

Case study Training for Practical Trainers

Kenniscentrum Handel supports companies offering traineeships

Kenniscentrum Handel is *the* centre of excellence for the trade sector and fulfils a strategic role within the retail, wholesale and international trade employment markets in the Netherlands. Kenniscentrum Handel endeavours to facilitate closer ties between industry and vocational education in this sector. They develop qualifications for secondary vocational education, recruit companies offering top quality traineeships; where students can do work placements, monitor the quality of these companies and offer support and advice both to companies that offer training and ROCs [Regional Educational Centres].

At the end of the 90s, vocational education was based on final attainment levels. However, educational insights gained and the realisation that this form of education no longer connected to the requirements of business and industry led to the modernisation of vocational education. To this end, a new structure of qualifications was established, concentrating on the development of competencies. Implementation of this competency-based training must be completed by 2010. Competency based education is distinguished by the fact that a greater percentage of the training takes place in a practical setting. Over the past few years, Kenniscentrum Handel has made a huge effort to support companies that offer vocational training facilities. Moreover, Kenniscentrum Handel has primarily focussed on the practical trainers within these companies. This is the person within the company that coaches and trains the work placement student during practical training and, subsequently, determines the quality of the training the company offers.

In 2008, a *competency profile for the practical trainer* was developed with 3 core tasks (organising practical training, supervising/training and assessing) and 11 secondary work processes. This competency profile is a guideline for implementing instruments for supporting companies providing vocational training. The competency profile for the practical trainer within the trade sector is attached as appendix 1.

Training for Practical Trainers

Kenniscentrum Handel has developed Training for Practical Trainers (TPT) in order to support practical trainers with their role, tasks and responsibilities.

Training for Practical Trainers, provided by Kenniscentrum Handel, is a practical and interactive course comprising six different modules, based on the practical trainer's three core tasks.

The objective of Training for Practical Trainers is to enable the practical trainer to contribute towards the organisation, training and assessment involved in the learning process for employees and for (educational) participants within the organisation (the company that provides traineeships). The practical trainer will then know exactly what is expected of him and what his role is within the people training process (knowledge). During training, he will also learn how to execute the role (skills) and draw up personal action plans and a portfolio on this basis.

Basic principles for evaluating the effect of Training for Practical Trainers

The new, competency based qualification structure within vocational education is an important aspect of the training. Competency based training means that during (preparatory, secondary and higher) vocational education, a great deal of attention is paid to the knowledge, skills and attitude that the young employee will need for the job either now or in the future. Kenniscentrum Handel applies the following definition to competencies: *A competency is the developable power of someone to act appropriately and purposefully and to be motivated and process and result oriented in situations that present themselves.*

In other words; a competency is a coherent combination of the knowledge, understanding, skills, and attitudes that are required in order to function in a certain situation.

A competency is formulated in general terms and is concretised in the situational context by visible behaviour. This essentially means gaining an insight into know-how and translating this into vocational practicalities. It also involves employing the knowledge gained, using practical assignments in realistic situations similar to those that may occur in practice.

On this basis, three basic principles that are essential for evaluating Training for Practical Trainers can then be formulated.

1. Setting explicit points of development for participants in the preparatory phase

The training comprises six different modules which link into one another but which can also be taken individually. The most important influence on the effectiveness of this training begins in the preparatory phase. The practical trainer is given the 'Training for Practical Trainers Questionnaire' prior to the training in order to establish which modules are important for them. This questionnaire is based on the practical trainer's competency profile (appendix 1). The 'Training for Practical Trainers Questionnaire' has been attached as appendix 2. The training adviser from Kenniscentrum Handel and the practical trainer discuss the results of the questionnaire and the possible points for development that arise as a result. On this basis, the participant then registers for the modules relevant to him/her. Completion of the questionnaire allows every practical trainer to link the training to his/her individual wishes and/or needs and the efficacy of the training can subsequently be established more accurately.

