

# **Get Results Project**

## **Good Practice Guide**

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## **Abstract**

In the scope of the Leonardo da Vinci Programme, 5 countries have joined a partnership to develop a Pilot-Project: Get Results - Entrepreneurship Trainers' Training Course. This Project commenced on October 2004 and ended on 5th October 2006.

This good practice guide is meant to assist organisations who are considering building upon the work done by the Get Results Train the Trainer in Entrepreneurship project partners. It also provides an insight into running a pilot project characterised by clearly defined targets and deliverables.

The guide outlines the work items specific to the Get Results project, and uses the feedback collected from the different partners to highlight the difficulties, contingencies and good practices pertaining to each task.

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## **About the Project**

In the context of EU economic policies, the creation of enterprises appear as one of the core intentions. Across EU countries, the rate of unemployment continues to be a major concern at the social and economic level. At the same time, life long employment and reduced public sector employment characterises the new economy.

Start-up training courses have been proliferated. However, we still witness a high rate of failing commercial enterprises even though the relevant entrepreneurs have attended these courses. This suggests that something is wrong with the present training actions (at both methodological and technical levels). The Project's partnership believes that those trainers must also gain some specific competencies in order to prevent business insolvency. Defining and delivering these competencies is the goal of this project.

This project aims to create an Entrepreneurship Trainers Training Course, from a shared reality of partner countries involved in the project. This portrays a European dimension and acts as a reference model all over Europe.

## About the Partners



P1 - SCALCONSULT - Consultores, Lda

<http://www.scalconsult.pt>

Rua Serpa Pinto, 116 a 120, 1º Andar

2000-046 Santarém

Portugal



P2 - CREAMA

Consorci pel la Recuperació Econòmica i de l'Activitat de la Marina Alta

<http://www.creama.org>

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Spain



P3 - CRIA S.L. - Grup Promocions

<http://www.promocions.com>

Plaça Vila de Madrid, 5

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P4 - TURUN AKK - Turun Ammatillinen Aikuiskoulutuskeskus - Turku Vocational  
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Finland



P6 - FITA - Foundation for Technology Accessibility

(<http://www.knpd.org/mittsfita>)

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Blata L-Bajda, HMR 02  
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P7 - ESGS - Escola Superior de Gestão de Santarém

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## **Research Methodology**

The Foundation for Information Technology Accessibility (FITA) used the documentation produced by the project administrator SCALCONSULT - Consultores, Lda to identify the main activities involved in carrying out the Get Results project.

Throughout the duration of the project, discussion between the partners sought to improve upon original task methodologies. This process of monitoring and control helped test and evaluate different approaches based on cultural, economic and educational differences characterising the target beneficiaries in the individual countries.

A questionnaire listing the main activities was circulated to all the partners who were asked to identify good practices, difficulties and recommendations based on their own experience in implementing the different tasks.

The amalgam of views and experiences is documented in the following findings.

