



Youth Employment Support

A service for companies



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Project Consortium

The YES offer has been developed by a multinational consortium of experts.

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1. Employing difficult young people

Have you ever experienced problems with your apprentice for which you could not find a solution?

Lack of motivation, barriers in communication or learning difficulties are problems which occur in every relationship between apprentice and trainer at one time or another. Most of them can be solved, some cannot – but dismissing an apprentice means a big loss for companies as well as for the young person concerned.

For this reason companies select their apprentices very carefully and difficult young people like early school leavers, young people who have failed to complete vocational education and training and other groups of youth with socio-economic and/or personal disadvantages are often not employed.

But there are also many companies which search for apprentices and cannot find those who they are ideally looking for.

With this as a backdrop and in the worsening demographical situation at the labour market it seems important to work with such youngsters intensively and professionally. And the effort pays off as our experiences show.

Companies, especially small and medium sized enterprises, are more inclined to employ and/or train “difficult” young people if they receive comprehensive and intensive coaching and training support.

1.1 Comprehensive support for companies

Youth Employment Support (YES) offers comprehensive support for companies employing difficult young people or discovering difficulties with apprentices who are already employed.

Experienced coaches analyse the situation and identify needs for support together with employers.

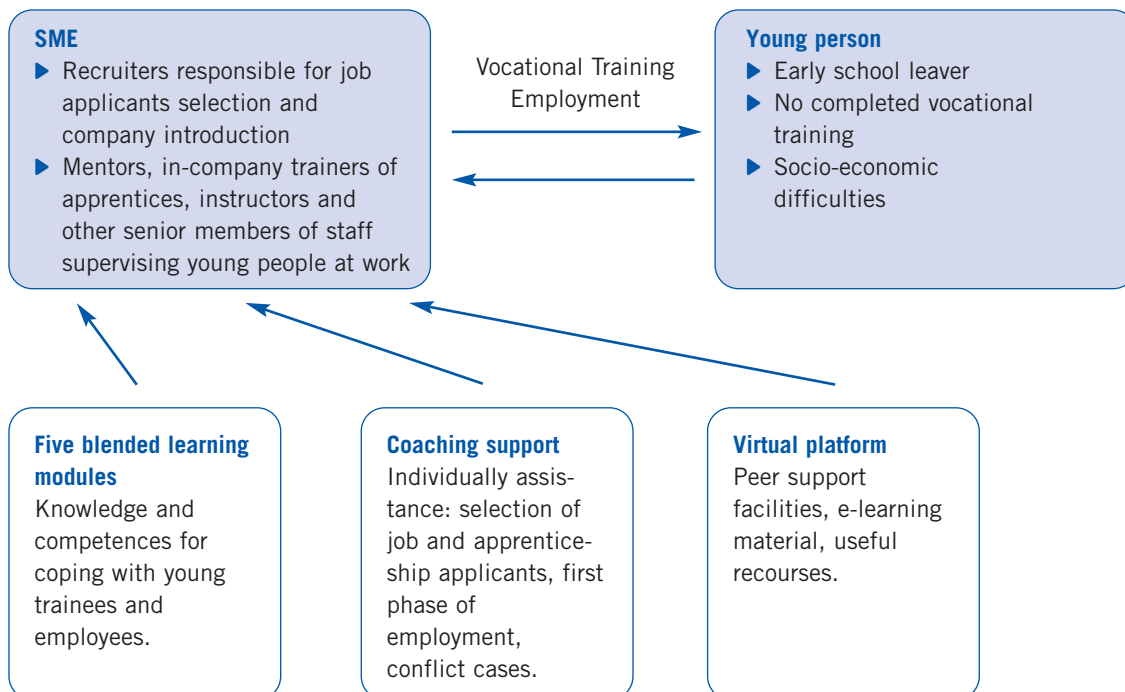
Depending on the results, of this analysis YES offers

- ▶ training in the field of pedagogy, law, youth culture, behavioural aspects and mentoring
- ▶ coaching support
- ▶ peer support
- ▶ an online learning environment.

1.2 Target groups – Who benefits from the YES programme?

The project YES is directly addressed to **SME employers, human resources managers, in-company trainers and supervisors**. The programme is especially designed to the needs of small companies, but also suits those of larger companies, as support needs are being identified individually.

Furthermore young people are being supported in an indirect way.



2. The YES Support Offer

The concept of Youth Employment Support is a comprehensive offer to HR managers, recruiters and in-company advisors who employ and educate young people.

