

VETwin-win

Handbook

Transfer of innovation project „VETwin-winModel“

Design for the interlinking of vocational training and operational further training as a key to competence development in training facilities and companies



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Leonardo da Vinci Transfer of innovation project - "VETwin-winModel"

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1. Introduction

The VET win-win model was selected in 2010 by the National Education Agency for Europe at the Federal Institute for Vocational Training in Germany for promotion in the Leonardo da Vinci EU programme. The project started in October 2010 and will run for 24 months.

This manual is one of the end products of the project. It contains the monitoring instrument, further analysis instruments, the connecting module and the design guidelines.

All products and further support material are also contained in the CD ROM.

The products results are available as:

- Manual
- CD ROM
- Project website
- Project transfer platform

2. Project background

While large concerns have provided structural units for company further training and competence development for their staff, small concerns have attempted to link learning with further education themselves.

The EU Commission has responded with the EU educational programme for lifelong learning to the challenges arising from social and demographic changes and the assurance of innovative and competitive ability.

- It is a breakthrough in strictly consecutive units of a training method
- It links formerly distinctly segmented training fields, including vocational initial and further training
- It ensures quality in all training fields and promotes new teaching and learning cultures.

One of the projects sponsored by the Federal Education Ministry (BMBF) in Germany for the interlinking of vocational training and further operational training has resulted from the analysis of the knowledge that the interlinking of vocational training and further operational training with the working process can offer a decisive approach to a concept of competence development for employees and also ensure the competitive ability of the company and training facilities.

The aim of the VET win-win model innovation transfer project is to adapt the available project results together with the project partner countries and implement them in the vocational training practice.

The fundamental understanding too has been established that the interlinking of vocational training and further operational training at the level of small concerns and the training facilities themselves and also at the level of sponsorship from educational policy and the economy must be followed through.

The transferred product should initiate and support the design by project partners of



future interlinking processes to combine the elements of vocational training and further operational training into a uniform process of learning and further education in an occupation and in the workplace. It is therefore directed at the interlinking of acquired vocational competence relating to the working process and also the changes in behaviour of the learners. The ultimate aim is to achieve a a leap in

quality of the didactic-methodical design of learning processes based on solutions to the contradictions between learning processes and working processes as well as between initial and further training.

3. The aim of the project

The aim of the project is the sustainable assurance of competence and skilled labour in small concerns through the interlinking of vocational training and further operational training.

This is defined in particular by the continual expansion of such vocational competence as is needed for the operational workplace and the labour market. This then relates to continual further education for employees in the working process, for which the management must provide above all for the learning intensive workplace a suitable learning friendly infrastructure. Apart from the motivation and activities of the employees themselves, such measures also support organisational measures, willingness to learn and improved performance.

In successful SMEs the interlinking of initial and further training is a fixed element of company strategy. The results from company analyses show that staff development in these enterprises is characterised by the following elements of interlinking in the learning and working processes and should become design and action objectives for all enterprises.

- The employees are comprehensively informed of company strategies and technical/technological changes.
- The concrete learning objectives are derived from the current working processes
- The learning objectives consider vocational fundamentals and special practical competence
- The individual values and norms of learning in the interlinking of learning and working processes and the development of company mentality is promoted among employees
- The learning processes are well integrated into the concrete working processes
- The learning friendly elements of the working process are considered in the learning objectives
- The learning takes place principally in mutual support processes in non-homogeneous groups to the benefit of all employees

The need for action in a more efficient design of interlinking of vocational training and further training in companies is also clear in the following aspects:

- Use of mentors/tutors
- Provision of suitable instruments and rules for company mentors/tutors
- Acquisition of operational pedagogic competence by management
- Systematic provision of learning locations relating to the workplace (learning islands)
- Involvement in particular of trainees in operational renewal processes



- Delegation of trainees and experienced skilled workers in foreign concerns
- Involvement of management, experienced skilled workers and trainees in vocational orientation to ensure long term continuity of skilled labour

The experience gained from previous national projects shows that the interlinking of vocational training and operational further training in the working process takes place principally in four different designs:

- Interlinking of vocational training with elements of operational further training
- Interlinking of operational further training with elements of vocational training
- Simultaneous interlinking of vocational training and operational further training
- Separate training modules used as a link between vocational training and operational further training

In addition it was recognised that:

- An infrastructure for the interlinking must exist in a company in order to create the potential for vocational/company competence development of employees
- The creation of an infrastructure for a long term process of personnel and organisational development in the company
- Concerns with less than 50 employees are only in exceptional cases in a position to design their own interlinking of initial and further training through internal measures. They need external support in the design of their infrastructure.