## Good Practices

| <b>Activity</b>               | <b>Project task coordination (by all partners depending on their responsibilities)</b>   |
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| Possible problems             | Partners can have trouble meeting deadlines and sometimes the other partners are informed of this only after the deadline expired.   |
| Good practice recommendations | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The project administrator must give feedback within 24 hours.</li> <li>2. If queries cannot be answered immediately, an estimate must be given as to when an answer will be forthcoming. This rule applies also for partners, but the administrator must set an example.</li> <li>3. The project coordinator must be flexible in setting deadlines but apply them strictly.</li> <li>4. The partners must update each other on the progress being made at pre-established regular intervals. Any difficulties in meeting deadlines must be highlighted early on.</li> <li>5. The web portal if used regularly as the primary means of partner communication between partners, can pay great dividends in terms of productivity.</li> </ol> |
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| <b>Activity</b>               | <b>Internal Evaluation (monitoring and control)</b>  |
| Possible problems             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If the evaluation process responsibility is shared by different entities, it can lead to varying evaluation criteria and uncertainty amongst the partners.</li> <li>2. Not all partners may understand or interpret the evaluation in the same way.</li> </ol>   |
| Good practice recommendations | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It is important that the partner doing the evaluation is not the project administrator/coordinator.</li> <li>2. Evaluation criteria and standards must be clearly defined and understood at the beginning of the project.</li> <li>3. Evaluation results should be shared by the partners.</li> <li>4. Evaluation must take into account cultural differences and constraints. These factors must be stated clearly in order to aid in the interpretation of evaluation reports.</li> </ol>  |
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| <b>Activity</b>               | <b>External Evaluation (monitoring and control)</b>  |
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| Possible problems             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. External evaluators may not share the same goals as the project partners.</li> <li>2. Specialisation in their respective area may inhibit them from visualizing the project as a whole.</li> <li>3. The results of external evaluation can arrive too late in the project life cycle for corrective action to take place.</li> </ol>   |
| Good practice recommendations | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It is important to source independent external evaluators who are experts in the activity areas they are evaluating.</li> <li>2. Wherever possible, the views of multiple experts should be sought.</li> <li>3. External evaluators must be appropriately briefed on the goals of the project partners, so that even if they apply different approaches, they still share the project's common goal.</li> <li>4. External evaluation reports must be complimented by prompt action to rectify any problems that are identified.</li> </ol> |
| <hr/>                         |  |
| <b>Activity</b>               | <b>Communication amongst partners</b>  |
| Possible problems             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Insufficient communication and dialog, or delays in answering emails.</li> <li>2. The communication can be too centralised around the project administrator.</li> <li>3. Lack of communication between partners can make it harder to understand the reasoning behind entrepreneurial and organizational behavior present in other countries or regions.</li> <li>4. Communication flow can be erratic, depending on the characteristics and resources of individual partners.</li> </ol>  |
| Good practice recommendations | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communication need not be too formal, so as to facilitate the sharing of view and ideas.</li> <li>2. The circulation of short questionnaires and idea evaluation sheets can facilitate the inflow of feedback.</li> <li>3. It is important to ensure a comfortable and productive social environment during the</li> </ol>   |

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|                               | <p>transnational meetings; as these are amongst the most productive stages within the project.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Transnational meetings are not only useful for partners to make direct human contact, but also: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Give an informal outline of the project’s status and required future progress. Documents and checklists alone, may not portray the scenario.</li> <li>– Provide a forum for discussing issues in a quick and conclusive fashion.</li> <li>– Create possibilities for future collaboration</li> </ul> </li> <li>5. Internet phone based communication and other ICT solutions can greatly facilitate communication whilst minimizing financial costs.</li> <li>6. The web platform, if used effectively, can greatly enhance communication. However, communication must still be moderated by an entity responsible for the web platform.</li> <li>7. The procedures and resources dealing with the different national languages national of partners must be defined early on in the project’s life cycle.</li> </ol> |
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| <b>Activity</b>               | <b>Project funding issues</b>   |
| Possible problems             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Funding may not allow for contingencies that arise along the way.</li> <li>2. Funding may be based only on the negotiation skills of partners and not mirror work load.</li> </ol>  |
| Good practice recommendations | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There should be a generalised adoption of modern and scientific approaches to the funding mechanism.</li> <li>2. Work allocation must not only reflect the partners’ expertise in specific areas, but also the cost factors.</li> <li>3. The use of allocated funds must be clearly earmarked, and permission to switch the use of funds must be obtained from the project administrator. This procedure should be used for monitoring purposes and not to reduce flexibility.</li> </ol>   |
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| <b>Activity</b>                           | <b>Organisation of Transnational Meetings</b>  |
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| Possible problems                         | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Partners may find it difficult to meet calendar constraints.</li> <li>2. Mismatches can arise between expectations and the arrangements made by host partners.</li> </ol>  |
| Good practice recommendations             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It is important that meetings are organised in such a way that all partners can participate.</li> <li>2. A set of minimum requirements should be defined, so as to ensure that this is matched by all countries for all transnational meetings.</li> <li>3. Presentation media and documentation should be transferred electronically to the hosting partner to allow for the necessary preparations. Media should also be carried to the venue by the respective partners in hard copy and electronic format.</li> <li>4. Full details about lodging, transfers, meeting agenda and schedules must be given in advance to all partners.</li> <li>5. Hosting partners should also be informed in advance of requirements like ICT equipment and accessibility considerations.</li> <li>6. In order to minimize charges incurred through bank transfers and currency conversions, lodging expenses could be administered centrally by the project administrator and subtracted from the agreed funding balances.</li> </ol> |
| <b>Activity</b>                           |  |
| <b>Outcomes of Transnational Meetings</b> |  |
| Possible problems                         | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Meetings can be too brief and not allocate sufficient time to manage the scheduled work.</li> </ol>  |
| Good practice recommendations             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The social aspects of transnational meetings and non formal activities are very important in leading to open and productive discussions.</li> <li>2. Meetings enable partners to better understand varying views between partners. Through transnational meetings one can better assess the project's progress; shared practices; analysis and discussion of issues.</li> <li>3. Transnational meetings must be followed by the circulation of a brief of the accomplishments made, decision taken and a list of agreed work items for each partner.</li> </ol>  |

