



## **PRACTICES DAILY PERFORMED – METHODOLOGY AND TOOLS**

Analysis of practices daily performed by organisations involved in activities aimed at supporting social inclusion and entering in labour market of prisoners

### **Rationale**

The project is aimed at improving knowledge processes management in organisations dealing with social inclusion and vocational training of people in prison. The approach will be constructivist: we consider learning as a social practice and so knowledge is a shared product of a common process in which each subject shares its skills, know-how, practices, etc.

Main areas of intervention of the project will be:

Improve active social inclusion and entering in labour market of people in prison.

Improve management of our adult education organisations facing the difficulties and stress of social work plaid in prison.

The two areas are strictly linked because stressing situations not well managed, can hardly affect effectiveness and efficacy of social interventions and wellbeing of social workers.

The project comes from staffs needs and wishes. VIP is aimed at recognizing supporting methodologies and exchange good practices among trainers in order to improve the effectiveness of their intervention in their context and their competences and skills in the social inclusion of people in prison.

Often trainers improve their skills by experiences: they need time and space to assess their skills for becoming more and more aware of them, refining them acquiring awareness of what they need to improve.

Further more sometimes trainers don't play managerial role and sometimes is very difficult to share know how from a person to another, because someone is not aware of his/her knowledge learned by experiences. Moreover in organisations – above all in small organisations – there is little time to carry out team building activities because often people play different roles in the same time.

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Nevertheless awareness is the key word for managing this kind of matter and improving effectiveness of actions performed by trainers.

Otherwise, awareness and peer to peer support/comparison is an important mean in order to overcome stress of social work plaid with people in prison. In order to improve management of our adult education organisations, we need to share good practices, methodologies, approaches, tools, for stress management.

## **Methodology**

In order to obtain the right answers, we need to ask for the right questions. This methodology arises from this common reflection. In fact, when we have questions to answer we have possibility to stop for a moment and reflect about what normally we perform daily.

On the other hand, in order to have possibilities to compare different practices, we need to have a shared organisation of the issues we are going to compare.

Here you'll find three different tools that have to be used together. Please, accomplish the requirement of the tools respecting the order of the list. And, please, if possible involve the same persons in all the tools. This way, people will arrive to the focus group prepared and aware of the matter.



## Tool N° 1

### Questionnaire addressed to people working with convicts in prison

<b>01</b>	<b>Please describe your users typology</b>
	Users are prisoners jailed in le Puy-en-Velay. They are either waiting for trial or sentenced for short duration. They are only men. 90 % are low-qualified and most of them are less than 35.
<b>02</b>	<b>Does your organisation assess users' needs and expectations? And, if yes, how does it assess them?</b>
	Needs and expectations are assessed by a satisfaction survey. Every three months, learners fill this document to evaluate some criteria (organisation, pedagogy, material available...). They have the opportunity to underline the weak and the strong points of the training. During a training path, a learner can give his opinion three times. There is also an interview to evaluate the motivation of the learner before entering the training path.
<b>03</b>	<b>Does your organisation assess context needs in order to organise activity? And, if yes, how does it assess them?</b>
	The gathering of all learners' evaluation allows to assess the context. Trainers can also express their needs to the training manager. Their demand is then discussed with the manager of the prison. Regarding the need of the training as cook for the economic context, there is a permanent need for cook in France, whatever is the region.
<b>04</b>	<b>How is the activity funded?</b>
	<b>By public funds</b> Training activity is funded by the Ministry of employment with the support of the European social fund.
<b>05</b>	<b>What is the methodology you use as ground of your activity?</b>
	The training action has two objectives depending on the duration, or to prepare the detainees to obtain a diploma as cook (CAP) or to qualify them as cooks (if the time is not sufficient). Whatever the path is, the content and the training objectives are defined by the diploma reference framework (produced by the Ministry of Education in concertation with the profession). All learners benefit from practical courses directly linked to the job of cook. They also follow general courses to enlarge their basic knowledge. Even though content and objectives are defined, each trainer can adapt his pedagogical methods, taking into account the constraints linked to the detention centre (eg. No internet connection, USB keys usable after control...). A trainer may favour group work or individualisation of learning. Regarding the practice courses, at the end of the session, the detainees have the obligation to have produced the whole meals that will be distributed to all the prisoners.



