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**Toolkit Case Study of Practice**

**Bringing education and industry together via a collaborative event for planning delivery of digital skills training: Varna University of Management and Accommodation and Visitor Attraction Micro & SMEs**

1. **Organisation name and brief explanation of purpose**

This case study presents an educational event organised by Varna University of Management, Bulgaria. The targeted group were professionals from the Hospitality and Tourism industry of the Varna region, with special attention to micro, small and medium enterprises. Event attendees were HR Managers and Managers from the accommodation and attraction sector and educational providers (higher education).

The main objectives of the event were to:

* present and introduce the NTG project
* present the features and opportunities to use and apply the Sector Skills Toolkit ((NTG Skills LAB)
* pilot the Sector Skills Toolkit (NTG Skills LAB),
* demonstrate the use of the educational resources, templates and checklists
* receive feedback from the attendees

1. **How was the toolkit used to address an industry, business or educational need?**

The session was designed in two sections. The first part focused on the introduction of the project, presenting the partners, and providing details about for whom the Toolkit is designed, what are the areas of implementation of the Toolkit and how to use it. The presenters showed the mapping opportunities and functionalities of the Skills Matrix and identified and analysed the skills gap. During the session examples were provided of how the Skills Matrix might be applied in different HRM activities such as Selection and Recruitment Process, Identifying Learning Needs and directions for Future Development, Career Counselling and Planning, Performance Appraisal, Job Review and Job Specification, and Occupational Profiles. Participants were very interested in intensive recruitment because of the forthcoming summer season, so the functionality “Find the best candidate for a given job” was much discussed and explored. The presenters demonstrated many other opportunities to use the Matrix in the advertising of vacant job positions, to create and store their own list of candidates as well as other HR functionalities of the Toolkit that would be a great benefit for the business.

The second part presented the Educational resources and materials. Lesson plans used during the session were: *Netiquette* and *Willingness to Change*. The presenters put special emphasis on the contents and usability of lesson plans: learning outcomes, teaching methods, additional resources such as case studies, resources, video links and tools. Part of the demonstration was a shortened course of the Netiquette ([**D8 L3 Netiquette**](about:blank)**), using the provided materials and lesson plan. The participants were able to see how to adapt the course to the relevant audience, how to customize the contents, according to their needs, or the different skill level of the audience. The presenters applied the lesson exercises and thus showed the practical relevance of the materials. Participants from the businesses were curious to see how the simple presentation and the attached materials could bring a lot of benefits and directly prepare the attendees to apply the skills.**

1. **Were partner organisations involved and if so, who?**

The event had been organised on behalf of Varna University of Management on the premises of university, on 30th of March 2022.

1. **What benefits result from use of the toolkit?**

The main benefit of the event was the feedback from the participants. A very important element was the investigation of their willingness and readiness to use and apply the Toolkit. Benefits from the event include improving the quality of the HRM processes in the organisation, the effectiveness of the training provided to the employees and the efficiency of developing their own training programmes and plans.

The attendees assessed the Toolkit in a very positive way. They commented that it would be easy to implement the tools in the Tourism and Educational sector.

The major strengths of the Toolkit pointed out were:

* The functionality of the Toolkit
* It is user-friendly
* Free access
* Opportunity for further development and adjustment to the company’s needs
* The learning session presented was assessed as interesting and beneficial. The content of the supporting materials (Lesson plan and case studies, additional activities) was assessed as very useful and applicable both to educational institutions and industry representatives.
* A good tool to support the development of learning materials, training programmes and study curriculum

1. **Were there any challenges or lessons learnt using the toolkit?**

A possible challenge and obstacle to the implementation of the tool discussed during the session was the element of the self-assessment. The participants discussed the relevance of self-assessment and the risk of subjective bias. In this regard, they discussed the opportunity for elaboration of test questions that would help identify the correct level of skills.

1. **Have you had any further reflections and/or recommendations?**

The recommendations given during the session were:

* To translate the materials into Bulgarian
* To include more videos, so the young audience will be more attracted to use the Toolkit
* To include more visuals in the materials
* To promote more actively the Toolkit among tourism professionals and continue the dialogue with the industry representatives.