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|                               | 4. Meetings should also be used to investigate the possibilities of embarking on new projects.  |
| <b>Activity</b>               | <b>Work distribution</b>  |
| Possible problems             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Allocation of work may not allow for contingencies such as increased work loads or the defaulting of partners.</li> <li>2. Timing and deadlines can be too flexible, resulting in problems for the group as a whole, since dependencies get stuck as well.</li> </ol>   |
| Good practice recommendations | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Distribution of themes and project schedules must be done according to the relevant partners' strengths.</li> <li>2. Deadlines must be flexible but should be applied strictly.</li> <li>3. There must be ongoing communication and effective action in dealing with operational developments hampering the partners along the way.</li> </ol>  |
| <b>Activity</b>               | <b>Work methods (specific to each organization)</b>   |
| Possible problems             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lack of templates can mean that partners may use different standards, unnecessarily adding to the work of other partners, who have to adapt the layout and presentation to their needs.</li> <li>2. Some work practices that may have been useful to other partners are not shared sufficiently or in time for other partners to apply them effectively.</li> </ol>   |
| Good practice recommendations | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Team work can enhance productivity by sharing monitoring roles and responsibilities between partners and not relying only on the project administrator.</li> <li>2. However, teamwork must rely on strict rules over the respective responsibilities, authority and deliverables.</li> <li>3. The project administrator must define an elaborate protocol, based around standard templates, for the compilation of information. The protocol may need to be adapted over time, but will form a binding structure that all partners can follow. This will facilitate the exchange of information and streamline the group's work.</li> <li>4. The sharing of work practices can help each partner</li> </ol> |

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|                               | in applying best practices across their respective country or region.   |
| <b>Activity</b>               | <b>Dissemination activities</b>   |
| Possible problems             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Some deliverables may not be available in time for dissemination exercises to take place.</li> <li>2. Resource limitations may impair effective dissemination of information.</li> </ol>  |
| Good practice recommendations | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Regular reporting requirements on dissemination exercises ensure that this activity receives continued attentions.</li> <li>2. Discussion and adoption of common best strategies and procedures for dissemination should be encouraged amongst partners.</li> <li>3. Wherever possible joint activities between partners will add additional international clout to the project activities.</li> <li>4. It is important to establish what information can be made available for dissemination.</li> <li>5. Project deliverables must meet given deadlines so as not to constrain dissemination activities.</li> <li>6. Funding for merchandise (small marketing products) could be subject to a tendering process and allocated to the lowest bidder amongst the project partners.</li> <li>7. Electronic information mediums provide wide ranging coverage at low cost.</li> </ol> |

| <b>Activity</b>               | <b>Research</b>   |
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| Possible problems             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It may be difficult to find qualified national research partners.</li> <li>2. Whereas theoretical information is relatively easy to gather, pilot projects, surveys and practical research is resource intensive and sometimes difficult to accomplish within predefined time constraints.</li> <li>3. There might be insufficient internal divulgence of research results. This can arise because research may be too specific. However partners could still learn from this information.</li> </ol> |
| Good practice recommendations | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It is important to establish templates and standards for research quality and deliverables.</li> <li>2. Country specific research like for example in areas relating to culture and legislation, should be carried out by the partners residing in that country.</li> <li>3. The adaptation of contents should be researched in detail, with the help of external collaborators.</li> </ol>   |
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| <b>Activity</b>               | <b>Production of training material (coordination and quality assurance)</b>   |
| Possible problems             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The group may start work on the materials without having first established well defined templates and work procedures, leading to differences in layout and duplicate information content.</li> <li>2. If the output of a partner is delayed, it may slow down the work of others who rely on it.</li> <li>3. Frequent changes and revisions may add to the workload and force partners to incur additional financial costs.</li> </ol>   |
| Good practice recommendations | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It is important for the partners to agree on common templates and standards before creating documentation and multimedia materials.</li> <li>2. Accessibility criteria should be considered early on in the project planning stages, so as to avoid retrofitting solutions which more expensive and less effective.</li> <li>3. Deadlines must allow enough time for the work to</li> </ol>   |