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**Have you chosen this methodology? Or does it come from your organisation?**

As said, each member of the team is free to use his/her own methodology to teach, to transmit knowledge (respecting the reference framework and the detention constraints).

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**If the methodology used is chosen entirely by your organisation, Do you change something? What? And Why?**

The organisation doesn't impose any method, what happens in a classroom is the responsibility of the trainer.

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**Why has this methodology been chosen for this typology of users?**

The method has been chosen because it is similar to what is done in the free learning conditions. So if a detention process stops, the learners, can (if there is some free space) and if the pedagogical team agrees continue his path in one of the training sites of Greta du Velay.

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**Please, describe the activity you are dealing with. Please, do not forget to explain timetable of activities, their frequency within the week, number of users, number of trainers**

The training has as objective to facilitate in the mid term, the social and vocational reintegration of trainees by the acquisition and mastery of basic skills in the fields of cooking. It should also help by teaching associate learning contents, the acquisition or upgrading of basic skills (French, mathematics, English according to the needs identified and to the requirements of the diploma). For students following the whole training, it can lead to the validation of the diploma of cook, this diploma being required to be employed in the hospitality sector.

A second objective is to place prisoners in a dynamic of employability by facilitating socialization and communication with others in daily life and its environment (acquisition or reactivation of appropriate behaviours: respecting timetable, adaptation to a framework, following of instructions given by teachers and trainers, emergence of solidarity practices, teamwork in practical kitchen work, but also development of skills related to employment in a company.

Training takes place from September to June and lasts 810 hours (26h/week). It can welcome eight trainees. The contents correspond to the requirements of the diploma of cook. Over a week, learners take the following courses:

- 1h30. practical activities related to cooking and culinary technology,
- 1h15 Applied Sciences,
- 1h15 Prevention, Health and Environment,
- 1h15 business and company knowledge,
- 2 hours of French,
- 2 hours of history and geography,
- 2h of mathematics
- 1h30 English,
- 1h15 physical chemistry.

The teaching staff consists of six speakers: 5 trainers GRETA Velay and a teacher attached to the prison.



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**Is the activity plan flexible and adaptable to users individual needs?**

All courses can be individualized. Each trainer masters individualized pathways and may at any time adapt to the needs and challenges of each person to enable them to achieve the purpose of validation of the diploma.

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**Is the activity plan flexible and adaptable to needs arising during the process?**

Training can be tailored to the extent that the requirements of the certification are met (content, objectives, time).  
Example: the training periods in companies included in the diploma reference framework are not feasible because the prisoners cannot leave the prison. An agreement has been found with the Inspector of Education not to penalize students for validation and they prepare the meals of the prisoners instead.

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**If you have answered yes to 10 and/or 11, who adapts activities plan?**

**Trainers**  
**A team composed by different figures**

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**If you have answered yes to 10 and/or 11, do users share the adaptation of activities plan?**

Adaptations are most of the time done in the interest of learners. As they necessarily share, they are sometimes at the initiative of it (processing a request from them to improve the system).

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**What kind of skills/competences would you like to improve?**

Trainers who participate on the process have no specific training in relation to the prison. It would be helpful if they could benefit from a training and exchange of practices for acting in a prison, focusing on the risks, pitfalls, and how to maintain a positive the relationship with the learners.

