning" is offering a lot of possibilities for communication, presentation and the exchange of individual experiences in the learning groups. (as a skype-conference, a blog, a mind-map, taking/sharing photos).

If own experiences of the pedagogues are in the beginning, it will need time and energy to develop the own competences in the field of “mobile devices” at first. Little steps in the use of “mobile devices” may be realized together with the students of *Productive Learning* – using their ideas and experiences, which may be very useful in the process of development. First steps may be the initiation of an own blog (as Pete Stockley showed at the Final Meeting in Espoo – see attachment 7a) for the exchange of the learning-group or for the presentation of individual results.

Another point in the development of this “digital Learning” will be the decision about the needed technical equipment (good/worse experiences with several companies, available equipment like smartphones). The support of an institutional specialist (administrator) giving answers to these questions and to the technical possibilities in general will be very helpful and essential.

Examples of materials you find in the attachment:

## **2.7 Digital Learning and Mobile Devices**

- 7 a) Example Mobile-Blog
- 7 b) Digital Learning examples
- 7 c) Digital Learning methods PPP

## **2.8 Personal-, Self-management- and Social-Skills**

Thinking of key competences the students will need for coming along in life and especially later on in the “world of work” the personal and social skills besides methodical and professional skills seem to be the most relevant ones. Out of this reason one of the “head target” of *Productive Learning* is the development of personality and in this way the development of these skills.

Especially in the field of **Learning in Practice** the development of these skills are very important for the students to come along outside of school. Mentors, colleagues and customers are demanding a certain range of these skills. Presenting these skills, the students will have a good chance to get more interesting tasks at the practical site and maybe also better chances to get an apprenticeship or work in the future. Self-management and self-responsible acting are not only the most wanted skills in the practical fields – it is also indispensable for the individual learning in the **Learning Workshop** at school. Coming along with the people inside and outside of school is mostly asking for the student’s social skills. Having dialogues and discussions with other people at the practical sites, in the communication group or in the individual consultation are good examples for the needed development.

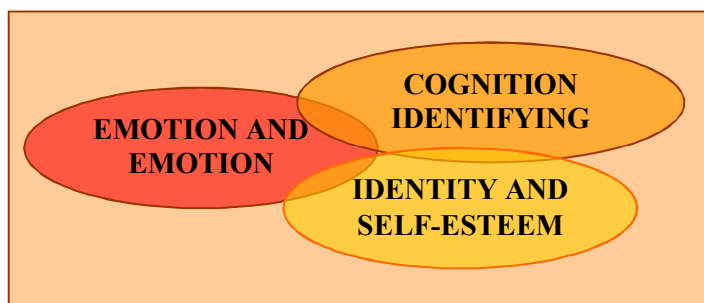


In the meetings of **Individual Counselling** the students have to reflect their own acting and have to analyze their own thinking more and more – therefore they need to improve their **Personal Skills**. These skills are also very important in the frame **Evaluation** to understand the external evaluations of educators and mentors and to be able to evaluate the own learning process and the development of the own personality. To realize this Self-Evaluation in a proper way the students have to be aware of the own strengths and weaknesses.

In this way it became clear that nearly in all key-processes in *Productive Learning* the students are asked for the development of these skills – also for a better coming along in future life.

### Personal skills

The personal skills may be defined as: the ability to reflect on internal concepts such as emotion, cognition and one's own identity.



*The aim of personal skills activities is*

- To reflect on each skill and competence and be aware of each component and process that occurs in the intrapersonal dimension,
- To expand into experience of the world outside (e.g. practical places),
- To develop an independent identity which is aligned with the personal abilities.

*Personal skills in a synthetic way:*

- Emotions & emotion regulation: ability to perceive and express one's own feelings;
- Cognition: self-reflection; realistic self-evaluation; problem-solving ability; ability to perceive one's own desires and longings; identifying barriers and resources; setting goals; taking decisions;
- Identity & self-esteem, self-confidence; identify values and beliefs

*Personal skills are important resources for leading a healthy life:*

- Health promotion approach implies improvement and enhancement of the individual capacities and their communities to manage their life and health conditions by coping with problems and crisis situation in the social context and in everyday life.

*Difference between working on personal skills and therapeutic approach:*

- It is important to look towards the future (from today's point in time forward) and not to look back into the past.
- It is assumed that person is capable and not disabled.

*Properly managing personal skills can encourage communication of one's deep intimacy, traumatic personal history:*

- The group leader must be able to handle situations that can cause a reaction such as over-exposure of individual emotions.
- The group leader must be able to create appropriate interventions.

### **Self-management skills**

As one important part of the personal skills the Self-management Skills shall be pointed out. The Self-management Skills may be defined as "the ability to make wise choices to achieve a fruitful and joyous life".

