InnoWork

CURRICULUM	
Project Title	**"Towards a More Innovative Workplace"**
Project Acronym	**InnoWork**
Project Reference №:	**№: 2014-1-BG01-KA202-001634**

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Preface

This curriculum is developed by the partner team of the project *"Towards a More Innovative Workplace"* (InnoWork, №: 2014-1-BG01-KA202-001634). It consists of seven sections which provide an overview of InnoWork training material, introduce its learning objectives, methodology and structure, and explain teaching and learning activities.

The curriculum is mainly intended for the EU micro, small and medium sized enterprises willing to enhance their innovative potential. It addresses the learners – the SME representatives who are going to engage with the InnoWork training material.

The curriculum may also be interesting to vocational education and training providers which deliver courses in organizational innovation. It is complimented by "*Guidelines for VET providers*" – a methodological documents leading educators through the InnoWork training content and explaining how they can integrate it into their programmes.

We hope that SME managers and employees, as well as VET specialists and teachers will have an opportunity to effectively use the InnoWork curriculum along with the InnoWork training materials.

I. Course Overview

The InnoWork course focuses on developing concepts and hands-on techniques for enhancing SME's business adaptability in highly competitive environment through organizational innovation.

At the time of increasing pace of change in the competitive landscape, innovation in products, services and business models is becoming the core of companies' success. The latest research shows that those companies, which prioritise innovation, get the highest increase in turnover[1]. In order to achieve that success, managers have to be able to tap into creative potential of their team and translate novel ideas into competitive advantage of their company.

Such ability requires understanding of the process of organizational innovation: what it is; who is involved in it; how it happens; how to plan, foster, facilitate and manage it. The InnoWork course addresses all these issues: from the concepts of creativity and innovation, through management for innovation, to development of organization's innovation plan. This course is so much more than theory on creativity and innovation. It is about applying this knowledge to specific challenges your company faces.

The InnoWork course employs the perspective of a manager of a micro, small or medium sized enterprize. Saying "a manager" we mean not only seniour executives – owners and managing directors, but also mid-level managers, first line managers, and even functional specialists – all those who take responsibility for the success of the company. Because, in fact, bringing about organizational innovation is more than seniour management setting up an appropriate strategy. It makes all people in the company ground the innovation perspective in their operational reality.

The InnoWork course is specifically tailored to SMEs' needs related to organizational innovation. Its content is prompted by the results of the survey among European SMEs and VET providers carried out by the project consortium in February and March 2015[2] (summary of the survey results can be found at: http://www.innowork-project.eu/index.php?t=24).

The companies which took part in the survey mentioned that innovation is often hindered by organizational impediments such as time and resource constraints, lack of motivation and relevant experience on behalf of staff. The course is designed to help you overcome these barriers to innovation. The theoretical chapters are accompanied with examples presenting the best practices implemented by companies in their way to success. Each module suggests game-like activities which all together help you develop and improve your ability to perform organizational innovation.

Considering heavy workload of SME managers and employees, the InnoWork course allows for flexible learning pathways. All materials are in open access on the project website: http://www.innowork-project.eu/.

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[1] Flash Eurobarometer 415 "Innobarometer 2015 - The innovation trends at EU enterprises": Summary. European Union, 2015.

[2] Survey participants: 198 SMEs and 101 VET providers from six countries (Austria, Bulgaria, Finland, Lithuania, Portugal and the United Kingdom).

II. Learning Objectives

Having completed the InnoWork course, you should be able to:

- ☑ Identify the challenges and opportunities your company has in the domain of "creativity and innovation";
- ☑ Understand the importance of organizational innovation and describe the central role of innovation for your company's success;
- ☑ Develop an innovation plan for your organization.

These are the broad learning objectives, which like an umbrella cover the module-specific intended learning outcomes. You will be able to achieve them when you go from module to module engaging with the suggested materials and implementing the exercises.

III. Course Methodology

The InnoWork course is intended to be open, flexible, practical and output-oriented, activity-based and learner-centred. These principles underlie the choice of methodological approaches to curriculum development.