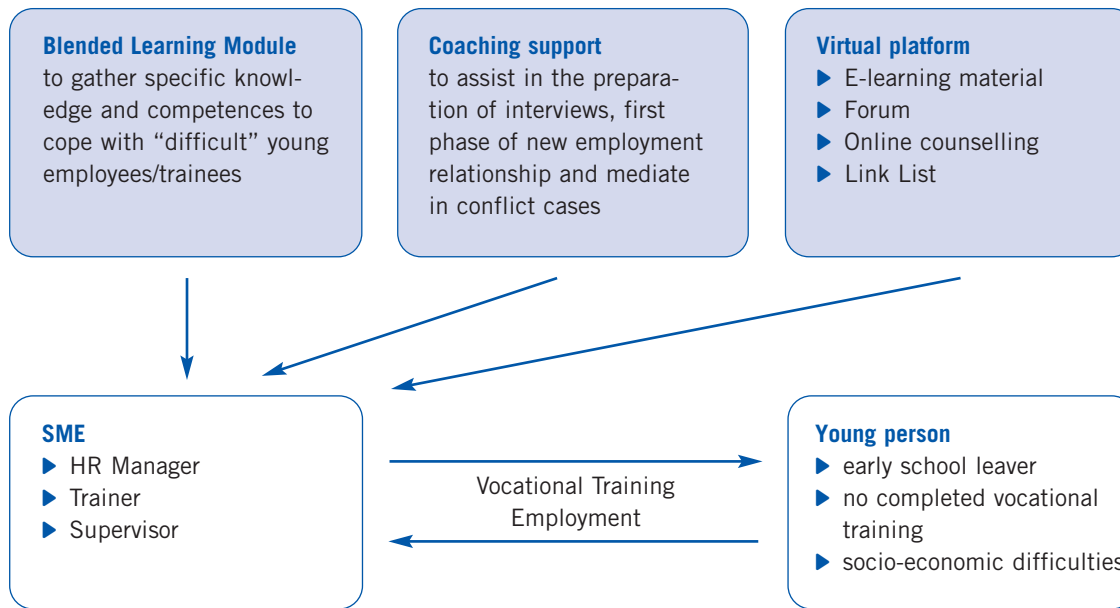
The YES training offers profound training in all areas relevant for educating and supervising difficult young people. Face-to-face meetings are accompanied by online learning facilities. This offers opportunities for individual study, further reading as well as for exchange of experiences with trainers and colleagues through the virtual support platform. The YES training concept attaches great importance to sharing experiences among peers and also provides the opportunity for networking.

The YES coaching offers individual support in professional crisis situations, advice for particular questions, mentoring in conflict cases as well as the possibility for further developing social skills.

2.1 YES Coaching

Effective working with “difficult” young people depends on several premises, amongst others specific knowledge, social competences and skills are necessary. Recruiters, mentors and other employees of SME working with young people could often use their potential to deal with youngsters more effectively. In order to enlarge those competences it is necessary to reflect the way of behaviour and interaction with young people.

By coaching responsible persons the job insertion process in SME will be professionally accompanied. The achievement of the coaching process becomes visible to the clients, and even more to the companies that increase their competences of leadership and human resource management.



YES Coaching is based on the Systemic Coaching Approach

“Social constructivism views each learner as a unique individual with unique needs and backgrounds. The learner is also seen as complex and multidimensional. Social constructivism not only acknowledges the uniqueness and complexity of the learner, but actually encourages, utilises and rewards it as an integral part of the learning process.” (Wertsch 1997)

Based on this view we comprehend coaching as an active learning process in which individuals evaluate, adapt and insert the offered information into their individual knowledge structure rather than independently store knowledge as it was originally gained. This encourages to construct a new view of truth and to extend their behaviour patterns. Thus the coaching clients are in the centre of a learning process by discovering new ways of solution methods. During this process cogni-

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tive and social skills are going to be enriched and self-efficacy (to set a goal and develop interests) will be strengthened.

While the learning clients are in the centre of this process coaches play the role of facilitators. They help their clients to find their personal attitude by systematic questioning and a well directed support, so that the clients are enabled to draw own conclusions. This is achieved by adopting a systemic style of coaching.

Summarizing we can say that systemic coaching is client-centred, solution-focused and success-oriented. Further attributes of a systemic coaching style are outcome orientation as well as the examination of visions, action plans, inspiration and feedback. Systemic coaching provides process expertise rather than content-oriented knowledge.

The clients gain two essential benefits from the coaching:

They discover a solution to solve a certain problem and at the same time they find a way to work on solutions.

In order to make the coaching process successful, systemic coaches should consider basic attitudes.

- ▶ **Systemic coaches are experts of active listening.**
- ▶ **Systemic coaches regard the client and his or her situation.**
- ▶ **Systemic coaches prevent suggestions and keep their own opinion to themselves.**
- ▶ **Systemic coaches ask creative questions.**
- ▶ **Systemic coaches survey complex contexts.**

Target group of the YES Coaching

YES coaching addresses staff members in SME who recruit and insert “difficult” young employees and apprentices, especially

- ▶ recruiters who select job applicants and introduce them into the company,
- ▶ mentors, in-company trainers of apprentices, instructors and other senior members of staff who supervise young people at work.

“Difficult” young people are those who have difficulties to get placed into the labour market because they

- ▶ have a low level of education and training,
- ▶ are early school leavers,
- ▶ failed to complete vocational training,
- ▶ are socio-economically disadvantaged (e.g. don't have a professional network needed or don't have sufficient work experience),
- ▶ or are for other reasons perceived as potentially “difficult” by potential SME employers.