*With regard to learning processes, the following steps can be distinguished:*

*Goal-setting:* The student in *Productive Learning* must set a specific learning goal. The overriding goal may for example be a good education and a good job or the development of a concrete professional perspective. What is needed is to define interim goals en route to the higher-level goal, which in turn requires additional cognitive and active processes to be performed.

*Calculating resources and barriers:* The student has to weigh up his readiness for acting self-responsible, to try out new ways of learning and make practical experiences.

Balancing between resources and barriers can influence which goals are chosen.

*Effective planning of the project:* The student develops a sort of work-/learning-plan (supported by the educators) as well as a realistic timetable having regard to the resources available and the existing barriers.

*Step-by-step implementation:* The planned steps of the activities (learning, practical experiences) now have to be successfully implemented in the correct sequence. To this end, re-

sources have to be mobilised, obstacles overcome and timetables and deadlines adhered to. In the process, further obstacles and questions may surface which were not previously discernible or had not been taken into consideration. The student must respond flexibly to these circumstances when selecting techniques and using resources so as to achieve their interim goals. Support from the educators and mentors and the other students (consultations, communication group).

*Maintaining motivation:* Putting the steps the activity entails into practice may take some time and require unforeseen obstacles to be surmounted. To achieve this, the individual requires patience and stamina as well as constant motivation.

### **Social skills**

Regarding social skills in a lifelong learning context, these skills are a key feature in *Productive Learning*.

*Definition of Social skills:*

- Social skills are abilities and behaviors that help to direct the focus of one's own behavior away from one's own self towards a shared alignment with other individuals.
- Socially competent behavior combines the individual's (student's) goals with the values and goals of a social group (learning group, practical site).

*Aspects of social skills are:*

- Cooperation and ability to work in a team,
- the ability to communicate,
- conflict resolution / the ability to compromise,
- group dynamic processes.



(examples: communication group, mentors, customers)

*Aims in training social skills are to start the process and to develop the participants to*

- an active and autonomous citizen,
- be able to both connect to other persons,
- be able to agree and disagree.

*Thinking of needed skills here one list of other related skills:*

- Time Management Skills: are vital to getting things done. (e.g. appointments with mentors and educators)
- Project Management Skills: the ability to take a large objective and break it down into an action plan. (e.g. development of learning plans)
- Emotional Control: ability to recognize emotions and act on them appropriate, not randomly and uncontrollably. (important in the communication group)
- Discipline: ability to actually do things instead of “putting off” them. (e.g. asked at the practical sites)
- Calmness: approaching a situation in a calm manner will result in clearer decision making that it will often be more logical and thorough. (e.g. needed concentration)
- Ability to create plans: to make up a goal and plan (step by step) how to achieve it. (e.g. individual learning in the Learning Workshop)
- Being reliable: ability to perform and maintain in routine circumstances, as well as hostile or unexpected circumstances. (e.g. asked at the practical sites)
- Being thorough and upholding quality in the tasks done. (e.g. reaching the exams)
- Self direction: setting your own goals, being able to plan and follow through on your goals. (e.g. finding practical places)

Examples of materials you find in the attachment:

**2.8 Personal-, Self-management- and Social-Skills**

- 8 a) Information to support skills
- 8 b) Methods to support skills
- 8 c) Article: What Do Employers *Really* Want?

### 3 Conclusions

Following the idea of the Pedagogical Manual as an “growing folder” which might be uploaded with new idea, instruments and methods the collection will be realized as an internet-based platform to make sure an easy access for all interested persons and the possibility to load up and down needed materials. Finding the files currently at the PROVED project’s section in Google-Drive the continuation of access will be secured after the project duration!

In the discussions and exchanges of the partners in the PROVED-project it was common sense that a Pedagogical Manual will help enormously starting a *Productive Learning*-project.

But making themselves the “first experiences” in *Productive Learning* the partners were often not that “sure” if their ideas and materials will be “good enough” to be examples for

others. The other “hurdle” was the language: it would be nice to have the collection in the end in the mother tongue language of the users. This will be a task for the national teams in future to build up such “national” pedagogical manuals – on this existing basis.

The current collection of materials (information, methods, examples) is not really showing the big range of the project’s activities which were really realized. As seen in the partner meetings and in the school-based-training there are a lot more of useable and interesting materials to complete this collection in the future. The workup of new ideas and methods, developed in the new *Productive Learning*-groups in the implementation phase, into suitable files/documents needs it time and is not finished now. In this way hopefully not only the participants of the PROVED-project will fill this collection step by step in the future – all people working in this *Productive Learning*-direction are invited to load up ideas to support the development of *Productive Learning* in the VET!