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**Describe the relation between your organisation and the prison administration, underlining weak and strong points**

Within each of the two entities is designated a reference person for the training preparing the diploma of cook. So through frequent communication between these two persons, problems are quickly resolved. The referent person of GRETA Velay has the opportunity to meet at any time a trainee to clarify a point or to answer one of his/her requests. During these discussions, she is always accompanied by the referent of the prison. We can work easily together.  
There are no real weaknesses in this relationship. Only sometimes, some members of the penitentiary administration "forget" that trainers are not staff from their same Ministry/administration. They can be critical in some modes of action. However, they are always ready to listen to the trainers if the trainers encounter any difficulty.



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**Describe the relation between you and the prison staff, underlining weak and strong points**

Staff at the prison are numerous. So from one guardian to another, the relationship is different. Some are quite reserved about the usefulness of the training. However, exchanges between the two parties are always constructive. It seems that a relationship of trust has been established over time. The teaching staff and supervisors have learned to know each others and they even exchange quite often about the behaviours and attitudes of prisoners.

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**Do you follow a behaviour protocol / ethic code in your relations with convicts? If yes, please describe it**

The relationship with detainees is not the same as that we have with other learners in the free world. Indeed, a certain distance is established between the trainer and trainees, manifested for example by use of “vous” instead of “tu”, the “madam” and “sir” or by avoidance of jokes. During courses, it is essential that the trainer keeps in mind that if the person is in custody, there is a reason. It must be vigilant and keep to the framework established by the prison (eg. trainers cannot accept to post a letter, they must be careful not to allow smoking students in the classroom...). At the slightest deviation, students take the opportunity to put the trainer in trouble. Moreover, generally, trainers are careful about their dress and do not wear clothes too tight to the body nor or low-necked.

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**Is the behaviour protocol / ethic code prescribed by your institution? Or is something shared in the institution but not aware? Or is it a personal approach?**

No protocol regarding the behaviour with the prisoners is provided. However, each new trainer is welcome by the director of the prison, who explains the characteristics of the target group and the importance not to get in trouble, and if necessary, to share quickly any matters with the team. To avoid putting trainers in an uncomfortable situation, learners sign at the beginning of the training a commitment act which sets out the rights and duties of each. Meanwhile, during the presentation of the training, the referent persons ensure that the first name of trainers are not communicated and will not appear on the documents provided to the trainees (in order to maintain a certain distance and not to enter an affective process).

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**Has your institution tools in order to assess satisfaction of trainers and other professional engaged? Please, describe it.**

There are no specific tools for measuring satisfaction of trainers working in prison. However, three yearly meeting councils are set up in the year in which each trainer can expresses about his/her satisfaction with the group. Moreover, as all the staff, they have a biennial activity interview. In case of difficulties, they may also exchange with a member of management team in GRETA and/or the prison management.

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**If satisfaction of trainers and other professional engaged is not high, does organisation carry out action in order to improve it?**

From the moment when management is aware of a problem, they try to find a solution (if necessary in consultation with the team from the prison).



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**If the activity is a project with an end, how do you foresee to continue your work here described?**

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## Tool N°2

Case Study: Please, describe at least two different cases per each typology.

### Pressure from users

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What kind of pressure from users you deal with?

Describe typical situations and describe practices that decrease pressure, and what does not work.

Pressure	Practices that work	Practices that do not work
<i>Example: learner with aggressive attitude (trainer/learner conflict)</i>	<i>Keeping the situation open. Expressing trainer's concern to the trainee. Involving a neutral third party (triangulation) Etc. etc.</i>	<i>Having an aggressive attitude. Absolutely wanting to resolve the conflict only for reasons of credibility in front of the group or for personal pride.</i>
A learner smokes in the toilets	Asking a third part intervention (a guardian or a member of the management)	Do as if nothing happens and let the learner smoking.
Tendency not to fill the food trails with the same quantity, depending on the prisoners who will receive the trail (each trail has the number of the cell).	Showing that all trails are checked. Reacting when a problem is detected. Call a guardian in case of difficulties.	Letting the trails leaving the kitchen without verification. Excuse the actions of learners by linking them to "moral" considerations (eg. "This person is there because of a sex affair, it is normal that he has less food").
A learner refuses to perform some tasks that he considers as disqualified (eg. cleaning)	Explain that this task is part of the duties of a cook. Organising turns.	Do the task instead of the learner or always asking the same to do the task (if they are more cooperative).
Asking to send a letter without any control from the penitentiary administration..	Refuse without any option.	Entering in a affective relationship (eg. "This is a letter for my children, they would be happy to receive news").

