

CVE – CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING

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Abstract

The CVE aims to contribute to secondary students' personal and professional development. Corporate Volunteerism is at the basis of the activities developed by the international partnership in order to train teachers in secondary schools with knowledge and also provide opportunities for collaboration between the world of business and secondary schools. The power of corporate volunteerism goes beyond the benefit of students and secondary schools. Through its large span the entire community can be given opportunities for development. The deliverables of the CVE project will be available at www.cve-project.eu

Key words: corporate volunteering, teacher training, professional development

Coordinated by Krakowskie Centrum Zarządzania i Administracji Spółka z o.o., CVE (Project No. 517833-LLP-1-2011-1-PL-COMENIUS-CMP) is an European Project developed in the framework of Comenius Programme which aims to build and extend knowledge among school leaders, teachers and other people working in secondary schools, about the potential opportunities and ways of cooperation between schools and the world of the work, specially through the Corporate Volunteering.

The CVE project prepares a training course that contributes to the personal and professional development of Educators. This way, through Corporate Volunteerism actions between schools and the world of work, teachers and trainers will be able to plan, implement and evaluate training activities in several fields and contexts, based on an adequate needs analysis and appropriate methodologies.

The CVE project is designed to prepare trainers and teachers to instruct school leaders and other school personnel about the methods of the cooperation between schools and the world of the work, specifically through the Corporate Volunteering. Moreover, educators in secondary schools can also benefit from Corporate Volunteering and of the benefits it can bring to young people, schools and the wider community.

CVE addresses one of the problems today's education systems are being faced with – updating

teaching materials, updating information and practice opportunities for students (especially in vocational schools) to prepare graduates for an efficient performance within their future professional activity.

School curricula cannot be constantly changed to include all the new developments in terms of technology and management. Therefore most often schools teach theoretical knowledge which is too little connected to the needs and requirements of the work market. Preparing students in vocational secondary schools for a job in the same field needs to be made in close connection and collaboration with representatives of the business world. Input from the business world cannot be added to the school curricula other than by means of teachers' activity.

Education and training have an important place in the Lisbon strategy for career development and career chances. There is wide agreement that our future prosperity depends acutely on increasing the skills and knowledge of the working population. The curriculum changes now being introduced engage employers to help young people develop the personal skills that allow them to prosper in the new economy and achieve more by exposure to different and potentially more motivating styles of learning. Partnership with employers can bring new perspective to subjects for both students and their teachers, as employers can bring with them a deep

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subject knowledge and broader range of theoretical and applied experience.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The Council of Europe's conclusion on The ET 2020 recognises the impact that Education and training has in achieving the long-term goals for growth and jobs. Through the cooperation between the schools and the world of work, young people get to work with employers and are motivated by them, thinking more critically about their future career options and better seeing the relevance of their school or college work to future employment.

School leaders, teachers and other school personnel, by collaborating with employees-volunteers, will gain new skills which will increase their vocational experiences and knowledge. Participants-trainers and participants-teachers of teachers should be able to take this framework into account when designing their training activities.

A basic problem in the implementation of Corporate Volunteering in school life is the appropriate preparation of school leaders and teachers regarding this area, as they need to acquire the competence which is necessary to take on new roles. Therefore the aim of the project is to develop an extensive knowledge of this area among school leaders, teachers and other workers of secondary schools, within the range of the schools' collaboration with the world of work, especially in the domain of Corporate Volunteering.

This project gives school leaders, teachers and other personnel in secondary schools in the member states opportunities to participate in high quality and attractive training. The trainer's guide will be accessible to all those who want to learn how to introduce Corporate Volunteering in secondary schools, because it will be available on the project website not only in all the partners' languages, but also in English.

The aim of the project is to be to prepare an innovative and good-quality training guide concerning the ways of introducing Corporate Volunteering in secondary schools. There is the first training programme designed to familiarise participants with the opportunities of collaboration between secondary schools and the world of work and employees through Corporate Volunteering.

