



Developing Innovative and Attractive CVET programmes in industrial shoe production

Train-the-Trainer Manual Trainings Management

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Content

1	Introduction.....	3
1.1	Aims of the DIA-CVET Project	3
1.2	Manuals to Guide Tutors and Trainers	3
1.3	Refer your training to the business process of industrial shoe production	3
2	Trainings Management.....	5
2.1	Hard skills.....	5
2.2	Soft Skills	5
	Communication skills.....	5
	Critical Thinking	7
	Leadership.....	7
	Teamwork.....	8
	Work Ethic	9
2.3	Trainings SOP:	9
3	List of Figures	12

1 Introduction

1.1 Aims of the DIA-CVET Project

The aims of the Erasmus+ project «Developing Innovative and Attractive CVET programmes in industrial shoe production» are

- to develop, pilot and implement comprehensive courses for the Spheres of Activity (SoA) of foremen in industrial shoe production on European level; available in English (EN) as well as in DE, RO and PT,
- and to develop a sector qualification framework level 5 and 6 and to reference existing or newly drafted national qualifications from Germany, Portugal and Romania.

1.2 Manuals to Guide Tutors and Trainers

The purpose of the manuals is to prepare designated trainers for their role and to provide content and support. Due to the nature of the SoA of foremen, they do not include specific forms of training; but we suggest a blended approach. Successful Continuous Vocational Education and Training (CVET) programmes combine theoretical lessons with application of the acquired Knowledge, Skills and Competences (KSC) in real work environments. The tasks of a trainer are to

- impart SoA-specific KSC,
- demonstrate operations which the learners are expected to learn to perform,
- introduce the learners to each new task and supervise them during their first approaches,
- organise and supervise blended activities (i. e. projects),
- guide them towards an independent performance of the tasks of the respective SoA.

The manuals are not meant to replace a textbook. They are meant to provide support to the trainers to plan and execute their teaching. The trainers are invited to gather more information from other sources.

1.3 Refer your training to the business process of industrial shoe production

Industrial production is a complex process, where the Sphere of Activity, described in this manual, is embedded in the business process. Before you start the training on a specific SoA, please make sure that the learners are familiar with the other SoA of industrial foremen in shoe production.

For example, the learners should be introduced to the types of products the company manufactures and their intended use, the different customer segments, the distribution channels etc. They should be aware of the product creation and manufacturing processes, i.e. product design, pattern making, purchasing department, production planning, and all production departments to warehouse and logistics.

The production process (not part of DIA-CVET, for insights see: <http://icsas-project.eu/>) is in the core of the business process; the SoA of DIA-CVET play a preparatory, supporting or accompanying role (see Fig. 1).