Thus, the InnoWork curriculum is:

- ▪ **Based on "needs survey"**

  The course development was preceded by in-depth analysis of the national context by the partner organizations as well as a "needs survey". The survey results were the starting point in identifying the structure of the course and the issues it should cover. The problems experienced by companies in developing and implementing innovations gave ideas for the course activities and exercises.

- ▪ **Competence-based / Outcomes-based**

  The definition of learning outcomes is central to developing the InnoWork curriculum. The broad learning objectives and module-specific learning outcomes helped to select theoretical concepts, develop reading materials and create exercises, engaging in which you can achieve the intended results.

  The module-specific learning outcomes are formulated in accordance with the European Qualification Framework for Life-long Learning in terms of *knowledge*, *skills* and *competence*, which a learner should demonstrate upon completion of the course.

  Such approach not only makes the course output-oriented; it also assures compatibility, transferability and, possibly, recognition of gained results.

  The course targets Level 5 of EQF (Table.1):

Table 1: European Qualification Framework: Level 5 Descriptors

European Qualification Framework: Level 5	
Knowledge	Comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge.

Skills	A comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems.
Competence	Exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change; review and develop performance of self and others.

▪ *Modular*

The course comprises 10 modules. Each of them focuses on its own learning objectives and suggests reading materials, exercises and self-test questions which help you achieve the intended outcomes.

Modular approach contributes to *flexibility* of the course, because every module can function as a separate learning unit. You can opt to complete the full course or, depending on your previous knowledge and experience, choose to study separate modules. In the first case, all modules taken together will lead you to attaining the broad learning objectives. In the other case, separate modules will result in obtaining module-specific learning outcomes.

In addition, modular approach enhances usability of the course for VET providers: they can easily integrate separate modules as independent learning blocks in related courses or programmes which they deliver.

▪ *Gamified*

The course content is designed on the principles of gamification. It uses game elements and game design techniques in learning activities and exercises. The material is presented in an attractive and user-friendly way, which makes it both activity-based and learner-centred.

There are presented games and exercises for individual work for those who take the course as self-learning and group exercises for the learners who take the course as part of a vocational training course.

▪ *Based on Web technologies*

All course materials are developed in electronic form. They can be accessed for free on the InnoWork website (http://www.innowork-project.eu/).

The integration of course materials into the project website makes the course open and easily accessible for wide audience. And the usage of video game elements in interactive exercises makes the learning experience even more engaging.

IV. Learning Approach

The learning approach intended for the InnoWork training materials can follow two different learning paths – self-study approach or tutor-guided approach.

Self-study approach

The InnoWork course is designed so that you could go through it without support of a tutor. It is a self-paced course with all materials available on the web-site. You can use them in a way most convenient to you. You can start with one module and proceed to another and then get back to the previous one, if you need, for instance, to recall some information for completing an exercise or answering a self-test question.

Each part of the course includes detailed instructions guiding you through the content. The material is developed in a way helping you achieve the intended learning outcomes. However, you should remember that the quality of your outcome is contingent on the quality of your input.

The 10 modules imply a wide variety of learning activities, including: reading and analysing theoretical material, reflecting on the own company or workplace situation, doing exercises and answering self-test questions. Please, note that reading the texts in each module is required for successful implementation of exercises.

Different modules suggest different types of exercises. So, you will engage in:

- *Reflection exercises*. You will run across *in-text reflection questions* asking you to relate the theoretical material to your experience and *after-text reflection exercises* providing a list of questions leading to in-depth analysis of your experience.

- *Case study examples*. Case studies are used to illustrate theoretical material. Reading and analysing them you will see how theoretical concepts and ideas work on practice and how they could possibly be applied to your organization.

- *Game exercises*. Games will immerse you in different scenarios and ask you to solve problems by completing certain tasks.

- *Problem-solving exercises*, in which you will generate solutions to a given problem using suggested methods or techniques.

In Module 9 you will learn how to develop an organizational innovation plan for your company. Reflecting on the current situation in your enterprise together with many of your collaborators and using the suggested template, you will generate solutions for enhancing creativity and innovativeness in your organization.