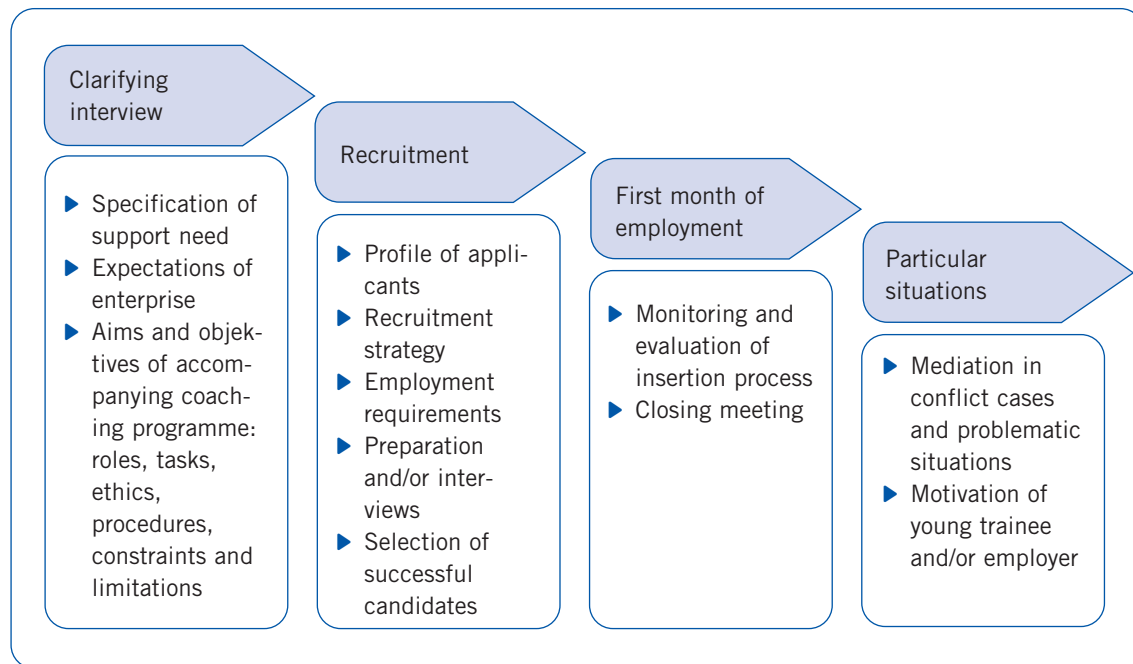
They are not directly targeted but finally benefitting from the coaching offer. YES coaches do not usually contact the youngsters directly. The YES support is aiming at the responsible persons in the enterprises with the intention to enable them to appropriately deal with the young person themselves.

YES Coaching Objectives

It is conjecturable that only a few clients have got pre-experiences with coaching, so we assume that the YES coaches will have to suggest coaching at the beginning of the process.

Possible topics could be

- ▶ Role perception of mentors, in-company trainings, instructors
- ▶ Leadership – reflection on the own style of leadership
- ▶ The way of delegating work orders
- ▶ Behaviour in conflict situation
- ▶ Self-perception as instructor, mentor,
- ▶ Expectations/demands on the young people



2.2 YES Training

The YES training offer covers the most important aspects of youth employment in a lively and practice-oriented way. In face-to-face meetings, all important topics concerning employment and apprenticeship are being introduced by experienced trainers and discussed within the group of participants:

- ▶ Profile of in-company recruiter/mentor
- ▶ Training Module National Law and Support
- ▶ Behavioural aspects
- ▶ Soft Skills
- ▶ Pedagogical Aspects

Great importance is attached to the exchange of experiences within the group and time for networking.

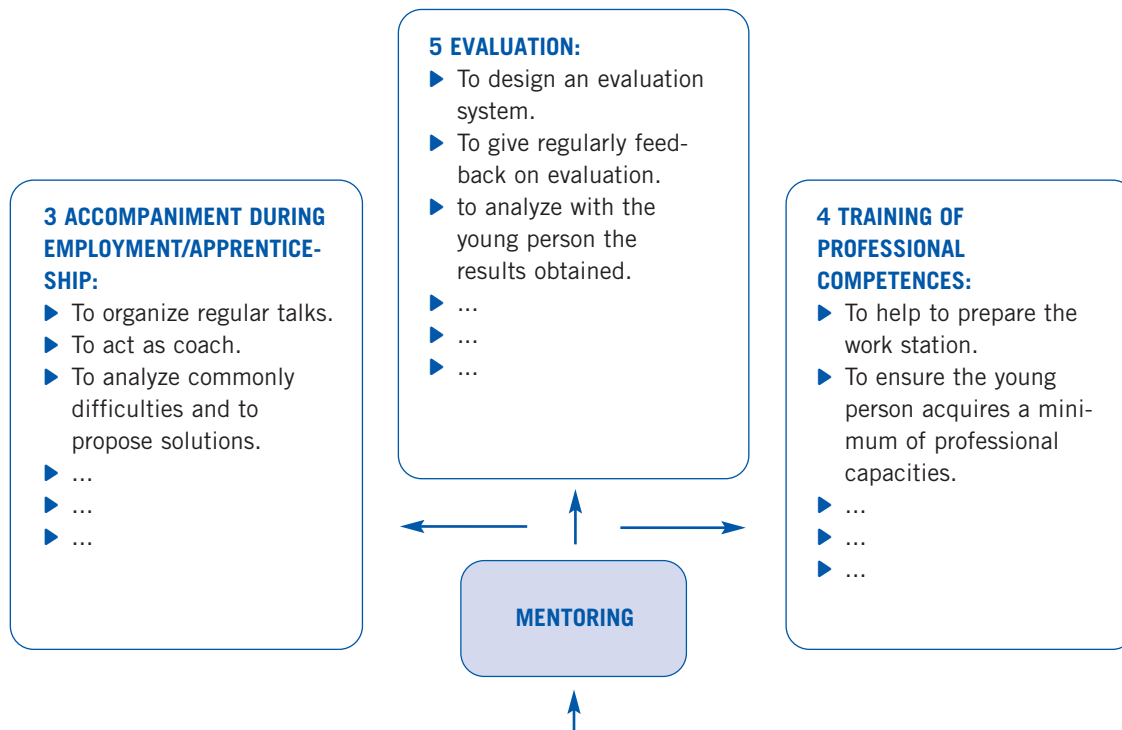
2.2.1 Module 1: Profile of in-company recruiter/mentor