2. Portfolio as criterion for practical value

Practical trainers work on their portfolio for the duration of the training. The portfolio is then used during training as a tool for developing the practical trainer. In the portfolio, the behavioural criteria are set out for the practical trainer per module, in relation to the practical trainer's core tasks and work processes.

The practical trainer reads through these behavioural criteria per module and decides which he/she already has and which he/she would like to develop. The practical trainer then draws up an action plan containing his/her 'plan of attack', based on the points for particular attention that have been chosen. The practical trainer then gets to work on the action plan in the practical context and the portfolio fills up with so-called evidence while the action plan is being executed. When the training adviser from Kenniscentrum Handel visits the company, they will discuss the portfolio with the participant and provide the advice or support required by the practical trainer. Once the portfolio contains sufficient evidence the practical trainer can complete a competency scan (attachment 3). If this competency scan is completed successfully, the practical trainer receives a certificate and the Training for Practical Trainers comes to an end.

3. Coaching by the training adviser in the vocational context

The effectiveness of the training is greatly improved as a result of coaching and support provided by the training advisers for the practical trainers after training. Once the certificate has been awarded, the training adviser makes a tri-monthly visit to the company where the practical trainer works. During this visit, any problems and (new) points for development will be discussed and the practical trainer will be supervised while executing his (new) role as practical trainer.

On the basis of these basic principles, we can formulate three statements with regard to the effect of Training for Practical Trainers:

1. Quality x Acceptance = Effect
Quality, here, represents the content-based and didactic design of the training and acceptance relates to harmonising the training to the participant's initial working situation.
2. Effect x Use = Practical value
This means that the ultimate return on the training is expressed in terms of actual usage within a practical setting.
3. Practical value x Coaching = Return
It is not just usage that provides maximum return but also the provision of coaching and feedback.

(Source: Bergenhenegouwen, G.J. e.a. (2002). *Strategisch opleiden en leren in organisaties. [Strategic training and learning in organisations] Deventer: Kluwer Bedrijfsinformatie.* Chapter 11)

Levels of effect evaluation for Training for Practical Trainers

The basic principles of Training for Practical Trainers correspond to the first three levels of the ROI method as used by the Avalnet project.

- Level 0: diagnosis level
Questionnaire for Practical Trainers

- Level 1: Reaction level
Verbal evaluation will take place at the end of each module and, on this basis, the trainer can adapt the main points of the training to the needs of the practical trainers. Written evaluation completes the training and allows the practical trainers to assess the trainer, the different modules and the programme in its entirety. Evaluation at this level may refer to the so-called 'satisfaction' of the practical trainers but also provides essential information about the form and content of the programme. The extent to which participants have accepted the programme can also certainly be gauged. (Quality x acceptance = effect)

- Level 2: Level of learning
When the portfolio contains sufficient evidence, the practical trainer can carry out a competency scan. After successful completion, he or she will be presented with a certificate, thus becoming a certified practical trainer. This is the official starting point for using the training in practice (effect x use = practical value).

- Level 3: Level of Effect
After achievement of the certificate, the training advisers remain in contact with the practical trainer via a tri-monthly visit to the company providing the traineeship, where the individual has achieved the status of accredited practical trainer. Problems and new development points will be discussed during this visit. It is important that the training adviser asks about the tasks that are being carried out by the practical trainer and is provided with an indication of the effect of the Training for Practical Trainers in practice.

The practical value (level 2) times the coaching (level 3) by the training adviser after certification of the practical trainer ensures a maximum return on Training the Practical Trainer and subsequently, Training for Practical Trainers from Kenniscentrum Handel contributes towards supporting the companies that provide traineeships.

Appendix 1 Competency profile practical trainer

Practical trainer in the trade sector

The practical trainer in the trade sector works in a company that provides traineeships and is recognised by Kenniscentrum Handel. Alongside and on account of his "ordinary" role in the company, he provides leadership to participants during their vocational training. He is the first point of contact for participants and familiarises them with day-to-day practicalities.