The success of the interlinking of vocational training and operational further training is chiefly dependent on how effectively the conditions conducive to learning in the working process are organised. The interlinking is an essential part of a learning friendly infrastructure and the support elements employed.

Personnel requirements and material and instrumental requirements are also a part of the vocational training and operational further training infrastructure.

The necessary infrastructure can, depending on the operational possibilities, be set up in the company itself or alternatively must be set up with external support to implement the preferred interlinking.

The interlinking of vocational training and operational further training can ultimately be viewed as an optimum strategy for staff development in small concerns.

Target groups for the project

Target groups:

- Management of training centres for initial and further training
- Instructors, tutors and mentors in vocational initial and further training
- Further training advisors to concerns
- Advisors for staff development
- Management and instructors in SMEs
- Agencies/instructors for competence development
- Training agencies
- Transfer institutions in the vocational training sector

4. The working and learning process in initial and further training

A prerequisite for the introduction of the learning process is the recognition of a learning friendly situation in the working process, i.e. the awareness that the current competence is not enough for the necessary activities and processes of change.

The difference between the necessary and the existing competence can be assessed with a competence balance.

The interlinking of vocational training and operational further training takes place in the practice in at least four of the aforementioned variants.

Interlinking of training with elements of operational further training

In the interlinking of training with elements of operational further training the trainees acquire special practical competence (additional qualifications, accreditation) that enable the adaptation to technical/technological changes and an interaction with operational processes of change.

These special competences are chiefly integrated in the working process. They also include methodical and socio-cultural competences. The special competences are chiefly oriented on operations (workplace concept). They serve in addition for individual profile development.

Interlinking of further training with elements of vocational training

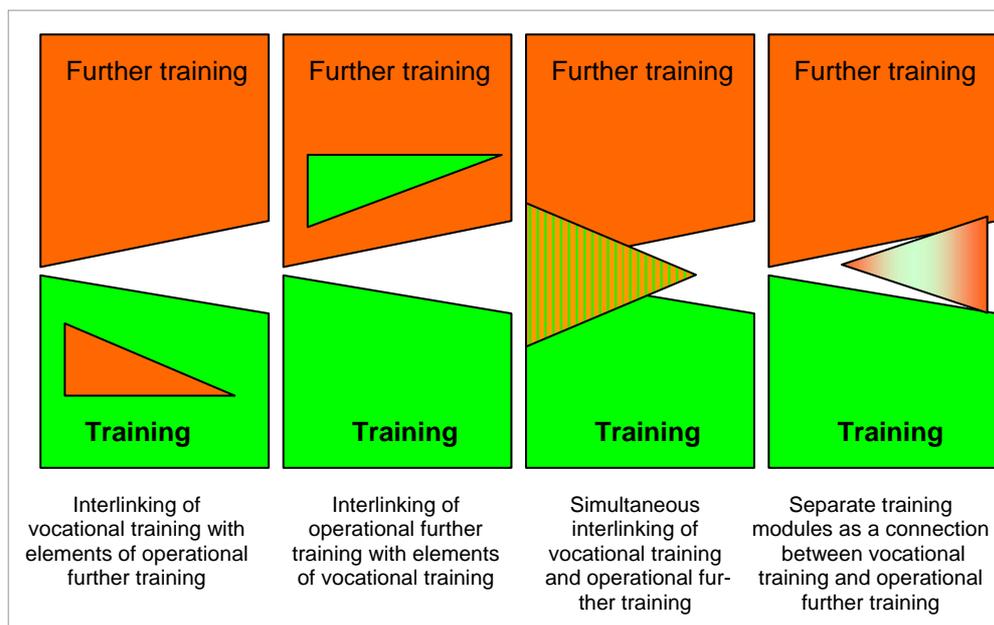
In the simultaneous interlinking of initial and further training, trainees and trained skilled employees learn jointly at the same time the vocational/operational competences *and* special operational competences that enable and accredit vocational activity.

