



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

ERASMUS PLUS DIALOGICAL APPROACH

Project Results Details (2)

Result title: Competency Profile for Dialogical Approach Tutor

Result Leading organization:

STICHTING HOGESCHOOL ROTTERDAM (E10135501 - Netherlands)

January 2023

Marieke Groot

Rens Martijn

With thanks to our project partners and Mirjam Koning

1. Introduction

The cultural change necessary for multi-professional and multi-sectoral work that is intended to be brought about through the dialogical approach, might only be sustainable if the Governance Group supports and knows about transversal tutorship capabilities. The tutor becomes **the bridge** between the Governance Group and the multi-professional teams who act in the different care and assistance settings indicated by the partners. This represents a guarantee for the systematic acquisition of the dialogical approach by the Governance Group and referents of the implementation processes in the multi-professional teams. This project result is devoted to identifying a **set of key competencies** that allow professionals who play the role of bridge to become a tutor in an effective, fair, inclusive way. Following this, organizational learning about the dialogical approach will be performed.

This project result has a two-fold aim:

- Outlining a set of cross-sectoral key competencies – specifically key skills, knowledge, abilities and behaviours – for tutors starting from current professionals’ experiences, attitudes, and challenges in the context of each partner.
- Setting the stage for implementing training activities. This project result is a fundamental step in designing the skills and competencies that will be acquired by the tutors during the training and (once the project is completed) for outlining transferable training modules.

The main innovation in this project result is that we have created a competency profile for tutors that currently doesn’t exist in the dialogical approach. These competencies are necessary to ensure a high training profile for tutors. Moreover, an innovative element consists in introducing tutor’s competencies by acting on resources already present in the system and directing them towards activities that become systemic, laying the foundations for the sustainability of the overall design system. The expected impact is to supplement the already existing skills of professionals who become tutors. They will therefore be able to create a new position in which they support multi-professional teams and Governance Groups and to ensure a more effective transmission within vertical processes. The potential transferability is made evident through a systemic effect also guaranteed by the evidence that comes from the actions put in place.

Course / curriculum – Design and development process

The construction of the Competency Profile is a result of a collective research process. Based on the development of the competence profile used for Honors students in the University of Applied Sciences Rotterdam, we started the dialogical approach with the different nodes to develop a model that will be used in the Tutor training in the beginning of January 2023.

The question “What should a professional know and what should a professional be able to show to become a tutor, e.g. to become the bridge between Governance Group and multi-professional team?” is the leading question in this process. In the first Multiplier event on the 27th October 2022 engagement and networks activation had been started with the aim to collect empirical data including interviews, participant observation, focus groups and so on. Key actors involved in the research process were identified both among professionals and persons who have management or political responsibilities. After that meeting, Rotterdam and D&D Ltd provided a guideline with tutorials for the upcoming research steps in the project. The final result is a Competency Profile for the Dialogical Approach Tutor that is used in setting up the tutor training

in 2023. A Phenomenon based approach is the method we used to develop the profile with the partners and stakeholders in this project.

Project result 2 refers to objective 2 “To provide tools and methodologies to enhance integrated, multi-professional and people-centred teamwork at the institutional, organizational and professional levels” and corresponds to activities related to WP 2. Specifically, the aim of project result 2 is to:

identify a competency profile for Dialogical Approach Tutor.

What is a Phenomenon based approach?

“In an increasingly complex environment with wicked problems, things need to be approached more as phenomena than as well-defined assignments. This approach challenges the traditional hierarchical and silo-like organizations. This also requires a dynamic organization around the phenomena. Complex phenomena don't recognize administrative boundaries, but their causes and mechanisms require a more comprehensive approach. This requires a strong cross-administrative culture of cooperation. (across organizational boundaries.” (Publications of the Finnish government: Network Management Guide 2019, 12.)

Streamlining operations, continuous development and finding new solutions require a perspective based on phenomenon-based learning rather than problem-based learning. While a problem-based approach is based on clearly described and delimited problems, the basis of phenomenon-orientation is multi-perspective and ambiguous, as well as that it takes into account experientiality and participation.