### Pressure from colleagues

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What kind of pressure from colleagues you deal with?

Describe typical situations and describe practices that decrease pressure, and what does not work.

Pressure	Practices that work	Practices that do not work
<i>Example: you and your colleague</i>	<i>Keeping the situation open.</i>	<i>Having an aggressive attitude.</i>



<i>do not share the same assessment about one user</i>	<i>Listening to the colleague (the reason is not in only one place) Use active listening Ask for a third party as mediator (both the persons have to trust the mediator) Etc. etc.</i>	<i>Absolutely wanting to resolve the conflict only for reasons of credibility in front of the group or for personal pride.</i>
Disagreement on a reconsideration of the sentence..	Let the responsible from Greta make the decision once they have listened to the whole training team.	Giving false hopes to learners.
Lack of communication about a difficulty encountered by a learner.	Listening the learner explaining his situation. Not formulating any comment before listening to all parts. Looking for all the information available. Verifying that all the information is communicated to all the team.	Discredit a colleague

## Pressure from your organisation

What kind of pressure from your organisation you deal with?

Describe typical situations and describe practices that decrease pressure, and what does not work.

Pressure	Practices that work	Practices that do not work
<i>Example: Too much pressure for getting positive results</i>	<i>Involving the organization about your work. Explaining clearly your job, its specificities, its difficulties (sometimes managers don't know precisely what is your job).</i>	<i>Considering that your organization can't understand your situation and never communicate with it.</i>
Asking for an examination within the training very soon for a learner who would be liberated or transferred. (It is possible to get a diploma through a continuous process control).	Ensure that the learner has acquired enough knowledge before evaluating him. If not, not enrolling him in the test.	Assess the learner as soon as possible even if we think that he has not reached the sufficient level.
Welcoming a new learner without being noticed.	Adapt to the situation. Assess the initial level Ensure that we have among the content, exercises for beginners.	Refuse the learner in the course, pretexting that we have not been informed.



## Pressure from penitentiary administration

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What kind of pressure from penitentiary administration you deal with?

Describe typical situations and describe practices that decrease pressure, and what does not work.

Pressure	Practices that work	Practices that do not work
Example: interference of the administration in your work	<i>Keep calm, explain the reasons of your choices and approach of the work in prison, try to get a mediation in every way, use of non violence techniques for the solution of the problem</i>	<i>Cut off the relation with the administration, Not to accept mediation</i>
The administration estimates that the trainers is too easy-going.	Discuss the point with the Greta management team. Explain that the trainers have not the same skills as the members of the penitentiary administration. Trying to find a solution within a tripartite group (Trainer, Management team of Greta and Management team of the prison).	Not talking about this situation to the management team of Greta and waiting for the situation to smooth down.
A probation officer asks for a letter to support the adaptation of a sentence.	The trainer has to give his/her opinion to the Greta. Informing the probation officer about the contact person.	Formulating an opinion regarding the adaptation of the sentence.



## Tools N°3

Carry out a (light) focus group with at least 3 persons working with people in prison

Track for the focus group:

- 1) What obstacles do you daily cope in your work? How do you overcome them?

A lack of motivation of trainees: although they are volunteers to integrate training, most of them seem to participate mostly to benefit from adaptation of sentences and not because they want to become cooks.

Solutions:

- showing them that cooking will be useful in their everyday life,
- reminding that the employment perspectives are high in this sector,
- informing that obtaining a CAP diploma will facilitate their validation of a second CAP in another domain (exemption from general education subjects),
- sending them back to the cell if they make no effort.