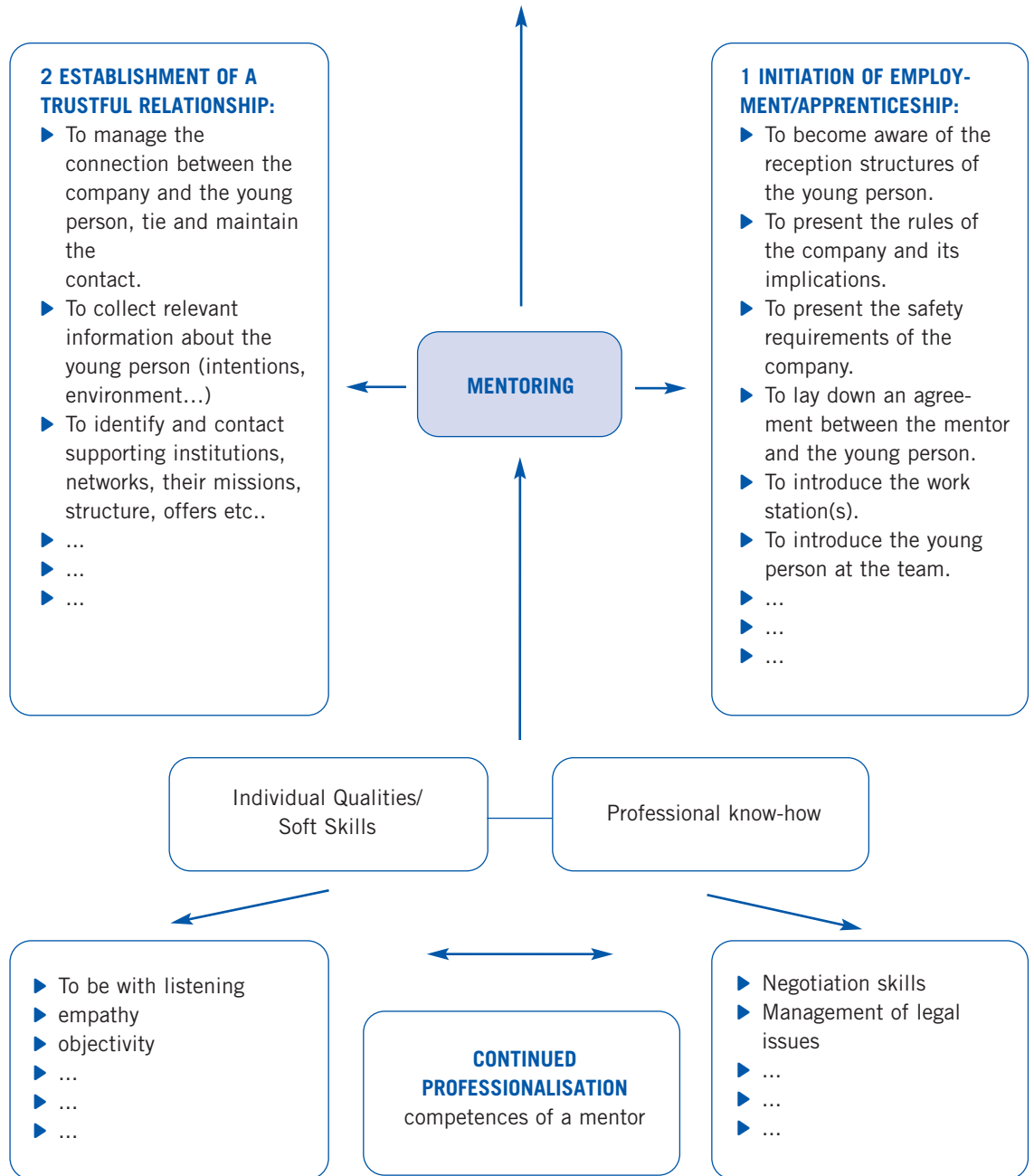
This module gives an overview of the Youth Employment Support system and the YES training course. The module develops the competences needed for recruiters who select job applicants and introduce them to their company or mentors, in-company trainers of apprentices, instructors and other senior members of staff who supervise young people at work in SME.

This module helps the employers to understand the system in which they evolve, and roles and tasks of each actor of the YES system.

Example: The tree of competences

Below you find a tree of competences highlighting some competences that recruiters and mentors should. Complete the graphic with your own suggestions.





2.2.2 Module 2: National Law and Support

The aim of Module 2 is to provide recruiters and managers of companies, especially of SME, with useful information about the rights and duties they have. They will learn about the background and rationale of these rules, and they will find out what to expect from their employees. This module's content includes information on specific obligations/prohibitions with regard to youngsters at work, but also on apprenticeship systems and subsequent possibilities offered by subsidized programmes, from which companies may profit in several ways.

Like most agreements, a working contract also entails agreements with legal consequences. Although both parties have to abide to it, it is not always clear what the implications are. Especially youngsters who sign up for a job often seem to have some difficulties with differentiating between rights and obligations. For instance, what bothers many employers is that most young employees know exactly how many minutes they are entitled to have a break during work time, but they 'tend to forget' to be punctual or they simply ignore other working obligations. This may affect the working atmosphere in a negative way and eventually situations may become tense.