The training programme is prepared based on the examples of good practice in this field. The long term target group of the project are young people studying in secondary schools. Through contact with employee-volunteers working for big companies and enterprises, young people will acquire basic life-skills and competences necessary for their development, future employment and active European citizenship. This is possible via meeting people from outside the

school environment who have succeeded in business and who, as volunteers, are examples of active EU citizenship.

The method of introducing Corporate Volunteering from business and the world of work to secondary schools has a universal character. However in the preparing of the training course for school leaders, teachers and other school personnel the consortium consider an approach that allows for customisation and adaptation to a broad range of cultural contexts.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

CVE represents an example of the future initiatives which will take learning and professional development closer together through the business- school collaboration.

CVE project has been designed to inform, instruct and train trainers in the method of corporate volunteering as a method and a means of updating school activity with meaning information directly taken from the representatives of the business world. Training school representatives in the method of corporate volunteering and instructing them on how they and their school can benefit from collaboration with the world of work is one of the points on the agenda of CVE project. The CVE project targets directly trainers and teachers of teachers and indirectly, the CVE project will target: School leaders, teachers and other personnel in secondary schools. The project partnership has already developed a research contextualised within each of the partnership countries. The research was focused on the number and types of volunteering activities developed and implemented in the project countries. The partnership members undertook the task of collecting example of good practices and they each developed a national report on these collected examples. Results illustrated that in most countries from the partnership the concept of corporate volunteering is still an ambiguous notion easily mistaken for general acts of volunteering or donations. Within the frame of national business supported still by national capital, corporate volunteering corporate volunteering even when rightly understood is hardly ever put to practice in its real sense. Companies usually find it easier to make donations and school system assimilates financial support easier than information and training input.

However financial support must be regarded just for what it is – a short term investment which will only flourish in the right professional context. Within the examples collected many were cases of donations or material contributions and only few of the best practices were relevant samples of corporate volunteering. Research has illustrated a constantly growing concern of the businesses to support local community development starting at the very heart of it – with education.

The most frequent cases in which representatives of the work market were engaged in corporate volunteering were those in which companies delivered trainings with the support of their staff or collaborated with students and supported their professional development through activities focused on a certain professional field.

Even though the aim of CVE project is to enhance and support corporate volunteering still attention was paid to all types of volunteerism so as to record all types of volunteering initiatives between the world of business and schools. Thus for the final form of the best practices hand book the partnership has selected a number of examples which illustrate a wide range of volunteering examples. The aim of this research was to develop a common ground for the state of the art regarding volunteering at national level within the countries of the international partnership. Based on the findings of this research the partnership is now better informed on the volunteering initiatives which are more likely to be easily adopted by schools and business at national and local level and on those types of volunteerism which need more support and enhancement.

The next step within CVE project is to develop the teacher training guide. The training guide will include the CVE's handbook which is the first part of a Trainer's Guide focusing on the methods of transferring the Corporate Volunteering idea from business and the world of work to secondary schools. It is designed to support the implementation of these methods in order to organize a training course for teachers, school leaders and school personnel.

Added to the first part the training guide will include:

- a) Information on the criteria of selecting participants, the roles and responsibilities of trainers, on how to teach this course, adult learning principles, plus important tips for the trainers.
- b) Course outline: a model plan of the training to be delivered according to the schedule, objectives/activities,

training/learning methods and resources/materials needed.

- c) Instructions for all exercises and activities by module.

CONCLUSIONS

Corporate volunteering represents one of the most relevant volunteering activities in terms of professional development as it directly involves students and schools with the new developments in the world of work. Through corporate volunteering schools can update their theoretical support and support it with practical activities lead by professional in fields relevant to vocational schools. Companies also benefit from corporate volunteering as they manage to prepare their future generation of employees and even select from the best students activating within the corporate volunteering activities. CVE project enhances the link between these two parts to create a collaboration system to benefit students' professional development and to enhance their future professional performance.

REFERENCES

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<http://career-advice.monster.com/in-the-office/work-life-balance/volunteer-as-a-corporate-team/article.aspx>