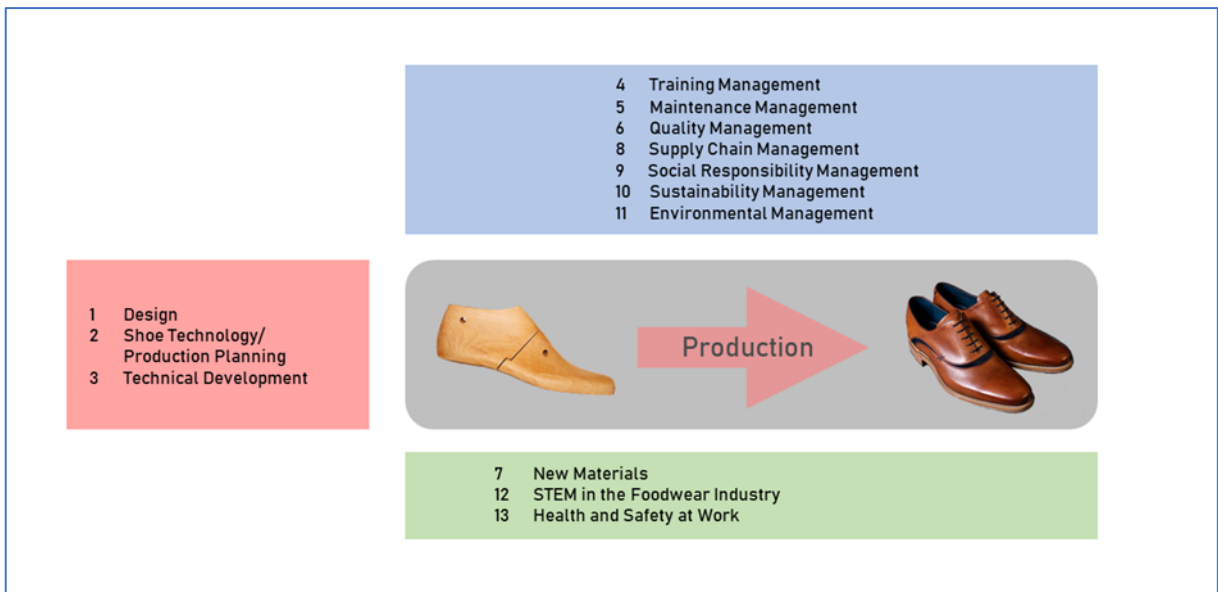


Fig. 1 Spheres of Activity of DIA-CVET and their relation to the production process.

2 Trainings Management

Rarely do new employees have all the company- and position-specific skills they need right away. It is not only important to train new employees for their new roles, but also to create a development plan to support their own career prospects and long-term job satisfaction.

Training can be divided in the teaching of Hard skills, referring to specific technical knowledge and training (e.g. use of a specific machine, procedure, software), and soft skills. Soft skills are related to certain personality traits and are difficult to measure (e.g. leadership, communication or time management)

Both types of skills are necessary to succeed and advance in most professions.

2.1 Hard skills

New employees must be trained in the company's standard operating procedures and policies. This includes, but is not limited to, the correct procedures for calling in sick, requesting leave, personal conduct, completing timesheets, diversity and disability, health and safety, and access regulations.

Besides those general applicable procedures there might be position specific trainings that new employees or existing employee on their career path need to undertake. Some of these trainings might have to be done regularly. Which training is necessary for which position and the frequency of retraining shall be written down in the trainings matrix of the companies trainings SOP (see chapter 2.3.)

2.2 Soft Skills

Communication skills

The ability to communicate effectively is an essential skill for any worker. One must be able to communicate one's needs and wants, ideas and problems clearly, concisely, concretely, correctly, coherently, completely and politely in order to develop professionally, build trust within a team, address potential quality and production problems and consequently increase the value of the company.

Positive work relationships equal happier employees and a company/manager needs to recognize ways to facilitate this effective communication by teaching their employees the necessary skills.

1. Active Listening:

Listening is one of the most important aspects of communication. Active listening means focusing fully on the speaker, understanding their message, understanding the information and consequently being able to give thoughtful and constructive feedback. Active listening contributes to the speaker feeling respected and happy to share information. This encourages sharing within the team, increases knowledge and understanding of different topics and can open up opportunities to collaborate with others. It also helps to get work done quickly or start new projects.

Verbal active listening skills can be trained by practising how to:

- ask open-ended questions,
- ask probing questions,
- paraphrase and summarize the main message,
- make short positive statements that encourage the speaker,
- show empathy and sharing similar experiences showing that you can relate to a problem/topic,
- include relevant information previously shared with the speaker

Non-verbal active listening skills can also be used to connect with the speaker. Nodding, smiling, maintaining eye contact and an attentive posture and the avoidance of distracting movements supports the speaker and encourages communication.

2. Communication methods:

It is important to find the right way to get a certain message across. Different methods are suitable for different occasions, goals and target groups. There are different methods of communication among those are letters, e-mails, instant messages, phone calls, one-on-one meetings and group meetings, written reports, presentations and proposals, social media posts and newsletters and not all of them are equally suitable for a particular situation. Choosing the wrong method can easily set the wrong tone and lead to negative consequences. For example, giving notice by email may not be legally valid, discussing sensitive information in front of a larger audience may lead to reprisals, and in certain cases it is advisable to put the communication in writing.

It is important to be aware of the pitfalls and advantages different methods have in a particular situation. Employees should be trained in verbal, non-verbal, written, and visual communication.