In his role as practical trainer, he supervises and assesses all of the participant's learning activities. To this end, the practical trainer ensures that there is a climate conducive to learning within the company providing the traineeship and that the workplace can be used as a learning environment. It is extremely important that the participant's workplace corresponds to the working environment for which the he or she is being trained as far as possible.

In order to be able to effectively carry out the role of practical trainer it is essential that he shows interest in the participant, that he can pass on expertise and that he can attune his training style to the participant's training needs. A feeling of responsibility, good organisational skills and the ability to work with people are essential skills for an effective practical trainer.

In addition to contact with the participant, the practical trainer also maintains contacts with the practical trainer from the school and the training adviser from Kenniscentrum Handel. During the participant's practical vocational training period, the practical supervisor visits the company providing the traineeship on several occasions in order to discuss the state of play with the participant and the practical trainer. The training adviser from Kenniscentrum Handel advises the practical trainer on training the participant during the practical vocational training period and helps him/her reflect upon his role as practical trainer. The portfolio can serve as the basis for this reflection.

Summary of core tasks and work processes from practical trainer's competency profile

Core task 1.

Organises the participant's learning process

- 1.1 Conducts the selection interview with the participant
- 1.2 Supervises the participant during the introductory period
- 1.3 Establishes the initial situation and learning needs
- 1.4 Determines learning activities in consultation with the participant
- 1.5 Substantiates the learning plan
- 1.6 Maintains contact with the practical trainer and the training adviser

Core task 2.

Trains the participant

- 2.1 Trains the participant on the work floor
- 2.2 Monitors and guides the participant's learning process
- 2.3 Conducts supervisory and progress interviews with the participant
- 2.4 Evaluates the practical vocational training period with the participant

Core task 3.

Assesses the result of learning

- 3.1 Prepares an assessment opportunity or an assessment period
- 3.2 Assesses the participant

Appendix 2: Questionnaire for Practical Trainers



Training for Practical Trainers Questionnaire

Kenniscentrum Handel

The TPT Questionnaire

Introduction

This questionnaire is intended to provide an overview of your skills and learning points as a practical trainer. On the basis of the completion of this questionnaire, the training adviser will conduct an interview with you about your qualities as a practical trainer and any points of particular attention.

The questionnaire is not an exam! It is a self-assessment: you cannot pass or fail.

The training adviser can also complete the questionnaire and, in this way, provide his impression of you as a practical trainer. If the training adviser is not yet capable of providing his impression of you, you can also ask someone else to do this. This may be a colleague to supervisor.

Completing the TPT questionnaire

The TPT questionnaire comprises several statements, divided between three subject areas:

- 1. Organising the learning process**
- 2. Training the participant**
- 3. Assessing the result of learning**

You can evaluate these statements under headings ranging from "Completely agree" to "Do not agree". Always indicate what applies to you.

If the statement concerns work that you do not carry out, for example selecting participants, then leave blank.

Completing the questionnaire will take about 10 minutes.

The result

You can analyse the results of the questionnaire using the "TPT Questionnaire Results" information that can be found on page 6 of this document. As mentioned, the result of the completed questionnaire(s) will be discussed with the training adviser. The training adviser can provide you with advice about possible support during the training and assessment of participants on the basis of this discussion.

Name of practical trainer:

Organising the learning process		Completely agree	Agree somewhat	Slightly agree	Do not agree
		A	B	C	D
1	I know what competency based training is	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	I tell the participant what I expect from him at the beginning of the practical vocational training period	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	I discuss learning objectives with the participant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	I observe the participant in order to ascertain the initial situation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Together with the participant, I decide which learning activities suit his learning objectives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	I draw up an introductory programme that suits the participant's learning objectives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Together with the participant, I decide which learning activities can be carried out within my company	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	I draw up a plan of the learning activities with the participant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9	Should problems arise, I contact the school and/or the training adviser from KCH	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10	I know what the school and the participant expect from me as practical trainer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11	I enjoy teaching the participant what is involved with working in my company	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12	I contact the school if necessary	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13	I listen attentively to the participant and ask questions if necessary	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14	I make use of advice that I receive from the school's practical supervisor and the training adviser	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Total (number of times that the circle has been crossed in the column)					

