DEAF WORK – Model Dedicated to Improve Employment Accessibility Among the Deaf People

AIM OF THE PROJECT

The main goal of the Deaf Work project is to devise, test and implement new and innovative solutions within an international partnership that will become effective forms of employment activation. Dedicated especially for the people that are deaf or hearing-impaired, the solutions aim to improve their position at the job market. The Deaf Work Model that has been created in the project proposes concrete solutions addressed to those stakeholders, which are directly engaged in developing the human capital or spreading the idea of life-long learning in Poland.

EXECUTORS

The leader of the DEAF WORK project is **Centrum Badawczo- -Szkoleniowe Dobre Kadry (Poland).**

Partners:
Oddział Łódzki Polskiego Związku Głuchych (Poland) i Fortbildungsakademie der Wirtschaft (FAW) GmbH Akademie Chemnitz (Germany).

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TARGET GROUPS

(A) the deaf or hearing-impaired people that are unemployed,

(B) institutions that support the abovementioned (divisions of the Polish Association of the Deaf, local divisions of the association, other entities engaged in helping the deaf),

(C) companies which employ the deaf and the hearing-impaired or would like to employ them in the future,

(D) all other entities that could potentially provide serivces for deaf people (e.g. ZUS, PUP, health centres).

STAKEHOLDERS

In the DEAF WORK model there are five stakeholders that could be potentially interested in implementing it:

1. Institutions that statutorily support the deaf.
2. Companies that have either willingness or ability to employ deaf persons.
3. Entities that could potentially provide the deaf with their services.
4. Entities that are interested in giving support to people with various disabilities.
5. Deaf people themselves.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The DEAF WORK model provides a complete framework dedicated for different stakeholders. It has been divided into seven sections, which are supplemented by an implementation procedure. Each of the sections covers areas that are related to the issue of a social and employment activation of the deaf or the hearing-impaired. The implementation of the DEAF WORK model could be customized depending on the needs of a user. The proposed framework is based on a previous version that was first prepared in December 2016. It was then tested during the „DEAF WORK" project together with organizations that support disabled people daily. Thus, the groundwork for the final version of the model relies on different sources, including empirical ones.

COMPONENTS OF THE MODEL

1. CONCEPT OF A COOPERATION NETWORK OF EMPLOYERS

In order to reach the full potential of employment activation programmes destined for the deaf and the hearing-impaired, different subjects ought to cooperate within a formalized network, which is to heighten a relative sense of stability and longevity of the proposed solutions. The innovativeness of the proposed solution relies upon its organizational aspect (building a cooperation network) and processual aspect (the support comes in the shape of a process that engages various stakeholders).

2. „WORKING WITH A DEAF PERSON" – SEMINARS PROGRAMME DEDICATED FOR EMPLOYERS AND HEARING-IMPAIRED EMPLOYEES

The current research shows that employers often lack experience in employing the deaf, which is a cause of concern for many of them. For that reason, it is essential to organize seminars given by deaf persons, where they could share their experiences (also accompanied by a qualified sign-language interpreter). Both potential employers and co-workers should get acquainted with the culture of the Deaf, as well as with suggested communication methods when engaging in conversation with a deaf person.

3. „DEAF EMPLOYEE" – EMPLOYER'S GUIDE

The main advantage of the guide is that, instead of taking into consideration all the disabled people, the scope of the target group has been only limited to deaf persons. The guide is also a valuable source of information due to the fact that employers in general have poor knowledge of the specific needs and abilities of the disabled. Stereotypically, they view them as having some kind of motor disability.

4. PATHS OF THE EDUCATIONAL-VOCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF A DEAF PERSON – AN INDIVIDUAL PERSPECTIVE

This section presents solutions that view the educational-vocational development of the deaf from an individual perspective. The recommended actions that have already been tested during the project are: the support of an animator/a guidance counsellor (including devising an individual development plan), psychological support, internships or an individual training aimed at filling competence gaps.

5. SEMINAR PROGRAMMES FOR FILLING MAJOR COMPETENCE GAPS OF THE DEAF, INCLUDING TRAINING MATERIALS

The authors prepared a package of educational materials that a deaf person could use either on their own or submit to an educational institution. This section of the model proposes organizing obligatory workshops consisting of 11 blocks (3 hours each) and giving non-obligatory classes that deal with the issues covered by the primary blocks in depth.

6. DEAF PERSON IN CONTACT WITH ADMINISTRATION

Next part of the model contains an indispensable set of formal applications that are necessary in the everyday life of a deaf person. They are supplemented with a description in the Polish language and helpful comments. This part of the model especially resonates with the needs of those deaf people whose Polish writing and reading skills are poor and who have to independently run their errands at the same time. Owing to this kind of materials the deaf become more skilled at filling indispensable forms at different institutions.

7. „WHEN I DO WORK..."

The Section 7 discusses materials that engage deaf people to seek employment in an active way. The contents motivate them to become vocationally active, show the benefits of being employed, explain the basic issues regarding seeking and keeping employment and demonstrate the opportunities for professional growth.

8. IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURE

Tactis and guidelines that are useful when implementing the model.

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COMPONENTS OF THE MODEL AND THE STAKEHOLDERS

The sections of the DEAF WORK model are directly and indirectly dedicated to following stakeholders:

Part 1: Concept of a Cooperation Network of Employers
Institutions statutorily responsible for supporting deaf people

Part 2: „Working With a Deaf Person" Seminars
Institutions statutorily responsible for supporting deaf people
Companies that are willing to/able to employ deaf persons
Entities that could potentially provide the deaf with their services
Entities that are interested in giving support to people with various disabilities

Part 3: „Deaf Employee" Employer's Guide
Institutions statutorily responsible for supporting deaf people
Companies that are willing to/able to employ deaf persons
Entities that could potentially provide the deaf with their services
Entities that are interested in giving support to people with various disabilities

Part 4: Paths of the Educational-Vocational Development of a Deaf Person
Institutions statutorily responsible for supporting deaf people
Companies that are willing to/able to employ deaf persons
Entities that are interested in giving support to people with various disabilities

Part 5: Programmes for Filling Major Competence Gaps
Institutions statutorily responsible for supporting deaf people
Companies that are willing to/able to employ deaf persons
Entities that are interested in giving support to people with various disabilities
Deaf persons

Part 6: Deaf Person in Contact with Administration
Institutions statutorily responsible for supporting deaf people
Companies that are willing to/able to employ deaf persons
Entities that are interested in giving support to people with various disabilities
Deaf persons

Part 7: A Set of Materials Entitled „When I do Work..."
Institutions statutorily responsible for supporting deaf people
Companies that are willing to/able to employ deaf persons
Entities that are interested in giving support to people with various disabilities
Deaf persons

Część 8: Implementation Procedure
Institutions statutorily responsible for supporting deaf people