Simultaneous interlinking of initial and further training

In the simultaneous interlinking of initial and further training, trainees and trained skilled employees learn jointly at the same time the vocational/operational competences *and* special operational competences that enable and accredit vocational activity.

The different structural and design variants of interlinking of process integrated vocational training and operational further training best enable the concrete objectives of acquiring vocational competences and the consideration of current conditions in individual concerns.

Fig. Structural interlinking variants



5. Analysis instruments for the design of interlinking of vocational training and operational further training

The design of interlinking of vocational training and operational further training requires that the current status of interlinking in small concerns should be comprehensively analysed.

The analyses should include

- The two levels of the participating institutions
 - The small concerns
 - The vocational training providers

and

- the three elements of the infrastructure
 - the personnel factor,
 - the instrumental factor and
 - the material factor

The results of the analyses form the basis of activities for the further design of interlinking for the vocational training and operational further training in small concerns.

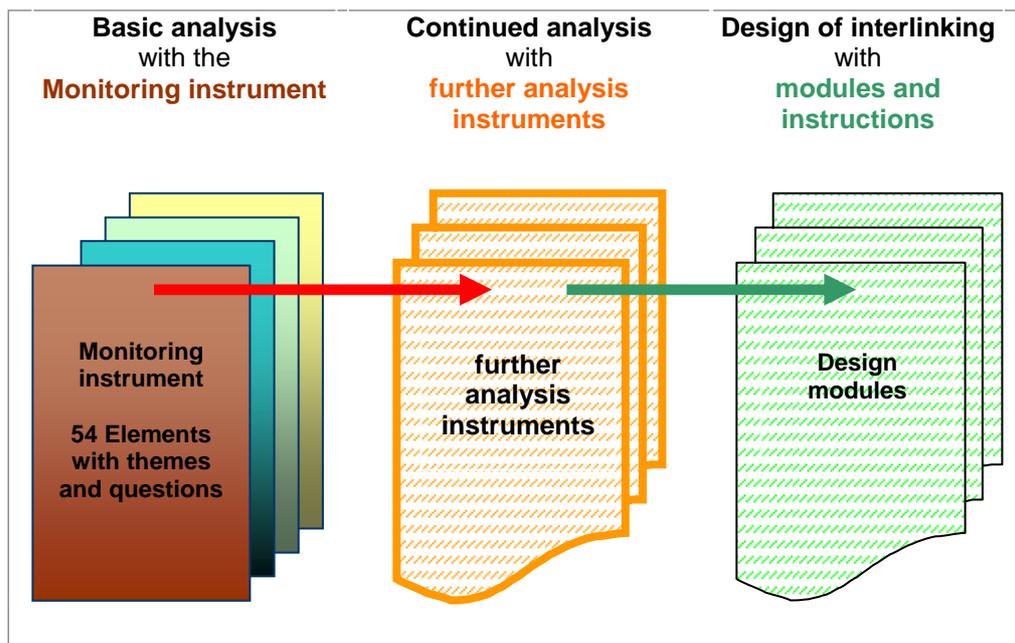


Fig: Elements of the analysis and design system

The following result from the ongoing designed and corresponding elements

- Interview guidelines for company visits
 - Monitoring instrument
 - Further analysis instruments
 - The subsequent modules and design guidelines
- as the analysis and design model for the interlinking of the vocational training and operational further training in small concerns.

6. Contents of the manual

The manual is the most important project product and contains all essential instruments, modules and action guidelines.

The manual represents a comprehensive, complex advice and action basis for training providers in vocational and initial further training.

It contains an introduction to the thematics and notes on the use of the manual. Its user friendliness and flexible application allow the easy selection of files in which the pages are always simple to supplement, amend and copy. Each partner or successive user can therefore maintain the currency of the manual and add knowledge, information and offers.

The individual instruments, modules and action guidelines can be extracted from the manual at any time and used independent of the manual.

