



## **PRACTICES DAILY PERFORMED – METHODOLOGY AND TOOLS**

Analysis of practices daily performed by organisations involved in activities aimed at supporting social inclusion and entering in labour market of Prisoners

### **Rationale**

The project is aimed at improving knowledge processes management in organisations dealing with social inclusion and vocational training of people in prison. The approach will be constructivist: we consider learning as a social practice and so knowledge is a shared product of a common process in which each subject shares its skills, know-how, practices, etc.

Main areas of intervention of the project will be:

Improve active social inclusion and entering in labour market of people in prison.

Improve management of our adult education organisations facing the difficulties and stress of social work plaid in prison.

The two areas are strictly linked because stressing situations not well managed, can hardly affect effectiveness and efficacy of social interventions and wellbeing of social workers.

The project comes from staffs needs and wishes. VIP is aimed at recognizing supporting methodologies and exchange good practices among trainers in order to improve the effectiveness of their intervention in their context and their competences and skills in the social inclusion of people in prison.

Often trainers improve their skills by experiences: they need time and space to assess their skills for becoming more and more aware of them, refining them acquiring awareness of what they need to improve.

Further more sometimes trainers don't play managerial role and sometimes is very difficult to share know how from a person to another, because someone is

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not aware of his/her knowledge learned by experiences. Moreover in organisations – above all in small organisations – there is little time to carry out team building activities because often people play different roles in the same time. Nevertheless awareness is the key word for managing this kind of matter and improving effectiveness of actions performed by trainers.

Otherwise, awareness and peer to peer support/comparison is an important mean in order to overcome stress of social work plaid with people in prison. In order to improve management of our adult education organisations, we need to share good practices, methodologies, approaches, tools, for stress management.

## **Methodology**

In order to obtain the right answers, we need to ask for the right questions. This methodology arises from this common reflection. In fact, when we have questions to answer we have possibility to stop for a moment and reflect about what normally we perform daily.

On the other hand, in order to have possibilities to compare different practices, we need to have a shared organisation of the issues we are going to compare.

Here you'll find three different tools that have to be used together. Please, accomplish the requirement of the tools respecting the order of the list. And, please, if possible involve the same persons in all the tools. This way, people will arrive to the focus group prepared and aware of the matter.



## Tool N° 1

### Questionnaire addressed to people working with convicts in prison

**01 Please describe your users typology**

The majority of women in prison were living in very hard poverty conditions before entering prison. Most of them are single mothers and have a low educational level and, in many cases, drug addictions or mental problems; many are victims of domestic violence. The number of immigrants is very high, and the Roma women too.

**02 Does your organisation assess users' needs and expectations? And, if yes, how does it assess them?**

Not applicable.

**03 Does your organisation assess context needs in order to organise activity? And, if yes, how does it assess them?**

Not applicable.

**04 How is the activity funded?**

By public funds

**05 What is the methodology you use as ground of your activity?**

The training courses are aimed at job training for inmates for their subsequent re-employment, once they have left prison. Given the low level of self-esteem that they present, these training workshops are often accompanied by self-esteem workshops to enhance job skills because, given their low educational level, and the stigma of being a former convict, their job search capability has to be reinforced.



Furthermore, to strength social skills for foreign women or from other ethnic groups such as the Roma, because of their different customs, to facilitate their reintegration into the majority population.

**06 Have you chosen this methodology? Or does it come from your organisation?**

My organisation.

**07 If the methodology used is chosen entirely by your organisation, Do you change something? What? And Why?**

Any changes allowed.

**08 Why has this methodology been chosen for this typology of users?**

Because it is implemented in all prisons by the Spanish prison administration.

**09 Please, describe the activity you are dealing with. Please, do not forget to explain timetable of activities, their frequency within the week, number of users, number of trainers**

Vocational training in different areas and social skills. I'am social skill trainer.  
Timetable:  
Mo-Fry 9.00 – 14.00 hours  
Users: 10 per group (5 groups)  
Trainers: 5



**10 Is the activity plan flexible and adaptable to users individual needs?**

Usually not.

**11 Is the activity plan flexible and adaptable to needs arising during the process?**

Usually not.

**12 If you have answered yes to 10 and/or 11, who adapts activities plan?**

Not applicable

**13 If you have answered yes to 10 and/or 11, do users share the adaptation of activities plan?**

Not applicable.

**14 What kind of skills/competences would you like to improve?**

We believe that the training plans should be more personalized, taking into account the personal skills of each one, as well as that the vocational training should be best suited to the reality of the low labor market demand.

Also, that the trainers could intervene in the adaptation of the formation plans.

**15 Describe the relation between your organisation and the prison administration, underlining weak and strong points**



As weak points, we emphasize the low possibility of communication with the prison administration, and the inability to make changes in the training plans, which are more focused to avoid internal problems, as to preparing the adaptation of women prisoners to the labor market.

As strong point, we highlight the emerging collaboration with nonprofit organizations unrelated to prison world.

**16 Describe the relation between you and the prison staff, underlining weak and strong points**

As weak points we highlight the difficulties that arise in both collectives because of belonging both to different administrations, as prison staff depends of the prison administration and trainers from the labor ministry. Therefore, sometimes there are frictions between the two groups, due to excessive control by the security systems.