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|                               | <p>be carried out well but should be applied strictly.</p> <p>4. Once the paper based version is published, ongoing development should be continued and circulated through electronic versions.</p>  |
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| <b>Activity</b>               | <b>Pilot training</b>  |
| Possible problems             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Some partners may address pilot training to their own personnel. Although this can have its benefits, it eliminates valuable opportunities for the dissemination of information. It also leads to a biased internal evaluation of the pilot training results.</li> </ol>   |
| Good practice recommendations | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This activity is resource intensive and requires careful budgeting.</li> <li>2. Collaboration between partners in this area is particularly useful in enabling partners to expand on their knowledge and experiences.</li> <li>3. Further development by each partner is essential in ensuring adaptation for a transnational philosophy of the overall product.</li> <li>4. Material must ideally be translated into all partner languages, so as to facilitate tuition.</li> <li>5. Reporting on training outcomes ensures the achievement of common goals.</li> <li>6. It is important for pilot training to assess samples of the overall product (even though they are incomplete) in order to gather feedback for the final material.</li> </ol> |
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| <b>Activity</b>               | <b>Adaptation of training material to national requirements</b>  |
| Possible problems             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Overall adaptation is difficult to carry out and assess, since it must be carried out after project termination, when all the material is available.</li> <li>2. Different translations may alter the final product.</li> </ol>  |
| Good practice recommendations | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It is important for the material to be adapted to cater for the varying characteristics and needs of the different partner countries.</li> <li>2. These differences should be documented as part of a separate project, so as to identify a harmonized version that is common to all of Europe.</li> </ol>   |

| <b>Activity</b>               | <b>Withdrawal of partner(s) (management and contingency planning)</b>  |
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| Possible problems             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The defaulting of a partner will bring about undue burdens on the remaining partners. New reorganization</li> <li>2. Good connections between the partners, but at first nobody meet the others and was difficult to start working.</li> <li>3. Good and effective care of contingent difficulties.</li> </ol>   |
| Good practice recommendations | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To the extents possible, selection of partners must exclude such risks.</li> <li>2. The project administrator must ensure quick and clear communication channels so as to minimize the concerns of the remaining partners.</li> <li>3. Regular monitoring and application of deadlines may help identify this possibility at an early stage.</li> <li>4. The project administrator must relocate work and funding based on discussions with all remaining partners.</li> </ol>   |
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| <b>Activity</b>               | <b>Project Web Platform (design and use)</b>   |
| Possible problems             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Partners may rely on traditional information mediums and fail to benefit from the web platform.</li> <li>2. The interface may not be fully accessible to disabled persons and persons with insufficient ICT literacy.</li> <li>3. Development problems may reduce user confidence and discourage its use.</li> </ol>   |
| Good practice recommendations | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Web Platform can provide a very valuable resource for project partners and future entrepreneurs.</li> <li>2. It is important to ensure easy navigation and clear presentation of information.</li> <li>3. Accessibility should be amongst the basic criteria to be considered in the early stages of product development.</li> <li>4. Because of the technical requirements and complex structure, it is advisable to apply a phased approach to feature implementation.</li> <li>5. It is important to include all the contents and in all</li> </ol> |

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|                               | <p>partner languages.</p> <p>6. Aesthetics and ease of use play an important part in the acceptance of the service for regular use.</p>  |
| <b>Activity</b>               | <b>Creation of multimedia training materials</b>   |
| Possible problems             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The interface may not be fully accessible to disabled persons and persons with insufficient ICT literacy.</li> <li>2. Partners may rely on traditional information mediums and fail to benefit from the multimedia product.</li> </ol>   |
| Good practice recommendations | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Accessibility should be amongst the basic criteria to be considered in the early stages of product development.</li> <li>2. It is important for these products to be available early on as they can greatly benefit dissemination exercises. If necessary, multiple volumes could be produced, as more information becomes available.</li> <li>3. To be in time next time (all partners and web designer involved)</li> <li>4. Aesthetics and ease of use play an important part in the acceptance of the service for regular use.</li> <li>5. It is important to ensure easy navigation and clear presentation of information.</li> </ol> |
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