Space for your notes, questions, comments:

SALTO-YOUTH
TRAINING AND COOPERATION
RESOURCE CENTRE

Education and Culture

The IDOL Handbook

Identifying and Documenting your Learning Outcomes

Training of Trainers for European Youth Projects

You do things… you experience…you reflect….you talk to others…you think you understand now…you get new points of view….you read a book…you find new questions…you feel more secure… or not…. you listen to an interesting input….you do things better…you get new perspectives… it seems like you are learning!

Anyway…that's how it feels. And mostly it feels good!

But *is* it good? Is it enough? Is it what I should learn?

In formal education you don't have to ask these questions because others will tell you. Because there they know exactly what you should learn and when it's enough and they express that in marks which give you all the clarity you want.

In <u>non-formal education</u> things are a bit different.

When you go to your non-formal trainer to ask her/him if you've done well and learnt enough, you might easily end up with the trainer asking you: Well…what do *you* think?

In non-formal education they *don't* know exactly what you should learn and when it's enough. Trainers will support you, offer you ideas, motivate you when needed, listen to you…. But in the end it's *your* learning and your responsibility to learn what you think you need to learn.

That includes that you are also the one who identifies what you've learnt. And let's be honest…<u>who can do that better than yourself</u>. This doesn't mean that it's an easy job.

In this paper some tips and suggestions about how to identify and document what you've learned.

Don't do it alone!

Take the advantage of having others around you working on the same thing!! Sit together, ask, share, steal good ideas, check with someone……

Written by Paul Kloosterman

How do I know I learned something?

Well.. what is learning anyway? We use the word learning in many ways. 'I learned a lot about myself'. ' I had to learn all the words by heart'. 'I learned to ride a bike when I was 8 years old'. ' I learned to be more empathic'. All about learning but maybe a different process you go through.

<u>With some things it's easier than with others to really know you learnt it</u>. When you study for a while how to use the Power Point programme you can probably at a certain moment say: Yes I can do it! I learnt it, I know all possibilities and know how to use them. (although you can still find a lot of people who know all this but still make horrible PowerPoint presentations…)

But what about a trainers' competence as: 'helping to create a good learning environment in the group'. When do you know you've learnt that? Or…. Is that anyway something you can ever identify as 'learnt' and tick off the box?

Still you learn. You might identify that:

- you found some methods/tools that can help in creating a good learning environment
- you feel more secure about your own role in dealing with group dynamics
- you understand more about what happens when a new group comes together
- you can identify better patterns in a group
- you feel more sure when and how to interfere
- etc.

Describing a few of these situations can be a possibility to describe your main learning points.

- For example a day in your practice project where you had the feeling that things worked for you because you put into practice
- A team meeting where you were able to deal with a conflict in such a way that it gave you insight in your own role.
- A peer talk that helped you to understand finally a certain way of thinking.
- But it could also be having read a certain article or book that opened for you a new insight.

Also here again in the end try to place the situations under one of the 8 key-competences.

3. The story of your process

'*When I arrived in Lugano for the first seminar…….*' might be the opening words for those who prefer to describe their learning more as a story, following the process and in such a way arriving at the main learning points. For people who like to write this can be a good way to explain their learning path.

Here of course goes very much the warning not to write a novel! But to write '**your ToT story'** in two pages in an attractive and understandable way can be an option for those who feel comfortable to do so.

In that case the 8 key-competences don't work. It means you have to place your story under 9. Other.

It means <u>you made steps in your learning</u> and you can give words to that. Probably from there you can also identify other steps you want to take to become more competent.

That you've learnt something can be about:

- you know now how to do it
- you understand something (better)
- you feel more secure in doing
- you understand yourself better why you act in a certain way
- you found for yourself a role that suits you
- you have now a (theoretical) framework for the topic
- you know what to learn next
- …………………………
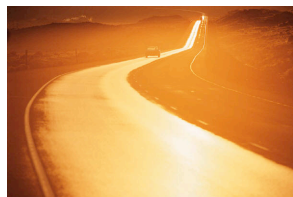
The How

Till now we focused on the what. When we turn back to the 'reasons' the first one was 'to become more aware about your own learning'. Of course the 'what' is important there. But also the 'how' might help you a lot in understanding your learning. <u>To identify how you learned what you learnt</u>:

- Did you work according to plan and did that help?
- What were situations/moments/circumstances that made you learn? Try to describe them in detail (were you alone or with others, where were you, were you sitting or doing something, etc.)
- What were difficult moments and how did you overcome them?
- What was the role of others?
- Anything to change in the 'how'?

1. Starting from the ToT competences

The ToT competences have been the starting point for this course. The <u>self-perception inventory</u> is based on those competences. The intention of these seven competences is to describe the full range of competences you need to be a trainer in the European youth field. In other words; they could function very well <u>as reference points</u> to check for yourself what you learned in this different elements of the trainer job.