3. Non-verbal communication

Non-verbal communication is transfer of information through body language. It is often underestimated, but eye contact, facial expressions and gestures play an important role in our perception. Non-verbal communication is about seeing and analysing movements. Not everyone is equally skilled to decipher non-verbal communication, but it often plays an unconscious role in perception of a topic and ultimately in the decision making. It can provide valuable information about a situation, e.g. how a person feels, how someone takes in information and how to approach a person or a group of people. There are different types of nonverbal communication: eye contact, tone of voice, appearance/clothing, posture, facial expression, hand gestures, respecting personal space.

4. Emotion and Empathy

Feelings play a big role in communication. Emotional awareness, i.e. the ability to understand feelings, is very helpful for successful communication.

Empathy is the ability to put yourself in another person's shoes and understand their perspective. This can be very helpful in choosing the appropriate response in a given situation. Empathy is closely related to emotional intelligence and while people might be naturally more or less empathic it is a skill that can be learned. Tools are: exercises in changing perspective, asking questions about the other persons position and circumstances, understanding their goals and working on solutions together, listening actively and challenging existing biases.

While it can be helpful to emphasize and understand others' emotions, it is also important to exercise a degree of control over one's own emotional state in order to communicate effectively. It is important not to behave or react in ways that are inappropriate in a workplace. Workplaces have standards and expect them to be followed. It is important to think before speaking or acting. It can help to follow some rules such as never sending emails in anger, but waiting some time and reading it again before pressing the send button.

Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is the ability to evaluate evidence and arguments independently of one's own beliefs and opinions. This skill is essential in most professions. Employers value employees who approach problems logically and look at situations from different perspectives to find the best solution.

Critical thinking helps to solve problems using knowledge, facts and data and requires that these are evaluated without emotional bias. It is not enough to have information, it is important to understand how information can be used to influence opinions and to eliminate cognitive biases and prejudices, especially one's own. This enables thinking outside the box and finding creative and new solutions. Critical thinking is the cornerstone of innovation.

One needs the ability to draw logical conclusions based on given information, recognizing and potentially challenging unspoken assumptions, weighing evidence and distinguishing between strong and weak arguments based on relevance.

Critical thinking should be trained in the workplace by encouraging trainees to ask questions and express their ideas and opinions and by challenging them and requiring them to explain their thought processes. Critical thinking can be learned by exercising how to gather information, investigating and questioning them, pointing out possible problems and draw and explain one's conclusions.

Leadership

Leadership skills refer to the ability to assemble teams, organize other people and motivate a group to achieve a common goal. Leadership requires a comprehensive skill set and there are different approaches to leadership. Some common key skills are:

1. Decision making:

Leaders must be able to make decisions, even or especially when they are difficult. They must be able to assess a situation, find one or more possible solutions, weigh the pros and cons of each solution and make a final decision on how to proceed. Afterwards, it is important that they communicate the chosen solution effectively and adequately.

2. Delegation:

Leaders must be able to delegate tasks instead of taking them on themselves. This can be a difficult transition when shifting from "doing" to "leading". In order to lead one needs to be more essential to a process, but less involved in the details and execution. It also requires trust in other employees to be equally qualified to do a task previously done by oneself.

3. Conflict management/resolution

Leaders need the ability to identify and deal with conflicts efficiently and fairly. Conflicts in the workplace can lead to a reduction in employee effectiveness and hinder the achievements and goals of the company. Identifying the source of conflict through a thorough assessment of the situation is essential. Self-awareness, communication, respect and appreciation for others and their skills as well as setting and enforcing boundaries are important aspects of conflict management.

Part of conflict management is managing difficult conversations. To resolve conflicts, it is important to face them they rarely just disappear and resolve themselves. In negotiations it is important to identify positions, interests and needs in order to find a suitable solution.

4. Inspiration and Motivation

Motivating and inspiring people is an important skill in leadership. Creating a positive work environment encourages employees to do a task willingly instead of feeling forced. Motivational leaders inspire their team with their own enthusiasm and passion. About a topic and are able to create a feeling of unity and common goal.

They also make their employees feel valued and recognise and nurtures their potentials by learning about their priorities, strengths and needs.

5. Mentoring, Talent management

Mentoring should be a skill of any leader. They should have an interest in the development and improvement of their team members and support employees in realising their potential. Some leaders fear that employees will move on or threaten their position and therefore do not support in their competence development. However, ultimately this leads to dissatisfaction and the employee might move on anyway.