6.1 Interview guidelines for company visits

The objectives of the interviews in SMEs include

- Reliable data on the interlinking of vocational training with operational further training based on research into initial and further training and the maintenance of interlinking and didactic implementation in the working process.
- Motives and reasons for establishing whether the staff development relating to company strategy is directed at core competence, innovative processes, traditions, singular target characteristics etc.
- Finding approaches for how an external further training advisor in the company can be effective and what help the company might call on or not
- Identification of typical, characteristic points and peculiarities in certain sizes of concern or in different further training sectors

6.2 The monitoring instrument for analysis of interlinking

The monitoring instrument is the key instrument in the manual. The results from implementation of the monitoring instrument form the basis for further activities in the design of interlinking of vocational training with operational further training in training concerns and small concerns. The manual offers partially linked analysis instruments, modules and further information which can play an important role in consultations, transfer of knowledge and the development of action and design in strategies for the "Interlinking processes" project topic by the training operatives in vocational initial and further training.

The monitoring instrument represents a suitable instrument for addressing the requisite analyses in the company and detailed statements on the individual aspects of vocational training in the company.

The monitoring instrument is divided into the four following complexes:

- A vocational training in the company
- B operational further training in the company
- C operational interlinking in the learning and working process
- D didactic-methodical interlinking in the learning and working process

These complexes are complemented by 14 questions in the manual, each with respective themes.

The indicators for the implementation of these themes and the resulting need for action are simplified in the following three groups.

No		Medium		Strong	
This problem, this question is not yet relevant to our concern		This problem, this question is very important to our concern but has up to now had only limited applications		This problem, this question is very important to our concern and has continual applications	

The indicators for the further need for action and analysis resulting from this assessment are:

- a consecutive analysis instrument
- a supporting module
- action guidelines

After completion the manual will be accompanied by a CD ROM with the entire contents of the manual and further supporting material.

The extra supporting material for the theme of the project should supplement the information and knowledge offer and the links to the monitoring instrument. This supporting material is only contained in the CD ROM version and is available in the language of the respective partner countries, generally in English. The supporting material is also designed as a basic module for the permanent knowledge and supplementary offers by future users.

6.3 Further analysis instruments

The analysis instruments can be extracted at any time from the manual and used independent of the manual.

Apart from the monitoring instrument for defining and evaluating the current situation of vocational initial and further training processes and the interlinking processes, the further analysis instruments have a supplementary function. They offer approaches for advice, the transfer of knowledge and the development of action and design strategies for training operatives in vocational initial and further training.

- Guidelines for the definition of competence needs in companies based on company strategy



An analysis instrument should be made available with these guidelines which supports the recognition of development methods and processes of change in the company in order to draw conclusions for necessary current and future vocational competence.

- Vocational and operational active competence - test yourself
The statements should offer approaches for the evaluation of vocational and operational active competence. These include technical, methodical and social competences.
- Quality management - assessment form for operational training
 - Evaluation of the course contents
 - Evaluation of the cooperation
 - Evaluation of the training service

6.4 Modules

The manual contains 7 modules with selected themes in context with the interlinking of vocational and operational further training. The modules should be expanded and supplemented by the users according to their needs.

The modules can be extracted at any time from the manual and used independent of the manual.

Module 1:

"Fundamentals and design variants of interlinking in the building industry and the commercial-technical sector".

Module 2:

"Design models for the practical implementation of interlinking of vocational and operational further training in building firms and SMEs".

Module 3:

"Self organised learning processes and learning friendly situations in the working process. The design of action oriented and self organised learning".

Module 4:

"Heterogeneous forms of learning relating to age and occupational/living experience in the context of simultaneous interlinking of initial and further training".

Module 5:

"Approaches for reckoning performance points in the interlinking of initial and further training".

Module 6:

"Evaluation of international competence in the interlinking process by Europe-wide exchange of trainees, vocational training personnel and trainee skilled labour".

Module 7:

"Professionalisation strategies and qualification concepts for training providers for active design of the interlinking processes".

6.5 Online competence and transfer platform

A media supported competence and transfer platform supports the advisory and further training activities and should promote the dissemination of the project product. In this way the contents can be continually adapted and expanded.

The platform can be found under the domain address: www.vet-win-win.eu/transfer.htm

The contents include:

- A monitoring instrument
- Interview guidelines
- Analysis instruments
- Modules, instruments

7. Practical experience in the design of the interlinking of initial and further training from the viewpoint of training providers - SAZ e.