Name of practical trainer:

Training the participant		Completely agree	Agree somewhat	Slightly agree	Do not agree
		A	B	C	D
1	I give the participant clear instructions about carrying out the work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	I give the participant clear feedback on the execution of his work and his attitude	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	I ensure that I use language which is understood by the participant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	I ask the participant how he would like to be coached	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	I tell the participant what he has done well while carrying out his task	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	I regularly check the progress of the participant's learning process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	I conduct coaching interviews with the participant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	I take action if the participant's development is behind schedule	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9	I help the participant reflect on his learning process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10	I modify my method of coaching according to the participant's needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11	I can estimate the self-confidence and motivation of the participant before carrying out a task	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12	I use mistakes and feedback to improve my effectiveness as a practical trainer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13	I help the participant to solve problems within the learning process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14	I am happy to involve the school's practical supervisor with the evaluation of the practical vocational training period	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Total (number of times that the circle has been crossed in the column)					

Name of practical trainer:

Assessing the result of learning		Completely agree	Agree somewhat	Slightly agree	Do not agree
		A	B	C	D
1	I decide when the participant has mastered the competencies well enough to be able to do the final assessment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	I plan the moment of assessment and prepare for it effectively	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	I inform the participant about the time and manner of assessment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	I assess the participant on the basis of the assessment criteria that have been defined	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	I can 'translate' the assessment criteria from the exams into the situation in my company	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	I ask the participant why he has made certain choices when carrying out his work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	I know the difference between my role as trainer and my role as assessor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	I read the assessment instruments from the school through carefully before I carry out the assessment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9	I base my assessment on a participant's visible behaviour	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10	I ensure that the practical supervisor from the school knows when a final assessment is taking place	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11	I explain what my assessment is based on to the participant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12	I use my knowledge of the job to assess the participant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13	I apply the assessment instrument as prescribed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14	I am prepared to give a participant a score of 'insufficient' even if I like him	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Total (number of times that the circle has been crossed in the column)					

Determining scores from TPT questionnaire

In the chart below, fill in how often you (or the training adviser, colleague or supervisor) filled in an answer in each of the four columns (A, B, C of D). You can do this by counting how often A, B, C etc was chosen per subject, at the bottom of each page.

Name of practical trainer: Company: Name of training adviser/colleague/supervisor: Date:		
Subject	Practical Trainer's result	Training adviser, colleague or supervisor's result
Organising the learning phase	... x A	... x A
	... x B	... x B
	... x C	... x C
	... x D	... x D
Training the participant	... x A	... x A
	... x B	... x B
	... x C	... x C
	... x D	... x D
Assessing the result of learning	... x A	... x A
	... x B	... x B
	... x C	... x C
	... x D	... x D
Subjects or agreements arising out of the interview with the training adviser: 		

Appendix 3: Competency scan



In order to gain a rapid and effective insight into the competency development of a participant, Kenniscentrum Handel has developed the competency scan, a handy tool to be used with competency based training.

Having an insight into the development of participants' competencies is important for being able to offer effective coaching during their training. Kenniscentrum Handel has developed a practical instrument that can be used to track and allow an insight to be gained into development. The competency scan is simple and effective.

How does it work?

The scans are provided on a digital basis (via internet). A questionnaire (Fig.1) has been developed per competency which is filled in by different people (independently of one another). The result is then translated into clear summaries. These summaries can then be printed, saved and filed.

Previewinstellingen:

Naam deelnemer **Jan de Vries** | **Marjolijn de Koning**
Bekijk als **opleidingsadviseur** | **praktijkopleider** | **deelnemer**

Jan bestudeert de informatie die uit het selectiegesprek naar voren is gekomen.
Kies de stelling die het beste bij Jan past

Past uitstekend bij hem

Past wel goed bij hem

Past een beetje bij hem

Past niet bij hem

Jan beoordeelt bij het selectiegesprek of de deelnemer en het leerbedrijf bij elkaar passen.
Kies de stelling die het beste bij Jan past

Past uitstekend bij hem

Past wel goed bij hem

Fig. 1

User friendly

The system is very user friendly. Every scan is offered via the internet (online) as a web application. The participant themselves can decide where and when they complete the competency scan.