Good mentors guide and share their expertise with their mentees with the intention of developing, improving and achieving personal and professional goals. This increases the overall skill level in the team and contributes to the overall success of the team.

There are many other qualities that make a good leader that should be recognized such as accountability, curiosity, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, empathy, flexibility, focus, optimism, patience, resilience, respect and self awareness. In order to improve one's own leadership abilities one should first identify their own leadership style and define areas of strength and areas with potential for improvement and then work on those accordingly.

Many of the skills that make a good leader can be improved and trained, but some are also an innate personality trait. It is important to note that not everyone needs to be, or even can be, a leader. A team exclusively made of leaders won't go very far. A productive and effective work environment requires both leaders and followers. It lays in the responsibility of supervisors and trainers to identify the strengths and ambitions of individual employees and to establish an appropriate development plan to ensure long-term job satisfaction.

Teamwork

Teamwork skills are essential in almost all jobs and career stages. Working well with others, be it clients, colleagues, managers and others will help to achieve objectives successfully and in a timely manner and increases the enjoyment in the task. Good communication skills are an important

factor for successful teamwork, but other soft skills are contribution heavily as well. Accepting feedback, collaborating well, managing difficult situations, emotional intelligence, interpersonal skills and self-awareness are the ingredients that make teamwork “work”. Working in a good team increases the joy when projects are successfully completed and can soften the disappointment of failure and renew motivation to try again. In line with the motto "Shared joy is a double joy; shared sorrow is half a sorrow". Group dynamics are very powerful and can be an important success factor if used in constructive and positive manner.

Work Ethic

Work ethic is about an attitude of determination and commitment to one's work. People with a strong work ethic place great importance on how they conduct themselves and feel morally obligated and proud to carry out the tasks and responsibilities assigned to them. They are reliable and show great dedication for their work, they are productive and do more than the minimum requirement and have the desire to make things work and to cooperate with others to reach a goal. They are punctual and value other people's time as much as their own. Their inert motivation to complete a goal often not only directed to the goal itself, but also towards ways of improving the path to success. Therefore, they often develop a skill set that belongs to project management such as planning, scheduling, setting, and meeting deadlines, self-monitoring and time management.

Respect for others and their time is an important part of a good work ethic. Good attendance, punctuality at meetings and after breaks, checking one's own work for quality and consistency before handing it in, meeting deadlines and making constructive contributions to the work of others show professionalism and appreciation towards colleagues and employers.

2.3 Trainings SOP:

The first step in implementing successful training management in the company is to create a standard training procedure (Training SOP). Within the SOP, a number of topics, such as those listed below, need to be addressed. The topics listed below are examples, for each company there will be differences depending on the size and organisational structure of the company. The first step is to clarify the needs of the company and develop the training procedure based on this.

1. Purpose (describe the purpose of the SOP)

e.g. The purpose of this SOP is to describe the procedure for effective training of personnel working at the manufacturing site X of company Y. The described procedure ensures that all employees receive appropriate training required to execute their duties and responsibilities successfully.

2. Scope (describe the scope of the SOP)

e.g. this procedure applies to all employees involved in the design, technical development, supply chain, manufacturing, quality testing, packaging, storage and transportation of the produced footwear.

3. Definitions (describe terms and abbreviations used in this document)

e.g.

Training: is a process that improves the employee's competence in terms of knowledge, experience, behaviour and the skills necessary to perform assigned tasks in order to achieve the required business objectives.

Trainer: the trainer is an employee who has sufficient knowledge, qualifications, experience and training skills and is responsible for developing and delivering training related to the function and operation. The trainer is designated by the head of the department.

Trainee: The trainee is an employee who is undergoing training for a specific job or skill.

Training matrix: it is a document that lists all SOPs and topics on which training is required for individuals with certain job descriptions/responsibilities.

4. Responsibility (define responsibilities)

e.g.

- a. The department head shall be responsible to choose assign training responsibility to a certified/sufficiently qualified trainer, provide training capacities and materials and ensure that no work shall be assigned to employees until the required training has been conducted. The department head shall identify training topics and ensure complies with this SOP.
- b. The training coordinator shall identify individual training needs, schedule and maintain the training certificates.
- c. The trainer shall be responsible to conduct the training, determine training success and provide training documents and certifications
- d. The individual employee shall be responsible for updating their training file and submit external training certificates to the training coordinator

5. Training categories

e.g.