Find the current collection on: [www.iple.de/PROVED/](http://www.iple.de/PROVED/)

## 4 Literature

Institute for Productive Learning in Europe (Eds.): *Productive Learning - from Activity to Education*, Schneider Verlag Hohengehren 2004, ISBN 987-3-00-027636-1

Institute for Productive Learning in Europe (Eds.): *Productive Learning and school development*. Symposium in Berlin on 4th of November 2011, 2011, ISBN 978-3-00-037573-6

Institute for Productive Learning in Europe (Eds.): Olga Leontyeva: *Insights into Productive Learning*. A Russian educationalist visits alternative school education projects in Berlin, 2009, ISBN 978-3-00-027602-6

Institute for Productive Learning in Europe (Eds.): *Productive Learning in the Learning Workshop: Pilot Projects of Pécs, St. Petersburg and Berlin Present Their Work*. Schibri-Verlag, Berlin und Milow 1999, ISBN 3-933978-02

Petruškevičiūtė, Auksė. Formaliojo ir neformaliojo ugdymosi sinergija persikirstant pedagogines galias produktyviojo mokymosi sąlygomis = Synergy between formal and non-formal education in redistributing pedagogical capacities in the context of productive learning. Tarptautinė mokslinė konferencija „Mokslu grįsto švietimo link“ : programa. Mokslinių pranešimų santrauka / Lietuvos edukologijos universitetas. Vilnius: Lietuvos edukologijos universiteto leidykla, 2015. ISBN 9786094710186. P. 141-143.

Petruškevičiūtė, Auksė. Redistribution of power during the educational interaction in the context of productive learning: grounded theory = Galių persiskirstymas edukacinėje sąveikoje produktyviojo mokymosi sąlygomis: grindžiamoji teorija : summary of the doctoral dissertation : social sciences, educational sciences (07 S) / Auksė Petruškevičiūtė ; Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences. Vilnius : Lietuvos edukologijos universiteto leidykla, 2015. 61 p. (<http://www.lmt.lt/lt/paslaugos/disertacijos/d-db/4334/p0.html>)

### 3 Attachments (see [www.iple.de/PROVED/manual](http://www.iple.de/PROVED/manual) or follow the links)

<p><b>1. Being a teacher in <i>Productive Learning</i></b></p> <p>1 a) <a href="#">Information about <i>Productive Learning</i></a>  1 b) <a href="#">Overview of educator's roles in <i>Productive Learning</i></a>  1 c) <a href="#">Short introductions to the concepts of Carl Rogers and Ruth Cohn</a></p>
<p><b>2. Admission and Orientation</b></p> <p>2 a) <a href="#">Example of info- and advertisement-material</a>  2 b) <a href="#">Structured 4-weeks-program of orientation</a>  2 c) <a href="#">"Reader": collection of methods and activities</a></p>
<p><b>3. Learning in Practice</b></p> <p>3 a) <a href="#">Basic information about Learning in Practice</a>  3 b) <a href="#">Examples of mindmaps</a>  3 c) <a href="#">Preparation of Learning in Practice</a></p>
<p><b>4. Learning-workshop</b></p> <p>4 a) <a href="#">General information</a>  4 b) <a href="#">Organization of group-work</a>  4 c) <a href="#">Equipment of a learning workshop</a></p>
<p><b>5. Individual counselling and group counselling</b></p> <p>5 a) <a href="#">Educational counseling - structure</a>  5 b) <a href="#">Individual counselling - topics</a>  5 c) <a href="#">Examples individual learning plans</a></p>
<p><b>6. Documentation and Evaluation</b></p> <p>6 a) <a href="#">Evaluation of educational development in <i>Productive Learning</i></a>  6 b) <a href="#">Example of documentation of practice</a>  6 c) <a href="#">Feedback questionnaire for mentors</a></p>
<p><b>7. Digital Learning and Mobile Devices</b></p> <p>7 a) <a href="#">Example Mobile-Blog</a>  7 b) <a href="#">Digital Learning examples</a>  7 c) <a href="#">Digital Learning methods PPP</a></p>
<p><b>8. Personal-, Self-management- and Social-Skills</b></p> <p>8 a) <a href="#">Information to support skills</a>  8 b) <a href="#">Methods to support skills</a>  8 c) <a href="#">Article: What Do Employers Really Want?</a></p>

August 2016

Published by:

Institut für Produktives Lernen in Europa (IPLE)

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[www.iple.de](http://www.iple.de)

Created in the frame of the Erasmus+ project PROVED

[www.iple.de/PROVED](http://www.iple.de/PROVED)



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