Impossible to use certain tools during training sessions (eg no internet access, no equipment for chemistry).

Solutions:

- providing suitable equipment for the operation of the detention,
- modifying contents while ensuring to meet the requirements for the diploma.
- adapting their teaching methods.

The lack of trainers colleagues in the structure: this is not always true because sometimes the teacher 's house arrest in his office is located right next to the classroom .

Solutions:

- to call a supervisor in case of difficulty,
- go to the Greta premises (located next to the prison) to discuss and share with colleagues at the end of the session.

The absence of a break during training sessions

Solutions:

- provide an informal break allowing learners to have a more entertaining time (eg. playful exercises, oral exchanges about a situation not directly linked to the course...)
- reduce the length of sessions with the agreement of the direction of the prison and of GRETA.

Parlours during class: sometimes trainees are called to the parlour during our training sessions. This requires to adapt the course for the learner, but also to manage him when he comes back (sometimes parlours can have traumatic effects).

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Solutions:

- take a moment to listen to the learner if he needs to speak or propose him to go back to the cell if the situation is too complicated to manage,
- report it to the management team of the prison to avoid parlours during training sessions,
- adapt the learning progress to the presence of the trainee.

2) How can I improve effectiveness, efficacy and satisfaction of my work in prison?

a. Tools

- Making sure to use the appropriate tools for each person and reminding that the level of education of most learners is low.
- Taking into account the expectations of trainees: do they prefer to work in groups or alone? Are they more interested by exercise in the classroom or by or more formal lectures? Do they enjoy more fun teaching methods?

b. Competences

- following open training prison staff to better adapt their behavior and know the constraints of the prison;
- discussing with colleagues and supervisors house arrest when I feel / encounter a difficulty;
- by setting up discussion work groups (moments of exchange) as those made under the VIP project.

c. Flexibility of relations

With the trainees, it is better not to be flexible. It is essential to establish a framework and fixed rules because they have a high ability to detect the slightest flaw and then it is easy for them to put the trainer in trouble.

On the opposite in our relationship (within the teaching staff) and with the staff of the prison (management and guards), it is useful to be flexible.

The flexibility of our relations is possible only if we make sure to communicate regularly. We have the opportunity to do so easily via email thanks to the existence of a "prison" mailing address that lists all the trainers and managers from both prison and GRETA.

3) How to improve the relations with:

a. Penitentiary administration

- by informing them regularly of the group behaviour and of the involvement of each learner;
- alerting them verbally or by email at the first difficulty;
- by considering them as allies and not as people who watch and judge my work.

b. Prison staff

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- discussing with them on my arrival and my departure;
- taking into account their remarks about the condition (physical and mental) of learners - they see them before the session begins and are therefore aware of the difficulties they may have encountered in the day (eg. difficult parlour);
- by considering them as colleagues.

c. Convicts

- respecting them without questioning about the reasons for their imprisonment;
- ensuring never to judge them if I become aware of the reasons that led them to prison;
- considering them as trainees and not as prisoners;
- maintaining a distance in relationships.

d. Colleagues

- informing them about the difficulties encountered and about comments formulated to a trainee (or received from a trainee);
- communicating with them by email as we do not meet very often.

e. Organisation

- by proposing areas for improving training (eg. Duration of a course);
- by speaking about the difficulties;
- by giving own opinion regarding the learning path of a student;
- by participating in meetings scheduled each quarter.

4) What kind of expectation have you about your work/carrier?

Except the teacher from the Ministry National Education, who is working 100% of his time at the prison, all trainers are part-time involved in this action. So, it is difficult to express specific expectations for our career (it is just a small part of our work). Anyway we prefer to stay as trainers rather than to integrate the administration of justice. The teacher from the Ministry National Education can ask every year to chance his allocation.

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