Denmark - qualifying training rather than professionalizing trainers

CEDEFOP, 24th February 2009
Core topics

1. Pre-understanding – the Danish VET system
2. Main problems and needs for Danish in-company training
3. Background: Danish tradition and culture
4. Principles for qualifying training
5. Support of trainers
6. Glance of the pre-version of the generic model for the TrainerGuide
Pre-understanding: The Danish dual system

- About 75% of a vocational education is carried out as in-company training.
- The major part of the training-companies are SMS-enterprises.
- Trainers = mainly skilled workers with their identity as professional experts, often also masters/directors themselves.
  - The typical Danish low-hierarchical structures causes that typically a wide range of employees / departments in a company are involved into training.
- Individual education plans, based on the students’ prior competences, talents, needs and goals.
Main problems and needs in the companies

- Lack of understanding for vocational educations as a whole, respectively planning a specific education, related to the curriculum.
- Lack of varying training methods and not being able to cope with apprentices’ personal/social problems.
- Need for integrating training into the quality policies of the companies.
- Need for contributing to the government’s policy of support and adherence of young people in their educations.
  - Official aim: 95% of a youth cohort will fulfil a youth education in 2015!
- General wish to continuously optimizing the school-company partnership.
Background: Danish traditions and culture

- In-company training is steered equally by the social partners and in cooperation with the Ministry of Education
  - realized in the so-called ‘trade-committees’ and in ‘local education committees’, attached to each vocational college
  - Realized as counsels for the government
- A tradition-based and cultural resistance against top-down steered regulations
  - Very important with involvement, commitment and reasonable arguments / proofs.
- Tradition for independency and decentralisation
  - although there are tendencies towards profession-crossing merges, but not yet branch-crossing merges of trade committees
**Principles for qualifying training**

- **Voluntariness**
  - Key words: increasing high-quality training as a part of quality assurance and as a factor for attracting and adherence to the company.

- **Motivation**
  - Company-owners or directors understand the economic rationale:
    - It is cheaper to prevent drop-out than finding and hiring new apprentices or harming the branch / trade, by loosing training-places.
    - Facing challenges from globalisation!
  - Bottom up:
    - Trainers become involved and convinced themselves, for example through their union.
Support of trainers

■ Virtual tools
  - Traenerguide
  - Elevplan
  - Partnership contracts
  - Etc.

■ VET schools’ consultants
  - Since 2007: Efforts for implementing short-time courses, run by VET schools’ consultants, financially supported by the state.
  - Implementation of principles around mentoring.
  - Model projects about for example portfolio issues.
Visions

- A steady-going increasement of quality in in-company training.
- A continuously improving partnership between the vocational colleges and their training companies.
- An increased focus on lifelong learning, as a potential for the in-company trainers own empowerment and for the apprentices’ perspectives on their (vocational) career.
Expected results / products of the project

1. Transfer from Danish TrænerGuide & improvement of the original product
2. ‘Generic model’: European TrainerGuide
3. National TrainerGuides in national languages, adapted to the countries’ conditions
4. Network for exchange of best practice
   • as ‘communities-of-practise’
References

- **www.trainerguide.eu**, access from November 2009
- Danish vocational system
  - Danish Ministry of Education
- Contact
  - traener@traenerguide.dk at Danish TraenerGuide Association
  - Regina.nielsen@delud.dk at Metropolitan University College