The questions in the self-perception inventory can help you to order your thinking about the different competences. Probably you will feel more able to answer the different questions after having the experience of the practice-training project. I doesn't mean that you need to find learning outcomes on all the 7 ToT competences. See them mainly as a reference framework to help you to structures your learning. <u>Describe shortly what/ how/ in what kind of situation you learned in a particular moment related to a particular moment.</u>

In the last step you try to place your description under a related key-competence.

2.Situations as starting point

You might feel more comfortable in linking your learning to certain situations. There might have been situations where 'all things came together'. <u>Situations could be the practice project, one of the seminars, peer talks, mentor talks, a team meeting</u> etc.

Documenting your learning

Before going into how to document let's first see where to document.

Why not take an old fashioned **diary**! Using a pen, real paper and when you have a good one you can even lock it with a real key. When you want to document just for your personal sake this still is an excellent instrument for those people who like to write for themselves and have the discipline to do that daily. It anyway helps you to reflect on and understand your learning.

For some people the '**project management way**' helps to document their learning in a structured way (some call it learning plan, others learning portfolio). In the beginning you write down your learning objectives and you plan in time how you want to reach them (with whom, how, when). You plan in also when you reflect on the process and note those reflections down. It can be even done in an Excel Sheet.

You can also make it less personal and invite others to join your learning process. The advantage could be that you open up for feedback and at the same time when involving others you might motivate yourself because of feeling obliged to the other to keep on writing. A **blog** could be a way to do this. You can make it totally public or restrict it to the few people you want. A blog has the advantage that you can do more than only writing, you can put pictures, use links or even record yourself on camera.

Maybe you already have, or you want to start, a **website** open to the public to promote yourself as a trainer. That might be the excellent place to put your learning achievements.
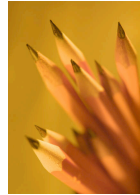
You can also choose not to use the 8 key-competences. Then you go for option 9 which is 'other'. This option can be used for those outcomes you can not place under one of the key-competences but it offers also the possibility to write under 9 your self-assessment in your own way without using the structure of the key-competences.

Writing for others

When you want to use the Youthpass as an instrument to show your training competences to others you have to take some things into consideration:

- not everybody knows ToT
- not everybody is familiar with the 'terms' used in ToT (SPI/practice project/learning project etc.)
- ToT is shortly explained in part 2 of the Youthpass, it might help to read what has been written there
- Try to be precise in what you think you've learned and why
- Avoid using over and over the same wording
- A ToT year is long and probably you can write a lot about all you experiences, learning moments etc. Don't write a novel! Somebody has to read it all. Try to focus on your main learning points and describe them accurate.

Three possible ways to your Youthpass

There will be surely much more then three ways to describe your learning outcomes but here are three that might inspire you.

And last but not least there is this wonderful instrument in the Youth in Action programme called **Youthpass**, which is specially developed to document your learning outcomes.

Describing your learning outcomes for your Youthpass

The moment is there! and the Youthpass has Part 3 of the you the opportunity to outcomes of your training course. The What now did you during this year?

The end is near to be prepared. Youthpass gives write down the learning in this moment of truth! really learn

Writing part 3 of the quite a challenging

Youthpass is job. <u>Here we want to give you some ideas and support for that</u>.

See also www.youthpass.eu & the ToT library

<u>The focus will be on writing a self-assessment meant to be read by others</u>. You can of course also write your self-assessment only for yourself to read. Then choose the way that fits you best and maybe you can get also some ideas from reading this.

Part 3 of the Youthpass gives you the possibility to arrange you learning outcomes in such a way that they can be placed under the heading of the 8 key-competences for Life Long Learning.

This doesn't mean that you have to 'score' all 8 key-competences. Probably you did not learn in all 8. It could be very well that you can put everything you learned under only 3 of them. That's fine,

nothing wrong with that. In the final Youthpass you will only see those three then. It is not that the other 5 then will show empty. They will just not show at all.

<u>Don't use the key-competences as a reference to check your learning</u>. The key-competences are not meant to be an instrument for evaluating your learning in a course. They are a framework designed by the European Commission to describe what Europeans should be competent in to be full successful European citizens. There is probably no course existing that will cover all competences to be the super European.

Use the key-competence structure that the Youthpass offers only at the end of your self-assessment. When you have written down everything you've learned then only start looking where you can place these different learning outcomes.

Competences are defined here as a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the context. Key competences are those which all individuals need for personal fulfillment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment.
The Reference Framework sets out eight key competences:

1) Communication in the mother tongue;
2) Communication in foreign languages;
3) Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology;
4) Digital competence;
5) Learning to learn;
6) Social and civic competences;
7) Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship;
8) Cultural awareness and expression.

For details see the ToT-library, folder on Lifelong Learning.