We encourage you to get involved in all course activities and maintain a personal journal of thoughts, observations and experiences during the course.

Tutor guided approach

The InnoWork course also envisages a tutor-guided approach. The tutor in this case shall play the role of a consultant or a facilitator and will help you navigate through the course content and develop your own learning path. The tutor's role is in bridging the gap between practical challenges you face in your work and possible solutions hidden in the course materials.

The envisaged tutor-guided approach follows the structure presented below:

Table 2: InnoWork Course: Tutor-guided approach

PART 1	Pre-consult phase
	Self-assessment based on the approach described in Training Module 9
Description	The "pre-consult" is a preparatory activity in which top managers of the SME are

	interviewed by an external facilitating team (one or more experts) in order to determine the objective of the intervention, as well as defining further conditions for its implementation (detailed description of this phase is provided in Module 9).
	Estimated Workload: 2 hours
PART 2	**Training workshop**
	Face-to-face workshops with company employees and management staff
Description	Going through the content of the InnoWork training modules with special focus on the weak areas identified during the pre-consult session. All team members who are going to work on the organisational innovation plan are recommended to take part in the workshop sessions. The number and duration of each of the workshops is to be defined according to the availability of the SME team and the facilitation team.
	Estimated Workload: 18 hours
PART 3	**Problem solving session and development of Organizational Innovation Plan**
	Face-to-face workshop with company employees and facilitation team
Description	This Problem solving session is intended to generate business development projects that may impact on business results. It is recommended that the majority if not all company employees take part in it organized in groups according to the specified schedule. The objective of the session is the one chosen by the SME manager at the pre-consult phase. The facilitators will use a problem solving method called "Problemaction", allowing for the establishment of an action plan and reflect on its implementation - different steps and goals, management control measures, acceptance and communication tasks.
	Estimated Workload: 4 hours

When the Organizational Innovation Plan enters its implementation phase, the SME management structure should assess the progress made on the implementation of the Innovation Plan (i.e. monitoring), as well as its impact on achieving the established goal, objectives and targets (i.e. evaluation). Monitoring and evaluation is an essential tool to assess how well the proposed Plan is working. It is a crucial aspect of the implementation phase.

During the implementation of the Organizational Innovation Plan, participants will have at their disposal the InnoWork modules, resource base documentation to help them to overcome any difficulties which they encounter while carrying out their activities. Coordinators of the different subgroups of the project team should encourage and facilitate the progress of work and strive to meet the deadlines.

V. Course Structure

The InnoWork course consists of 10 modules. Each module represents an independent learning unit. Its inner structure includes: module overview, learning content – reading part and exercises, self-test questions – quiz, additional readings, glossary, and bibliography.

Table 3: InnoWork Course: Structure, Content and Workload

	InnoWork Modules
Module 1:	***The concepts of creativity and innovation***
Description	Module 1 covers three main topics: importance of creativity; main characteristics of creativity; creativity development. It also suggests ideas for supporting creativity by developing a favourable organizational climate.
Knowledge	Gain knowledge on why creativity is important, what are the main characteristics of creativity and creative people, how can creativity be developed.
Skills	Improved ability to identify creativity impetuses and obstacles in the organization; improved ability to adapt traditional methods, concepts, models to new applications; proactive thinking; self-assessment; understanding attitude.
Competence	Encouraging creativity; facilitating a climate that supports creativity in an organization; managing change; leader behaviors; analytical thinking.
	Workload (self-learning approach): ***1 hour and 55 minutes*** ***Workload (tutor-guided approach):*** ***1 hour and 20 minutes***
Module 2	***Organizational structure (business model), the creative process and governance for innovation***
Description	Module 2 is focused on the role of organizational structure and culture in the process of innovation. It considers open innovation imbedded in business model as a pathway to fostering creativity and innovation. The module also explains what "*governance for innovation*" is and how it is important for innovation initiatives.
Knowledge	Advantages and disadvantages of the different organizational structures; the elements comprising a business model; understanding the role of organizational structures, culture and business models in SME innovation and government of innovation (particularly the relevance of open innovation).
Skills	Ability to identify and critically apply knowledge leading to increased organizational and business model innovation and open innovation; distinguishing between the different organizational structures; generating and reflecting upon ideas; initiating change in an organization.
Competence	Enhancing and mastering company innovation and competitiveness through organizational structures and open innovation; facilitating a business model and

