

The ideal employee of the future has T-shaped competencies

The ideal future employee has so-called T-shaped competencies - in-depth knowledge in at least one field and the ability to understand and connect with different disciplines and with people.

As the job life cycle shortens, people need broader and a more multidisciplinary range of skills. The key skills include: an ability to adapt to the rapidly changing content and work environment; an ability to work effectively in teams within and networks; analytical skills to understand problems; solving problems; decision making. Thanks to globalisation, now several organizations operate across borders, bringing together people from several cultures to work on a project or goal. That increases an employee's need for greater mobility and openness. There is also a growing need for virtual collaboration skills, i.e. the ability to work effectively in different (including virtual) working groups and networks.

This new way of working demands that people be highly committed, motivated and ready to participate in teamwork.

In addition to having enhanced professional skills, the future employee is also expected to have significantly better mastery of 'soft skills', such as communication and perception of, and adaptation to, different cultures. Technological prowess is expected too. In the short-term new technologies may lead to job losses, but in the long run, technological development has always created more jobs. Smart machines and systems can change work organization, but they also support development in the workplace - as well as in everyday life and in society at large.

Teachers

for Reactive and Responsive Vocational Education



Systematic thinking and technical intelligence - necessary in every profession

Systematic thinking, technical savvy and the ability to apply ICT tools are increasingly becoming prerequisites in different professions.

Acquisition of basic ICT competencies is a key requirement in the labour market, regardless of a person's profession or occupation. The so-called IT+ programs become important, where field specialists acquire significant ICT-related knowledge and skills, either as part of postgraduate studies or through in-service training.

These ensure that there will always be future technology specialists, smart customers and development managers in various fields of life (e.g. medicine, education, energy, logistics, public administration, financial intermediation, media, etc).

(CEDEFOP, 2018)

What are the main expectations employers have towards graduates?

Magnus Hillermaa, Business Development Manager of BCS Training, answers the question.

"Looking beyond the characteristics highlighted in the CEDEFOP study, I would like to add what I expect most from the young people.

*It is the **courage to share their thoughts and ideas with older colleagues**, and another, more important keyword is the readiness of **taking responsibility** in the broadest sense - responsibility of their own action; for the correct and timely completion of ones work.*

Also a willingness to delve deeper and commit to ones work and not just specifically to their task, but to be interested in the organization itself and its processes more broadly.



If a young person who is just starting his working life wants to build his career, it is very important to find his inner reasons for this specific job, his personal long-term goals and of how these two can be connected.

In case these goals can be combined with those of a company or organization, it is possible to become really successful in a career.

That way we will guarantee the satisfaction of both sides – employee's and the employer's".

Who's task it is to teach the young generation about responsibility?

"The family certainly has a big role to play here - whether and how parents support their children's independence - whether or not children and young people are involved in decision-making processes at home, and involving young people in taking the initiative when performing daily activities and tasks.

The alternative is to involve them only in a waiting position where activities are determined by the parents rather than growing out of an inner desire or need.

These behaviours play a decisive role in the formation of the attitude which a person adopts for his/her activities. This in turn affects a young person's intrinsic motivation to act and take overall responsibility.

At the same time, I wouldn't like to reduce the opportunities for schools and teachers in directing students towards greater self-confidence and self-management.

I strongly believe that modern teaching methods, such as active learning, project-based learning and the introduction of design thinking, offer graduates a good starting point for entering the labour market.

They [graduates] have the ability to analyze the problem from different perspectives, good basic IT skills and knowledge of how to search and process information.

Those who have left vocational training institutions also have very strong professional competencies. At the end of the day, employers are left with the task of using these tips to support the development of systemic thinking and to encourage young people to ask questions about how to self-adjust within their particular context," said Hillermaa.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

VET schools simultaneously have to meet two opposing requirements: to remain true to tradition, delivering stable, tested knowledge approved by relevant parties in society and the economy; and to equip students with a set of skills and competencies relevant to newly emerging demands.

Despite great efforts by national and European policy makers to drive VET schools into 'rethinking' their curricula and teaching methods, changes have been slow to keep up with labour market requirements. In most European countries VET qualifications are based on standard curricula that precisely define what is taught, leaving little freedom for teachers and schools to train for just-in-time labour market demands. Most systems also have lengthy and complex accreditation procedures, so the approval of a new curriculum - or even the modification of an existing one – can take a long time.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The project aims to provide effective and necessary training and support for VET teachers to enable them to identify and respond to skill-gaps in the labour market, but also involving other relevant stakeholders - students, parents, teaching staff, and particularly employers experiencing difficulties finding skilled workers to fill vacancies. The consortium will develop, test and deliver standardized, comprehensive toolkits packaged as a set of teaching, collaboration, and communication methods and a rapid curriculum development methodology for VET teachers, to be used in conjunction with potential employers to identify skill-gaps, and to design, develop and deliver up-skilling training for students. The toolkit will be tested within the IT sector, but the standardized version will be equally applicable to other vocational education subjects.

TARGET GROUP

Teachers and trainers in Vocational Education
Beneficiaries: VET students, industrial partners, companies

PROJECT BASICS

Title: Teachers for Reactive and Responsive Vocational Education
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