It can prove to be very useful for employers to get a clear picture of their rights and the obligations towards their employees, while at the same time getting acquainted with apprenticeships and subsidies for hiring difficult youth. Additionally, if everyone knows exactly what they are allowed and not allowed to do, it is more likely that a pleasant working environment will be sustained.

Example: Case study on European legislation

During the last years you have built up a small profitable business in the construction branch. Being employed yourself for many years, you decided to take a change and start your own business. Now things are going well in your company and it seems that your personnel are committed when performing their tasks.

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One day you read in a newspaper that one of your competitors in the economic sector has been sued by a group of young employees. Allegedly that company was infringing the rules and regulations imposed by the European Union, which give the youngsters certain rights.

Since your own company has also some youngsters at work and in order to avoid similar events you go and investigate what you can and cannot do according to these European rules. Because lawyers or counsellors are expensive, you decide to familiarize yourself a little bit with the rules.

- a) You find out immediately that there are (among others) two EC directives which catch your attention, Dir. 94/33/EC and 89/391/EEC. However they seem to be directed to the member states and NOT to the enterprises. Do you still have to follow the guidelines then? Why (not)?
- b) As you were looking to hire youngsters a few years back, you were told that they needed to be at least 16 years of age. Now you find out that according to these EC guidelines the minimum age is 15. How can this be? Is this possible or not? Explain.
- c) Some of your young employees still follow some form of education somewhere else for 12 hours a week. In addition they follow training at your company, which keeps them busy for another 7 hours a week. In how far does this affect their total time they can spend working in your company? Would spending time in your company as an apprentice make any difference for them?
- d) Dangerous jobs in your company are generally done by the older and more experienced employees, but sometimes you want or need to give the job to a youngster who is not totally fit for the job yet. Is this allowed under EC rules, and under which conditions is this (not) possible?

Answers to be found at www.yesproject.cesga.es

2.2.3 Module 3: Behavioural Aspects

The aim of Module “Behavioural Aspects” is to provide information how young people behave and on reasons for their behaviour so that future employers can grasp youngsters’ specific motivation for work, their priorities and lifestyles. The module can help recruiters, human resources managers and managers of companies, to build confidence how to start cooperation with vulnerable young employees and offers the communication strategies for better mutual understanding of different generations.

Young people – even early schools leavers – may bring to the company a new way of thinking and new viewpoints on routine processes. This can be the starting point for innovation.

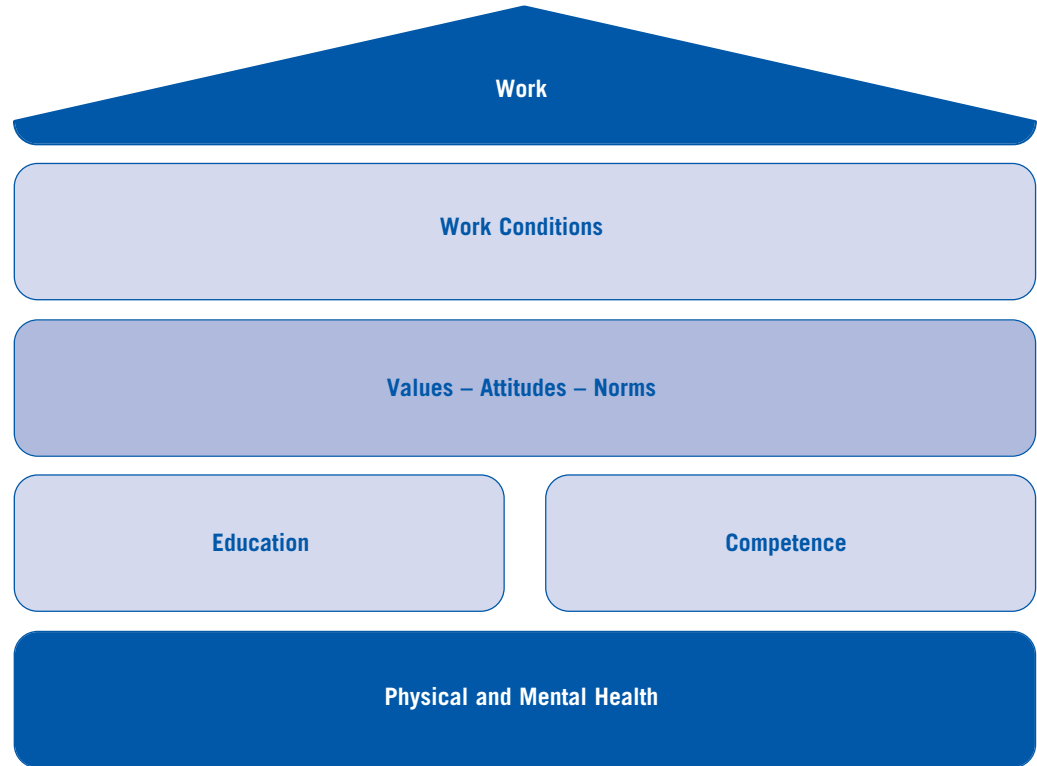
It is therefore important to have a good level of competence for negotiating with young employees even when they have some behavioural problems, because they may become very valuable for your company. The smaller the company, the more obvious this is.

