



***Ariadne: Training for Managers in Social Enterprises: Approaches and perspectives***

**UK Pilot Seminar**

**Date:** Thursday 18th October

**Venue** IVAR (at Birkbeck College)  
Seminar Room 2 (Basement)  
Egmont House  
25-31 Tavistock Place  
London WC1H 9UT

**Seminar Coordinator:** Roger Spear

***Aim of the Seminar***

The three areas of assessment, as specified in the project proposal were addressed:

- to validate the quality and relevance of these training modules tailored to the specifics of each country. (does it address needs & level of SE managers in your country)
- to improve the modules and transfer process.
- To assess the integration of this module into existing qualifying training programmes (fit with existing trainings –gaps in provision)

Note that the aim in the Pilot Seminars is more centred on: assessing the general tools and the design/adaptation process, as opposed to evaluating the “product” or training that results.

### **Key elements of Ariadne approach (to be discussed):**

- Key Skills and Competences Model (KSC)
- General Training Framework (6 modules and outline curriculum)
- Country Specificities Chart

In addition there has been the development of Shared Resources (national/international): case studies; teaching resources (eg Ashoka/CM social business planning), glossary development of Wikipedia.

### **Materials for Pilot Seminar Programme:**

- PPT slides for introduction; and questions for each group.
- PPT slides summarising 3 tools and design methodology
- Project training description

### **Outline of Pilot Seminar Programme**

#### **1. Introduction**

- Purpose of seminar.
- Main elements of Ariadne Approach (3 tools and design methodology)
- Structure of seminar

#### **2. Overview and discussion of the three tools developed through the Ariadne project**

- Competence Model – Key Skills and Competences Model
- General Training Framework
- Country Specificities Chart

#### **3. Introduction and discussion of design methodology (8 variables their use with Country Specificities chart**

- Design methodology discussion

#### **4. Introduction and discussion of Ariadne developments of Shared resources**

- Joint discussion with groups

#### **5. Wrap up: Thanks and further developments**

### ***Results of Pilot Seminar***

#### **Competence Model (KSC) discussion:**

Trainees and managers considered this an important and useful tool in a number of ways: in terms of designing course materials, in terms of assessing training requirements, and in terms of assessing learning progress.

It was also felt that they can be considerable uncertainty and ambiguity about what are the key managerial competences in this new emerging field of social enterprise; and the KSC model makes both an important contribution to these discussions, and helps establish an international benchmark for learning and course design in this field.

### **General Training Framework discussion:**

The participants felt that this framework has a number of uses. Firstly it helps locate and reflect on national considerations in relation to the European social economy model. And secondly it provides a broad framework of the design of course material on the management of the social economy.

However there are also challenges, in the sense that some countries have different perspectives on the social economy, or use different terminology such as social enterprise; thus incorporating an understanding of these different perspectives was important; and some people (and indeed some countries) may be more focused on the national perspective, and be resistant to taking broader European perspectives - thus the intellectual and solidarity case for making this bridge needs to be made.

### **Country Specificities Chart discussion:**

Whereas the general training framework was felt to be useful in broad terms, this chart was considered a useful complement in allowing more careful consideration of breadth and depth of issues relevant to management in the social economy. However there was a feeling by practitioner/managers and while this was useful background material, their primary concern was developing skills to address practical problems. Trainers agreed that the value of this perspective needed to be "sold" to participants to ensure its utility was recognised.

### **Design methodology discussion:**

Trainers in particular felt these eight variables were useful in guiding both market research, and specific consultations with client organisations about training needs.

Practitioner/managers could also see the value of this methodology and how it helped them reflect both on their past training, and on the current training needs.

### **Developments of shared resources discussion:**

This led into a wide-ranging discussion about pedagogy and training for social enterprise (see below). In the process they were exchanges about materials that people have found useful in past learning experiences; this included general texts about action learning, different approaches to assessment and project work etc, as well as achieving balance in the design of learning packages. Thus the general feeling was for the need for exchanges amongst trainers and managers on these issues, and possibly considering ways to support networks (and workshops) for doing that, prior to defining important areas of shared resources.

### **Some additional general comments arising from discussion**

There are two contrasting approaches to social enterprise training: firstly to take classical functional business training and adapt or add on social enterprise training specificities; and secondly to start with the distinctive characteristics social enterprise and orient training more directly to these:

- Multiple goals
- Market
- Finance and Resources
- Stakeholders: Members, Internal/HR, External (governance).

One trainer described a course developed which was based on the first approach of developing additional training material to address social enterprise specificities, and using

this alongside conventional functional management training. The key areas of difference were:

1. the origins of the social enterprise and the cultural and other characteristics linked to that origin (e.g. voluntary sector organisations/charities becoming more socially entrepreneurial)
2. type of organisational structure and governance structure
3. capital structure and different sources of finance
4. business model and key business proposition
5. need to develop alternative/supportive work culture

There is also a degree of diversity in terms of the kinds of social enterprise within which managers are based; this requires different kinds of emphases in the training material; for example the following dimensions require different emphases: stage in the life-cycle of a social enterprise (particularly differentiating between entrepreneurial skills managerial skills in the startup and growth phases), size of a social enterprise, and different forms of capitalisation, different ethical/social characteristics.

And linked to this, is the need to place a social enterprise learning/training within existing training portfolios of institutions. Thus designing a new training course on social enterprise management is not always (or generally) a case of rationally designing a course based on a well considered conceptual framework, it often requires reconfiguring existing training materials, and politically negotiating a new configuration that meets the requisite learning requirements.

It is also important to consider the different building blocks, or design possibilities for developing training modules and courses. This would include establishing a balance between use of the following:

- case studies
- embedding conceptual learning and skills application: for example in projects
- utilising historical and contextual understanding
- using both formal and informal learning spaces
- using both F2F and virtual learning experiences
- emphasising critical and reflective learning
- developing communities of practice

Information and research skills are as important as technical/business skills – i.e. being able to find the solutions to new problems is also a key skill; and being able to do this problem solving in a collaborative team is also important.

Learning effectiveness will be improved by achieving the best combination of these approaches. Also learning can be enhanced through the design of both informal as well as formal learning spaces. Assessment: can be designed in a way that empowers the learner.

Co-training has been found to be particularly effective; this is where managers amongst a group of students take responsibility for knowledge transfer in areas where they have high skill. This can be enhanced through virtual platforms – for example the UK CIC Association has a NING site (social networking) where this kind of exchange takes place. Such models could have a role to play in designing the post training learning development (which is a classic challenge).

Constraints on training: in smaller social enterprise in particular there is an important issue of lack of time for training; it helps address this if the unit of study is the trainees own organisation.