

## **Seminar „Making Lifelong Learning a reality“**

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### **Lifelong Learning Personal Development Planning.**

**Abstract. 25/02/2004**

#### **Rationale.**

We began by giving consideration to the barriers to a commitment to Lifelong Learning from an individual perspective. We chose to concentrate on people experiencing social exclusion because we felt that it was here that the most profound barriers were likely to be visible.

Learning we concluded is a natural state; the barriers therefore can be considered as imposed inadvertently by structures and negative experience.

Individual barriers we assessed as:-

- Lack of confidence.
- Lack of clarity of goals and understanding of the relationship between learning and self fulfilment.
- Inability to visualise positive outcomes from learning.
- Inhibition stemming from previous negative experience.
- A narrow perspective of learning as necessarily “formal”.

These barriers we saw as adding up to:-

- A lack of motivation.

These individual barriers we assessed were exacerbated by structural barriers which:-

- Pressurised individuals into taking up existing learning opportunities with no clear outcomes for the individual (to meet college or employment agency targets, or perceived learning region need, for example).
- Lack of joined up thinking – and ways to find meaningful links (for the individual) between current aspirations and opportunities, between work place needs and learning opportunities, and between employability and learning.
- Individual employment planning which starts with job types (rather than work environments) and which inadvertently narrows choices and opportunities.

For people who are experiencing social exclusion these structural barriers too often we felt inadvertently reinforced the individual barriers leading to a downward spiral.

#### **Lifelong Learning Personal Development Planning.**

We gave ourselves the challenge of working with people who are experiencing social exclusion to develop a Lifelong Learning Personal Development Planning process (that could be used by anyone) that would overcome these barriers by being : inspirational, quickly understood, meaningful, led and owned by the participant (i.e. non prescriptive), enjoyable to complete, and to lead to clear and sustainable goals. If we can achieve this we believe it will be inherently motivational.

**Objectives (How this is being done).**

- a) Together the partners are identifying the most effective elements of the current formal and informal Personal Development Plans being utilised in their learning regions. Then through a process of development, action learning, and evaluation, the partnership is jointly creating a single shared “best practice” Lifelong Learning Personal Development Process.
- b) This “best practice” process includes ways to assess: Personal Learning style, personal motivators, preferred social environment (including employment environment), existing and required skills, choices and opportunities.
- c) These elements are being benchmarked on three levels 1) for the fit between individual preferences and opportunities, 2) the fit between required and actual skills, 3) the differences between learning regions.

**Outcomes of the partnership.****Broad Outcomes.**

- a) The creation of an innovative and effective “best practice” individual lifelong learning planning and development process.
- b) The new LLPDP to be used by the individual partners and made widely available as a “best practice” method for future use in the learning regions.
- c) The creation of effective “benchmarking” information as basis for networking.