What is it used for?

The scans can be used for:

- charting competencies (a zero measurement or progress measurements)
The practical trainer, practical supervisor and/or manager can establish (per competency) to what extent the participant has already mastered or developed the competency.
- 360° feedback
The competency scan is expanded to include an assessment of the participant themselves. Language usage within the questionnaire is attuned to the participant's level. Learning points can be discussed on the basis of the result.
- assessing competencies
The questionnaires in the competency scan are set up so that they can be used for assessing competencies. The assessor completes the questions. On the basis of pre-set standards, an

assessment can take place of whether the participant has mastered the competencies to a sufficiently high level.

Report

The standard report is given in two variations: a graphic account (comprising a 360° rose (fig.2) and a full histogram summary (fig. 3)) and a textual account which illustrates the answers chosen by the participant. The presentation of the question and the chosen answer is also visible for each of the assessors.

The report can be evaluated with the participant. The participant can use the report as evidence in his portfolio.

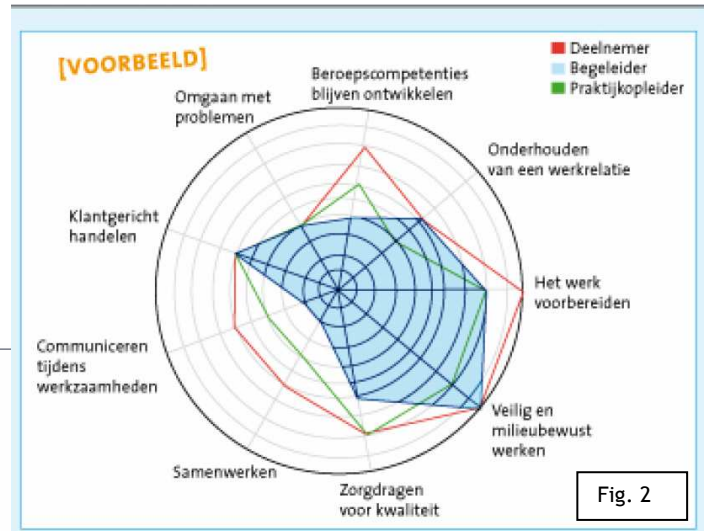


Fig. 2

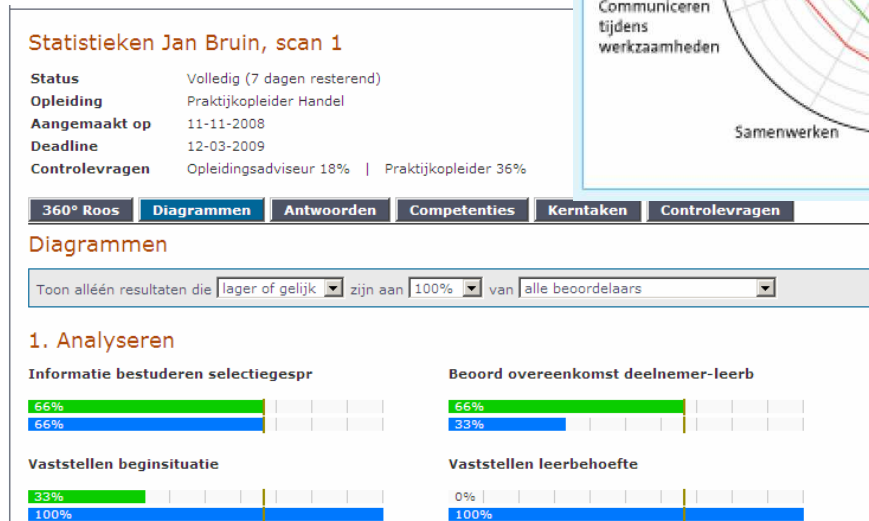


Fig. 3