	organizational structure that support creativity in an organization; managing change; leader behaviours; analytical thinking.
	Workload (self-learning approach): *3 hours and 5 minutes* **Workload (tutor-guided approach):** *2 hours*
Module 3	**Creating a culture of innovation**
Description	Module 3 focuses on the role of culture within innovation along with its benefits, barriers and some case studies from companies who have been able to successfully create one.
Knowledge	Understanding the importance of organizational culture, main components of and barriers to pursuing it; methods for successfully implementing a creative culture; developing a team ready to innovate; fostering creativity in the workplace.
Skills	Improved team-working and leadership skills.
Competence	Challenging own thinking as well as evaluating own organization; fostering teamwork; commitment to job; developing others; goal directedness; proactive thinking.
	Workload (self-learning approach): *1 hour* **Workload (tutor-guided approach):** *1 hour and 20 minutes*
Module 4	**Maintaining a culture of innovation**
Description	Module 4 focuses on two key competences required to ensure that a culture of innovation is maintained. The first is associated with people – engagement of employees; the second is linked to organizational structure – maintenance of creative environment.
Knowledge	Understand organizational and human based factors essential to maintaining a culture of innovation; gaining insights on how to cultivate creativity within an organization.
Skills	Ability to identify the elements necessary for establishing a suitable environment for innovative culture; ability to develop and communicate goals; ability to express ideas concisely; ability to express gratitude and appreciation to others.
Competence	Maintaining a culture of innovation; providing motivational support; empowering others; managing performance; attention to communication.
	Workload (Self-learning approach): *1 hour 30 minutes* **Workload (tutor-guided approach):** *1 hour 30 minutes*
Module 5	**Application of creativity to the work tasks**
Description	Module 5 explains the relation between the concepts "design thinking", "creative thinking" and "problem solving". It describes the process of creative problem solving and suggesting creative techniques which can be used in each step.
Knowledge	Understand the concepts "design thinking" and "creative problem solving"; knowledge about different creativity and problem solving techniques.
Skills	Apply "design thinking" and "creative problem solving" to a variety of work tasks;

	applying various creativity and problem solving techniques.
Competence	Problem solving; analytical thinking; creative thinking; building collaborative relationships.
	Workload (self-learning approach): *2 hours and 25 minutes* *Workload (tutor-guided approach):* *2 hours and 10 minutes*
Module 6	**Creative workplace management**
Description	Module 6 defines creative workplace and provides guidelines for developing and managing it. The reading materials and exercises help to learn to set up inspiring working spaces, develop organizational climate fostering creative behaviour of employees, and facilitate creative process by using web technologies and tools.
Knowledge	Understand the concepts "creative workplace" in its three dimensions: physical, social, and virtual; what distinguishes an innovative workplace.
Skills	Ability to develop a plan for transforming an ordinary working space into a creative one.
Competence	Reflective thinking, practical thinking, conceptual thinking; attention to communication; building collaborative relationships.
	Workload (self-learning approach): *2 hours and 25 minutes* *Workload (tutor-guided approach):* *2 hours and 40 minutes*
Module 7	**Innovation leadership**
Description	Module 7 covers the following topics: innovation leadership, innovation cycle, enabling innovation in teams, and managing creative teams.
Knowledge	Understand the concepts of "innovation leadership" and "leadership for innovation"; gain insights on how to lead your effective creative team; understand the differences are between a leader, manager and a CEO.
Skills	Improve their skills for leading others: improve skills for encouraging and motivating staff and colleagues, and develop new skills for applying "leadership for innovation" strategies to team management.
Competence	Improve leadership competencies: establishing focus; providing motivational support; fostering teamwork; empowering and developing others; managing change; Improve competencies for solving problems: fostering innovation; forward thinking; strategic thinking; initiative and entrepreneurial orientation; Improve competencies related to communication and influencing: influencing others; building collaborative relationships.
	Workload (self-learning approach): *2 hours* *Workload (tutor-guided approach):* *2 hours*