And in some cases they are the only people available on the labour market for some positions.

You can meet a lot of youngsters applying for a job who apparently do not behave politely, or with a scaring or strange outfit. Why do they act in such a way? When communicating with them it is important to know the realities of youth life in the 21st century, to know their culture and subcultures to avoid inappropriate reactions from the very beginning – when they show up at the interview and apply for a job in your company. The work relationship, if they are accepted for the job, can be enriching for both parts: for youngsters – to help them in the transition from youth to adulthood, and for employers – to get many innovative ideas from the youngsters.

Example: House of work capability

Work capability describes the potential ability of a person to accomplish a specific task at a given time.



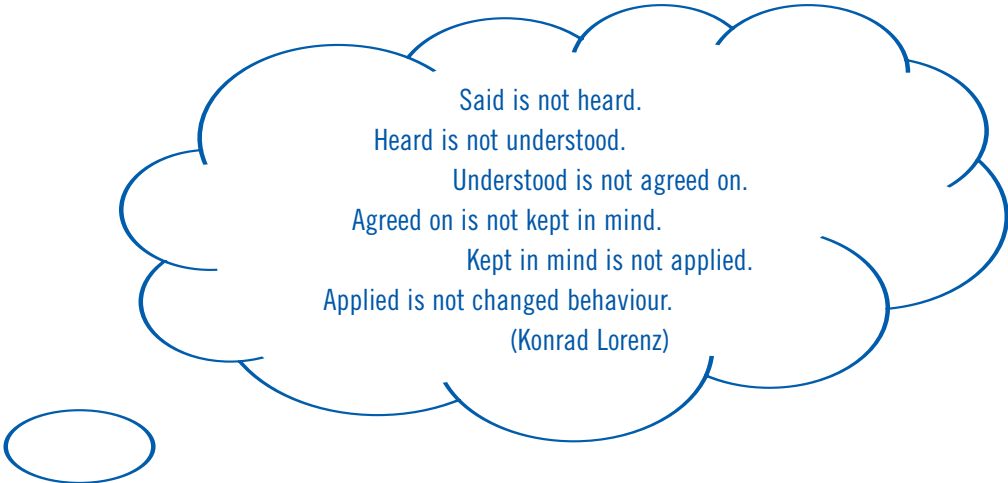
2.2.4 Module 4: Soft Skills

This Module is intended for improving communication with young people by increasing awareness and learning new knowledge and skills in three main domains: interpersonal communication, conflict resolution and coaching.

Reflecting on one's individual communication habits and knowing about the different aspects of communication leads to a better communication culture within the company. Effective communication engages the choice of the best communication channel, the technical know-how to use the channel, the presentation of information to the target audience and the skill to understand responses received from others. This avoids misunderstandings, helps to understand other persons better and to avoid and resolve conflicts. Conflict solving is also a special topic in this module. Very often small conflicts are not being noticed or cannot be solved for a long time, which can be a mature drawback for the atmosphere and also for the productivity within a company.

Example: Communication and Understanding

Reflect on the statement of Konrad Lorenz below.
Did you already make this or a similar experience?



Said is not heard.
Heard is not understood.
Understood is not agreed on.
Agreed on is not kept in mind.
Kept in mind is not applied.
Applied is not changed behaviour.
(Konrad Lorenz)

2.2.5 Module 5: Pedagogical Aspects

The aim of Module 5 is to provide recruiters, human resources managers and managers of companies with useful information on basic pedagogical skills needed for effective knowledge transfer and to give instruction and pieces of advice on learning processes and intergenerational learning.

In today's global business environment, a knowledgeable employee is the most valuable asset to a company. Especially young people who are at the start of their career with lack of education need to realise that continuous learning is critical for their success and consequently to the overall success of the company. This is why it is important to create conditions in which the company becomes a learning community, open to new knowledge and ready to share the existing knowledge.

For successful knowledge transfer it is vital that all experts involved in passing on their knowledge to others within the organisation, especially to newcomers, have some basic pedagogical skills. Therefore not only specific professional „hard“ skills are important, but also the awareness of the way how to communicate the knowledge effectively.

People learn in different ways and process information in their own personal way. Differences in genetic make-up, environment and experiences influence the way we learn. And young people in this sense are no exception.

Example: VAKOG learning styles**Please read the following before answering the questions:**

- ▶ Mark every statement on the scale from 1 to 5 according to the extent the statement holds true for you:

1 – very rarely

2 – rarely

3 – sometimes

4 – quite often

5 – often

- ▶ Score each question with the very first response that comes to mind. If you have trouble deciding which mark to give, tick the one that occurs first. There is no need for undue pondering and thought. Your first response is usually the most appropriate.
- ▶ If you are still having a difficult time choosing, think of specific circumstances in your life – relative to the statement.
- ▶ If you get a sudden case of the “How I might make the test come out the way I want it to”, resist, resist, resist. Purposely slanting the answers will make the outcome meaningless and devoid of the information from which you could benefit.

| ASSESS THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS: | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | At taking decisions I rely on accompanying feelings and emotions. | | | | | |
| 2 | At taking decisions I rely on the way the solutions sounds, and I can advocate best if talking to myself. | | | | | |
| 3 | At taking decisions I rely on the solution which looks clearest to me. | | | | | |
| 4 | About a speaker I appreciate most his voice and the way he speaks. | | | | | |
| 5 | About a speaker I appreciate most if he pictures his subject clearly and evidently. | | | | | |
| 6 | About a speaker I appreciate most if I am addressed emotionally. | | | | | |