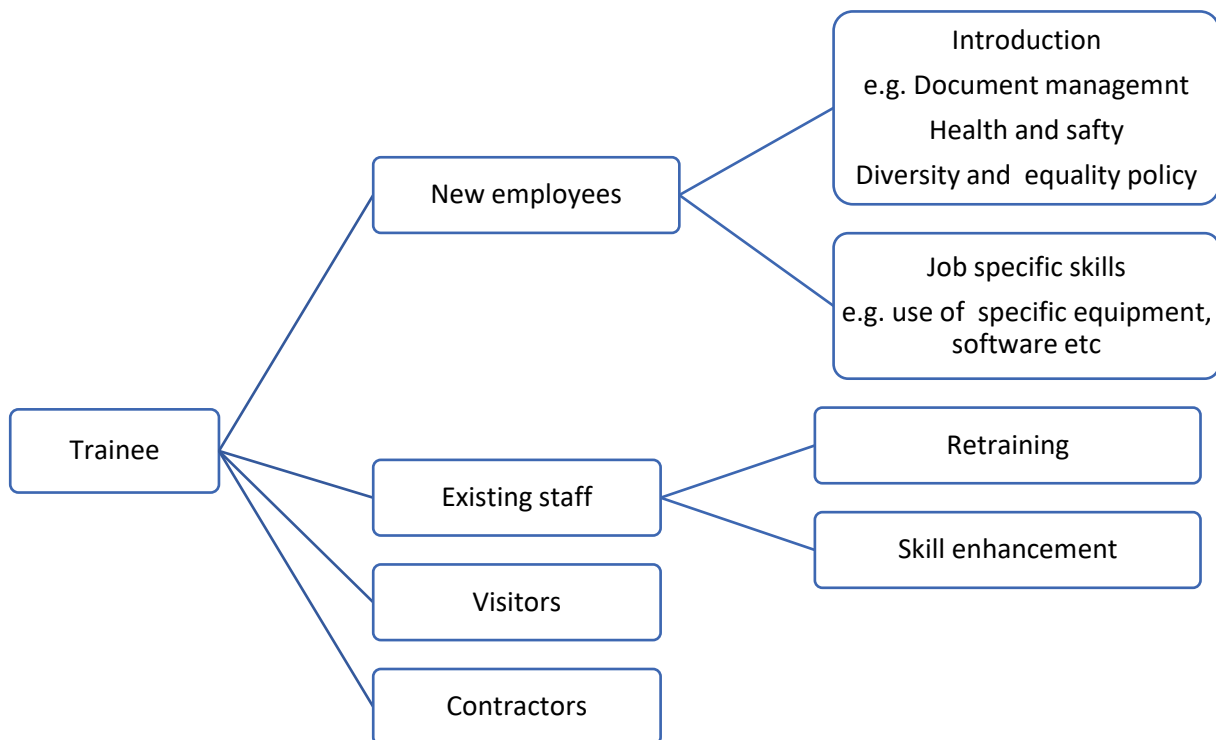


Fig. 2: Trainee categorization and training requirements

Determine the training needs for the different categories and specify. e.g.

5.1 **Visitors:** Allowing visitors or untrained personnel into the production and quality control area shall be avoided. If this is unavoidable, brief they need to be briefed in advance on health and safety and confidentiality requirements. They need to be under the supervision of a trained person at all times.

5.2. **Contractors**

And so on ...

6. **List of trainings:**

e.g.

- Self-training and certification (determine requirements and scope)
- In-house training (determine requirements and scope)
- External training (determine requirements and scope)

7. **Training evaluation**

Training evaluation is an ongoing process with the aim to determine the effectiveness of current training measures in regards of long and short term learning and to improve the training measures where appropriate. Determine the measures and the improvement process here. E.g. could be group discussion, questionnaire, determine thresholds when measures need to be taken and the change process.

8. **Training documentation**

Training certification:

The implementation and success of the training must be documented. The original training certificate shall be entered in the respective training file and a copy shall be given to the respective head of department.

3 List of Figures

Fig. 1 Spheres of Activity of DIA-CVET and their relation to the production process.	4
Fig. 2: Trainee categorization and training requirements	10