



WP2 - Best practices and Training Needs Assessment

Case Study 2: SMEs in Apprenticeships with focus on role of intermediary organizations - Poland

Title	The good practice of Pearl Stream company
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Source of Information	Publication of Polish Ministry of Education, by National Centre For Supporting Vocational And Continuing Education /NCFSVCE/available (in Polish) at: https://men.gov.pl/pl/ksztalcenie-zawodowe/publikacje-ksztalcenie-zawodowe-i-ustawiczne Title of the publication: Współpraca szkół zawodowych z pracodawcami – przykładowe rozwiązania [cooperation of vocational schools with employers - sample solutions]
Location (Region / Country)	The good practice was implemented in Strzelce Opolskie region (in the Opole Voivodeship, south of Poland).
Context (appr. 500 words)	<p>Pearl Stream is a young company, which since its foundation had difficulties in finding employees with the desired qualifications on the local labor market. Company location in a region facing demographic problems, outflow of young people from the region and the structure unemployment was a serious issue that significantly affected the company's operations.</p> <p>The Management Board noted the need to strive for young people who, consciously choosing the path of their education, will find the company as the perspective place for employment, which will last for years.</p> <p>The Pearl Stream company wanted to ensure well qualified labor and wanted to actively participate in the process.</p>
Methodological Approach (appr. 500 words)	<p>The company started its activities by analyzing local schools and institutions of practical education. The chosen entity was the Center of Vocational and Continuing Education in Strzelce Opolskie town. The cooperation between the Pearl Stream and this institution began in September 2012.</p> <p>The company indicated following selection criteria during the selection of the vocational institution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– the long traditions of schools that made out the Center of Vocational and Continuing Education in Strzelce Opolskie town;– reputation and capacities in the scope of workshops and didactic– opportunities for further training of staff (teachers). <p>The cooperation with the institution in order to achieve the desired outcomes is based on the following principles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Patronage class. On the basis of bilateral agreement it was agreed that within the Center of Vocational and Continuing Education in Strzelce Opolskie town there would be created a patronage class (educating mechanics of machinery and equipment). The students of this class will, among others, take apprenticeships in a factory belonging to the company;

	<p>2. Within the framework of the patronage class there was identified the need for preventive measures to ensure an adequate number of conscious, future students. This constituted the target of 3rd class of local junior high schools (gymnasiums). Considering the above, there was developed a series of activities including a meeting with the management of local secondary schools, meetings and presentations in schools and presentation of factories for students of 3rd classes, as well as meetings with their parents. The meetings are intended not only to familiarize prospective students with the schools offer but also with the perspectives of future apprenticeships and work in modern manufacturing company, operating dynamically on the local labor market;</p> <p>3. The company undertook also series of internal activities to prepare itself for apprenticeships.</p>
<p>Impact and key success factors (appr. 500 words)</p>	<p>The cooperation with the Center of Vocational and Continuing Education in Strzelce Opolskie town enables the company to actively support the education of students in the profession, which are the key to the organization of the production profile (the mechanics of machinery and equipment). Such action is intended into the acquisition of suitably qualified staff, which meets not only the specifics of the profession and technological processes but also the expectations of the employer and the environment. Company officials emphasize that in the undertaken actions there is also an important social dimension, which is the ability to support Center of Vocational and Continuing Education to adapt education to the real needs of employers. The management is convinced that such initiatives are a proof of the possibilities of making the strong ties between business and vocational education that are based on mutual trust and constructive cooperation.</p> <p>As a part of internal activities to prepare the company for apprenticeships, there were many actions undertaken, which can constitute a best practice. These actions covered following aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the company staff was prepared for working with students during their apprenticeship. There was undertaken preparation and support for apprenticeship tutors through training the company staff in such skills as training, assertiveness, team building, communication, commitment building and problem-solving; – each student during the apprenticeship was supported by one qualified worker of the company (the apprenticeship tutor); – each student during the apprenticeship has a chance to familiarize with many divisions of the company. Such a distribution of tasks allows knowing different styles of work, contacting wide range of professional employees and thus a wider range of jobs and opportunities for practical learning; – beside the tutors, the HR department is dedicated to care for apprenticeship students. There are systematically organized workshops with professionals covering the following topics: knowledge about the company and the working position, organizational culture in the company, communication, team cooperation, professional activity, labor market, and others. Such

	<p>meetings are also a kind of mentoring - a support for young people who have just entered their career path. They certainly facilitate the beginning of the apprenticeship.</p>
<p>Stakeholders and Partners (appr. 500 words)</p>	<p>1. PEARL STREAM S.A. is a rapidly growing plastic manufacturer with two factories in South-West of Poland delivering injected, painted and assembled plastic parts for Automotive and Electronics industry. The company started its history in 2010, basing its business on a very strong development of Korean companies in Poland. The shareholders' structure is a mix of Korean management and reliable family offices from Germany and Poland, which have also strong tradition in German industry and automotive business.</p> <p>2. Centrum Kształcenia Zawodowego i Ustawicznego w Strzelcach Opolskich [The Center of Vocational and Continuing Education in Strzelce Opolskie town] is a place that offers youth education in 10 professions considered as technical, 22 professions considered as vocational and also offers vocational and qualification courses.</p> <p>3. The other identified stakeholders were students and their parents.</p>
<p>Conditions (appr. 500 words)</p>	<p>This good practice is an example of actions undertaken without intermediary entities. It was possible because the medium size company had enough resources and determination to start cooperation for apprenticeships. Their good experiences can be used as an example for other companies.</p> <p>Since neither external funding nor subsidies were provided in this case, the replication of this good practice can only be based on actual good experience from the market.</p>
<p>Materials / Tools</p>	<p>The agreement templates between company and VET The schemes of patronage class organizations The agreements considering apprenticeships</p>
<p>Replicability and/or up-scaling (appr. 500 words)</p>	<p>Since neither external funding nor subsidies were provided in this case, the replication of this good practice can only be based on actual good experience from the market.</p>
<p>Conclusion (appr. 500 words)</p>	<p>This good practice constitutes not only an example of good cooperation but the way of thinking of employers, guided by both self-interest and corporate social responsibility, which actually translates into real action in the region. However, it is not a common universally applicable model action of employers. Therefore, this example should be use to ensure the replication of this type of behavior by actions including the dissemination and promotion. It constitutes a good base for developing of mechanisms to initiate cooperation between entrepreneurs and VET institutions.</p>
<p>Other remarks:</p>	

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