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| ASSESS THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS: | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | When I think about something, a problem I picture it clearly. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8 | When I think about something, a problem I discuss it with myself and talk about everything internally. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9 | When I think about something, a problem I walk up and down, trying to adopt the situation. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10 | At the seminar I value most clear pictorial materials and the lecturer's use of different visual resources. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11 | On the seminar I value most comprehensively presented subject by the lecturer. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12 | On the seminar I value most practical exercises so that I can try out the sense of the subject by myself. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13 | When I think about a good friend of mine I see their picture in my mind first. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14 | When I think about a good friend of mine I have a good feeling and pleasant memories of mutual experiences. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15 | When I think about a good friend of mine I can hear their voice and remember conversations with them almost word by word. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16 | I learn most easily, and remember data best if I discuss the subject with myself and partly learn it by heart. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17 | I learn most easily, and remember data best if I draw a sketch, mind map or make extracts out of it. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18 | I learn most easily, and remember data best if rehearse the subject by practical exercises. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19 | To encourage and motivate myself I take a bodily position full of power (upright and self-confident posture). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20 | To encourage and motivate myself I picture (in colours, 3D) my success vividly. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21 | To encourage and motivate myself I talk to myself and encourage myself aloud. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Please sum up ratings from following statements:

| Statement ratings to sum up | Sum | Type |
|-------------------------------|-----|----------------------------|
| 3 + 5 + 7 + 10 + 13 + 17 + 20 | | Visual learning type |
| 2 + 4 + 8 + 11 + 15 + 16 + 21 | | Auditory learning type |
| 1 + 6 + 9 + 12 + 14 + 18 + 19 | | Kinaesthetic learning type |

The category with the highest number shows that this is probably your primary representational system.

If your three scores are close together in value it means that though you might be primarily visual, for example, many of your strategies are kinaesthetic or auditory.

If your scores are highly slanted, that is, higher than 17 in any category, you are clearly dominant in that representational system.

Finally there is no representational system that is better or worse than the others. Your representational type doesn't have any relevance to the kind of human being you are, it simply sheds light on how you relate as a human being, reveals how you run your relationships and learn/teach.

3. YES Virtual Support Platform for Self-study and Communication

To be able to learn effectively, YES offer the learning platform where crucial parts of the training take place. You can discover your own learning path by going through the e-learning on the YES web-platform.

To access the YES course, you have to go to the YES website: <http://www.youth-employment-support.eu/> and click on Support to SME. On the right side, click on “Training Area”. Then you will see the YES training area main page. You need a valid username and password to access the content of YES course.

YES online courses count on several communication tools to facilitate tutoring, exchanging of ideas and doubt solving. These are:

- ▶ Discussion forums, where students and teachers can post their contributions when they are working on their courses.

- ▶ Chats
Online live written discussions can also take place in a YES course.
A simple chat system allows the participants to share views, links and ideas.

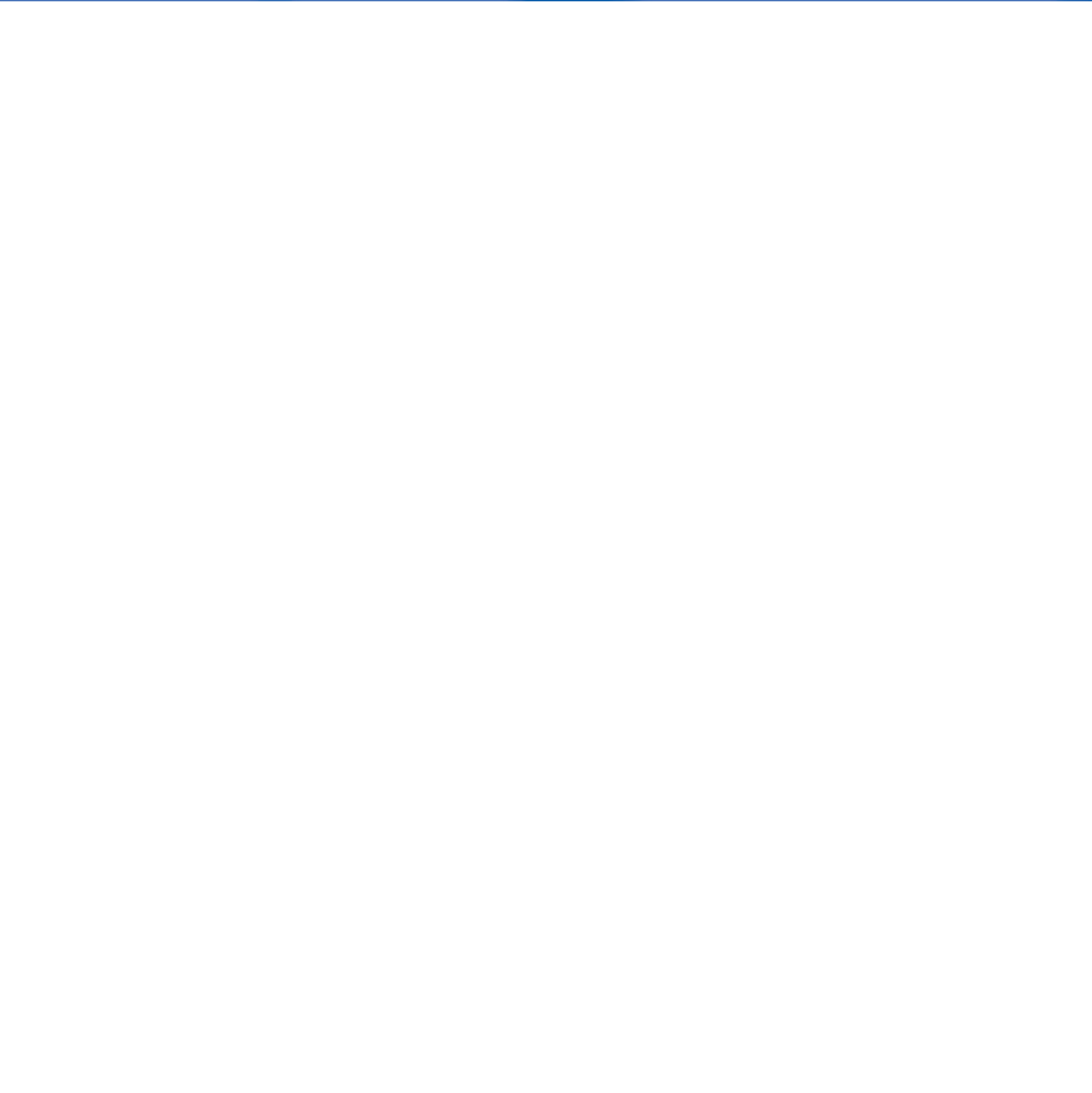
- ▶ There are also other tools to reinforce communication, like “assignments” a tool to send tasks from students to teachers, or “announcements”, to send important notes to students’ emails.