As strengths, the often friendly personal relationship between workers.

**17 Do you follow a behaviour protocol / ethic code in your relations with convicts? If yes, please describe it**

Yes, we follow the Code of Ethics for employees of penitentiary institutions, recently created, aimed at all staff working in prisons, including NGOs.

This code reflects the conducts due to prison staff, who must meet the following postulates:

- 1.- legal compliance
- 2.- public interest
- 3.- neutrality
- 4.- integrity
- 5.- exemplariness
- 6.- equity



7.- proportionality

8.- effectiveness

9.- transparency

10.-good faith

The three basic principles to be determined by the performance of staff are:

1.- honesty

2.- impartiality

3.- looking the public interest, regardless of personal or corporate positions

**18** Is the behaviour protocol / ethic code prescribed by your institution? Or is something shared in the institution but not aware? Or is it a personal approach?

Determined by correctional institutions.

**19** Has your institution tools in order to assess satisfaction of trainers and other professional engaged? Please, describe it.

They spend satisfaction questionnaires.

**20** If satisfaction of trainers and other professional engaged is not high, does organisation carry out action in order to improve it?



Not applicable.

**21** **If the activity is a project with an end, how do you foresee to continue your work here described?**

Not applicable.





## Tool N°2

Case Study: Please, describe at least two different cases per each typology.

### Pressure from users

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What kind of pressure from users you deal with?

Describe typical situations and describe practices that decrease pressure, and what does not work.

Pressure	Practices that work	Practices that do not work
conflicts generated by women of different ethnic origin	-workshops in which the different customs of the social skills of the dams are analyzed - conduct workshops to develop and analyze different personal skills: concepts of empathy, respect, solidarity, respect for differences ...	Having an aggressive attitude. Absolutely wanting to resolve the conflict only for reasons of credibility in front of the group or for personal pride. attempt to impose a unilateral vision of the behavior and customs of the majority culture in our country

### Pressure from colleagues

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What kind of pressure from colleagues you deal with?

Describe typical situations and describe practices that decrease pressure, and what does not work.

Pressure	Practices that work	Practices that do not work
conflict with a male colleague in relation to his behavior (lack of knowledge and sensitivity needed) regarding to women who have suffered gender violence (mostly all of them)	Having an open dialogue with the partner Give him teaching materials, the comprehensive law against gender violence so that he can understand the various situations considered as violence, as well as various studies on the subject	Having an aggressive attitude. Absolutely wanting to resolve the conflict only for reasons of credibility in front of the group or for personal pride. Ignore the conflict. Maintain a negative attitude toward the partner for his lack of knowledge

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## Pressure from your organisation

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What kind of pressure from your organisation you deal with?

Describe typical situations and describe practices that decrease pressure, and what does not work.

Pressure	Practices that work	Practices that do not work
<i>None</i>		

## Pressure from penitentiary administration

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What kind of pressure from penitentiary administration you deal with?

Describe typical situations and describe practices that decrease pressure, and what does not work.

Pressure	Practices that work	Practices that do not work
for security reasons	Keep calm, try a calm dialogue with the staff member explaining the reasons of your choices and approach of the work in prison, and if you cannot resolve the conflict, seek the help of a mediator with an engagement of both parties to respect the resolutions adopted	Frontal confrontation with the staff member Cut off the relation with the administration Not to accept mediation



## Tools N°3

Carry out a (light) focus group with at least 3 persons working with people in prison

Track for the focus group:

- 1) What obstacles do you daily cope in your work? How do you overcome them?

The main obstacles we face daily in our work are essentially two:

In our relations with prison officials, the obstacles are mainly the lack of flexibility that exists in relation to the rigid rules of prison security.

In our relations with the dams, the obstacles are the multiple inequalities of the group, their personal characteristics, cultural differences and educational levels.

How we overcome them:

In relations with prison officials we try to explain particular situations and reach an agreement, and in relation to dams, we try to adapt our actions to the particular situations of each of them, given the limited possibilities we have, raising awareness to the rest of the group on inequalities and promoting solidarity and understanding.

- 2) How can I improve effectiveness, efficacy and satisfaction of my work in prison?

It is imperative that educators, in addition to their knowledge of the subjects they will teach, acquire additional training on teaching methodologies with groups suffering social exclusion, mediation skills, social skills, psychology, group works on concepts good treatment, etc.

It would be desirable to establish a fluid dialogue with the management of the prison, in order to make specific and well-argued exceptions about the rigidity of the safety rules and internal functioning of the prison, in order to facilitate the real future reintegration of dams to life outside prison.

- 3) How to improve the relations with:

To improve the relations with the administration and prison officials, as well as with colleagues and prisoners, it would be very positive to create a working group with regular meetings, involving one or two representatives



from each collective, in order to expose the daily problems that arise and try to reach a mutual agreement, to facilitate good relationship and collective work.

4) What kind of expectation have you about your work/carrier?

We would like to get a promotion of greater awareness about the currently problems that actually exist in the social reintegration of prisoners in our country, by providing us more resources, both economic and policy changes, to facilitate the objectives of our work.

To have continuity in the work we are doing, and that the entire group can keep the same working line.

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