Module 8	Technology as an enabler of innovative ideas
Description	Module 8 introduces the challenges of the information age and explains how Web-based technologies and tools help organizations meet them. It also provides an exemplary list of technologies and tools which may enable creative ideas and facilitate organizational innovation.
Knowledge	Understand the challenges the business faces in the information age; understand the concepts "social business", "open innovation", "human cloud" and "crowdsourcing".
Skills	Improve skills for leading others, namely skills for facilitating groups, supporting change, motivating and supporting colleagues, including in particular skills to identify and select appropriate web-based technologies and tools for facilitating innovation process in the learner's company.
Competence	Improve competences for fostering quality, fostering teamwork, providing motivational support, empowering others, managing change and performance, building collaborative relationships, enhancing customer orientation, forward thinking, strategic thinking and reflective thinking, initiative and fostering innovation, in particular by developing competence to facilitate the innovation process by the use of web-based technologies and tools.
	Workload (self-learning approach): 2 hours and 5 minutes **Workload (tutor-guided approach):** 2 hours
Module 9	Designing an organization innovation plan
Description	Module 9 presents the process of developing an innovation plan in series of steps which learners could follow when designing an innovation plan for their organization.
Knowledge	To understand the process of developing an organizational innovation plan as a five step model; the concept of innovation as a systematic process.
Skills	Improve skills for leading others, namely skills for supporting change and skills for motivating and supporting colleagues, in particular by organizing work on the design and implementation of an organizational innovation plan in a SME; ability to translate innovation problems into a structured plan.
Competence	Improve competences for fostering quality, fostering teamwork, empowering others, managing change and performance, building collaborative relationships, forward thinking, strategic thinking and reflective thinking, creative problem solving, initiative and fostering innovation.
	Workload (self-learning approach): 3 hours and 5 minutes **Workload (tutor-guided approach):** 2 hours
Module 10	Reference to other creativity and innovation tools
Description	Module 10 provides tools for creativity and innovation that can be used for different tasks at the work place such as creativity and innovation audit tool, creativity techniques

	search engine and other useful tools.
Knowledge	Learn more about the difference between personal and organisational creativity; acquaint with tools for applying creative techniques;
Skills	Ability to adapt traditional methods, concepts, models to new applications; self-assessment;
Competence	Encouraging creativity; conceptual thinking and analytical thinking; creative thinking.

	Workload (self-learning approach):	*30 minutes*
	Workload (tutor-guided approach):	*1 hour*
	Total workload (self-learning approach):	*20 hours*
	Total workload (tutor-guided approach):	*18 hours*

VI. Recommended Background

There are no specific prerequisites for this course. However, it is primarily designed for:

- Owners, managers and employees of micro, small or medium sized enterprises;
- Instructors teaching courses in *Organizational Innovation* to VET students and adult learners;
- Those who are interested in fostering creativity and innovation in the work context (more specifically, in the context of SMEs).

The course targets the fifth level of European Qualification Framework and is suitable for learners holding equivalent or more advanced qualifications and/or degrees.

VII. Technical Specifications

The access to the InnoWork website (http://www.innowork-project.eu) is open, no registration is required. All materials developed under the project are available at the website.

The learning games and exercises developed for the different modules are fully compatible with all up-to-date versions of the usual web browsers: Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, Microsoft Edge, Safari (9 and later), Internet Explorer (11 and later).

There shouldn't be any hardware limitations for the average PC used: Operating System: Windows XP SP2 and above, Max OS X 10.8 and above, Ubuntu 12.04 and above /GPU: DX9 suitable and above; Ram: 1GB and above/.

Learners do not need any specific technological skills to take the course. You just need the Internet access and the desire to learn and explore new things!