4. Experiences of the First YES Participants

- ▶ I applied to the seminar because of coaching. I liked it a lot, but unfortunately I did not have much time for additional learning. I like the fact that the coach pays attention to the most important things.
- ▶ The fact that the coach focused on the most important things.
- ▶ During the coaching I solved problems with a young employee. The communication was broken between the employee and the company before. The coach also visited our company.
- ▶ We had 2 jobs to provide in urgency (contract at determined duration), the YES trainer identified our needs and proposed adapted profiles to us. We recruited 2 young people with which we were very satisfied and the contract of one of these person was prolonged.
- ▶ I was searching for new apprentices and 11 people applied. One young person was not qualified, but showed to be very interested and we expected, he could be perfectly integrated into the team and he transmitted his candidature to me very quickly. He called me several times. With the YES trainer of Mission Locale, we thus set up an evaluation in work environment which confirmed the motivation of the young person. The YES trainer proposed to me to profit from a helped contract (CIE “contract initiative employment”) and dealt with the contract. Then, we remained in very regular contact by e-mail and physically (a YES coach came to meet the young person and is responsible to evaluate the process). The trainer was contacted several times as intermediary between us and the young person in order to avoid severe conflicts. We are still in contact.
- ▶ One of the best experiences during coaching was perhaps that I put myself in the place of the young person... that it would be me who wants something without being sure what that exactly is... I will try to take these experiences into concern more often.

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- ▶ Better understanding my motivation and activities in my company.
- ▶ I learned to understand young people, co-workers and superiors. I learned how to communicate with them, motivate them, integrate them into the company's working process, and I learned how to pay them compliments for the work that was done well. I think now I understand their problems better and I got to know a new approach in solving conflicts in a correct way.
- ▶ I learned how to do a job interview in a correct way, to differentiate competences, tasks and responsibilities in the working organisation – which is responsible for certain tasks, differentiate between mentor, adviser, coach and therapist. One of the most interesting things I learned is how to be a good mentor and how counselling should be performed, what coaching is, how it is performed, what we might expect from it. Furthermore I found out that there are 4 learning styles (4MAT) and learned how to identify them. I also received a lot of other beneficial information for example: in the connection with employment legislation, how to present an organisation in the best possible way, how to behave within family enterprises, etc.
- ▶ I gained new knowledge about the role of the human resource manager in the organization and I got information about legislation.
- ▶ I found out that I do not know much about youngsters today and I learned how to work with them.
- ▶ Lectures were mainly discussions where we were confronting different opinions, commenting, expressing our opinions, etc. The trainers were extremely professional, they presented a lot of topics that were interesting to us, so we could gain more information and skills in the field which were useful and necessary for us. The participants had different experiences so we were sharing useful advices, opinions, information with one another. I prefer that kind of lecture in comparison to the classic one where the participants only listen to the lecturer. Trainers were creating a good atmosphere that is why I liked to participate. My personal opinion, according to my experiences, is that lectures should perform this kind of approach to teaching also in formal education.



Youth Employment Support – The project

All over Europe unemployment is a huge political, economic and social challenge, which becomes even more urgent with a view to the present economic crisis.

Young and unskilled workers, youngsters who are socio-economically and/or personally disadvantaged, school leavers and those who have failed to complete vocational training are particularly vulnerable concerning unemployment and therefore need to be supported. From the employers' perspective employing young people brings various assets to a company: fresh ideas, high motivation, flexibility and resilience, and applicable knowledge.

There are a lot of companies all over Europe which know about these benefits, but which are not able to find apprentices they would consider appropriate. At the same time there are a lot of young people, being considered as “difficult” who do not find a job or apprenticeship. Europe needs innovative and creative concepts to bridge this gap – for instance through the comprehensive support offered by YES.