The Schwerin based training centre (SAZ) in Germany serves over 800 concerns within its various programmes, in particular those in the plastics and automation equipment sectors. With the development of SAZ from training provider to training service the necessity arose to provide, control and administer a centralised facility for initial and further training for individual firms.

A control group was therefore set up some years ago from all sectors of the Schwerin Training Centre.

In order to administer and analyse all information and activities of staff development with the company a company databank was set up. It serves for in-house knowledge management.

The duties of the control group are as follows:

- Maintenance of customer contact
- Definition of initial and further training needs
- Analysis of the company possibilities for integration to projects
- Control of integration with the respective training guidance
- Submission of all relevant data to the company databank
- Interdisciplinary talks
- Control of information flow in SAZ from the enquiry from a company for a certain training programme to the concrete offer.

The following action fields are coordinated jointly with the management:

Training

- Current training situation in the company
- Projected training in the subsequent year
- Support needs of the company

Further training

- Current further training situation in the company
- Definition of needs by consultation
- Presentation of training offer
- Joint development of measures

Labour needs

- Definition of current and projected needs
- Requisite vocations and occupations

Connections to networks and projects

- Possibilities for company connections to networks and projects
- Nature and content of cooperation

The close interlinking of initial training with operational further training was a key element in the successful approach to continuous staff development in the company. At first it concerned only the placing of trainees and the support for initial training. With the growing relationship of trust in the training provider the wish developed for a comprehensive cooperation in the field of staff development.

Today, with 140 SMEs, measures for initial and further training are consulted, methodically coordinated for contents and implemented. Our service, initial and further training instructors are increasingly playing a part in this cooperation. They are the learning process guidance.

The staff and organisational development too are increasingly playing a part in the interlinking of initial and further training processes.



Learning in heterogeneous groups is gaining increasing importance in operational training. A new method must accordingly be developed in order to promote the new role of training staff too. Here too the SAZ has made great strides in recent years. If it was initially the industrial-economic objectives that set the process in motion, today it is the exploitation of the positive aspects of the various age groups in definite learning phases.

According to the experience of the SAZ e.V. the initial and further training processes in the company and at the training provider cannot be separated. The way to comprehensive operational training work can begin with initial training as well as with further training and the experience in one action field can support the steps in the other action fields. Above all, the linking of learning independent of the workplace with work related learning and the development of new forms of learning at work is leading to many concerns forming partnerlike behaviour and training services are being developed into a joint and realised product.

8. The operational benefits of interlinked initial and further training

The interlinking of initial and further training in the operational learning and working process can be viewed as an optimum strategy for staff development and forward looking, sustained assurance of competence and skilled labour since the following benefits can be expected:

- Learning and further education in the working process with the objective of stabilising above all small concerns and improved competence of the often scarce and therefore flexible, deployable employees in concerns is crucial. The entire planning of lifelong learning lies in one hand.
- The employees are informed in advance of company strategies, technical-technological and organisational changes. In this way the long term orientation on vocational training is recognisable.
- The concrete learning objectives are derived from the current working processes and consider the vocational fundamentals and special company competence; extra financial expenditure is thus often unnecessary.

The learning processes are conversely integrated in the concrete working processes.

- The individual values and norms of learning in the interlinking of working and learning processes and the development of company mentality is promoted among the employees.
- The learning takes place principally in mutual support processes in heterogeneous groups with the most varied forms of learning to the benefit of all the employees. The positive aspects of the vastly different age groups in definite phases are exploited.

For the smaller concerns there are chiefly the following reasons for using the working process and the opportunities for the interlinking of vocational and operational further training as the most effective form of ensuring competitiveness.

- Smaller concerns cannot afford to interrupt a production for further training of employees. The pressure of time and effort and the lack of replacement labour call for another form of qualification in contrast to larger concerns.
- External further training measures are not generally effective for smaller concerns as the specifics of the workplace and the resulting necessary competences cannot be taken into account.
- Further training measures offered in the market are often too expensive for smaller concerns. In addition, there is the problem of finding a suitable training facility that can offer the necessary competence.

