

Quality Assurance Meta Evaluation Report

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Introduction:

This report is Ref. no 36 according to the Evaluation Plan.

Evaluation:

Several techniques have been used in the evaluation process and will be elaborated below

- Group discussions: Primarily during partner meetings
- Interviews: Primarily with the project management
- Questionnaires: Primarily to evaluate process (partner meetings)
- Observations: Primarily during Train the Trainer sessions and feedback from companies

Group discussions

Used during the whole project primarily in relation to partner meeting and also Skype meetings have been used for group discussions. Evaluation shows that there has been a clear agenda and well prepared Minutes from every partner meetings. And this is very important in the context that group discussions must serve as a status on the project as well as planned coming actions. The Minutes shows clear evidence in this context. Minutes shows that all partners are participating in the discussions. No one seems to dominate the group.

Interviews

With respect making interviews they were prepared with specific questions beforehand made by quality coordinator. This is important to avoid interviews being too time-consuming and informal. As a quality coordinator in the project I have collected high-quality information. This is also strengthened by the fact that quality coordinator and project manager comes from the same organization and thereby have the opportunity to meet face-to-face often.

Questionnaires

As part of the evaluation plan, evaluations of project progress are made upon conclusion of each WP. The evaluation reports were based on the same format questionnaire and the same target group. The reason is to be able to measure development in either direction (negative/positive). With regard to the processing of data from the online evaluation questionnaires and development of the evaluation reports, it is taken into consideration that the number of respondents in this project is relatively small. That means that each individual respondent has a pretty high influence on the overall results. With respect to the results, the main aim has been set that the level of satisfaction with the project must be at a level of 3 and above (see the evaluation report).

With respect to the format of the questionnaires it was kept pretty short to avoid being too time consuming for the respondents. It consisted primarily of closed questions supplemented with open questions to be able to elaborate the opinions of the respondents

Observations

Observations were made as a supplement to the working process with the training material and tool box. Especially that gave input to the fine tuning process. The purpose was to be able to assess accurately whether the development of the working with training material and tool box was in line with its objectives. By this it serves as a more accurate description of behavior than was possible with other evaluation methods. Especially it was an advantage that it was the same participants from partners that conducted the train-the-train sessions that also worked out and gave feedback and inputs to the fine tuning.

Conclusion

As a quality coordinator I think that the methods were accurate and gave valid information. With partners placed in different locations around Europe it is crucial that communication and evaluation works well. There can a number of problems in this area, but the two main ones are either too little communication/evaluation or too much. In the early part of the ExBased project we definitely had to deal with the problem of too much communication leading to “information overload”. There were posting to the intranet forum, mails, and phone calls and of course the partner meetings. The main problem was that we were not clear how to communicate and evaluate efficiently.

At the partner meeting in England November 2010 it was decided to change the way we communicated. More direct contact through Skype, email and phone calls was decided on and a stop to automatic group mails. This strategy worked excellently during the second year of the project and things got sorted much faster and more efficiently. Additionally the evaluations were made systematically and with focus on both process and product issues and with focus on the links between the WP’s. All this is highly recommendable for future projects.