A problem or a worry?

When problematic situations are complex and difficult to define, they are called “wicked problems”. Problems with clear boundaries and descriptions can be called “tamed problems”. That does not mean that they are always easy. Professionals are trained to diagnose problems, design solutions and work with those solutions to solve the problems. In the case of tamed problems, we can endlessly refine the logic, algorithms and technical implementation of the solution. To solve the problems, it is good to have enough information to support decision-making, to use previous experience and expertise in making choices. After draft versions decisions are prepared by experts in the field. But what if no solution is found or no agreement is reached?

At the individual level one can start talking about a worry. Worry is a subjective experience that arises from a lack of self-action and a combination of needed support. Worry cannot be transferred to another person. Based on the contact information, the person with worry will be able to talk to the person who can act. The best result is achieved when a person with worry speaks with a person who can help. The greater the worry, the more dialogue is needed.

A polygonal situation also requires the polygonal nature of producing solutions and the production of lots of alternatives as a basis for choices. Dialogue means thinking together, listening to others, loosening one's own preconceptions and future oriented working. This produces lots of creative options early in the process. In trying to make decisions too early, you may lose good and workable solutions. Orientation to the future means looking at the current situation from the future prospect and does not mean looking at the future from the perspective of the current situation. In this kind of case we are often prisoners of the possibilities of the current situation. It all starts with listening.

Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences (UAS) has developed a competence profile for innovative honor students and several institutes has used this profile specifically to challenge these ambitious students and to offer them scope to advance and strengthen their professional development beyond the boundaries of their own professional sector. This Rotterdam UAS honors profile is partly based on research on the added value of Honors in the various areas of professional practice that form the focus of the University's study program. Based on several meetings with the consortium partners and specific questions we discussed, we have gathered comments on the profile, incorporated these, discussed them again and finally we've come to this last version with which we will work throughout the project.

For our UAS it is important to experience the use of the dialogical approach in an increasingly complex environment with wicked problems. It is therefore important to approach the wicked problems as phenomena more than as well-defined assignments.

In setting up the competence profile for the tutor in the project we started by using the dialogical approach method with our partners to develop this profile for the tutor in our project.

Basic five complementary competences:

1. *Innovation driven*
2. *Demand driven*
3. *Collaborative working*
4. *Interactive learning*
5. *Knowledge creation*

Competences for Innovative Working – “Learning to Innovate”

The competences required for the Tutor are described below. This profile is about the following five competences:

1. Innovation driven
2. Demand driven
3. Collaborative working
4. Interactive learning
5. Knowledge creation

1. Innovation driven

Role: Innovator

Domain: Professional practice

Specification: Innovation and research

Competence

In contributing to the development of an innovative professional product, the tutor shows an enquiring attitude and identifies and exploits opportunities to introduce innovations into professional practice.

Context

In working life, we come up against stubborn problems, problems for which there are no ready-made solutions. There can be various reasons for this: the complexity of the issue, a lack of sufficient, wide-ranging and up-to-date expertise, and sometimes simply the speed at which developments take place. In such situations innovative capacity is needed to produce creative solutions.

As an innovator, you recognize this complexity and experience it as an opportunity, as a challenge to reflect on and discuss potential solutions with professional colleagues from your own and other disciplines. You dare to put your neck on the line and share your ideas with others. You know how important a solution is and that it is no good trying to avoid difficult situations. You investigate the problem using your own expertise, always looking for ways to uncover new insights, for example by combining existing concepts to create new solutions. You are bold and decisive and as an innovator you are enterprising and pro-active. You actively look for opportunities, know how to turn them into effective actions, and experiment with new methods and scenarios – always working from a well informed and well thought-through vision. Your insight, attitude and work are valued. You are increasingly involved in innovation. You notice that you can be an equal and critical discussion partner.

To

Contribute to innovation

You must

1. be pro-active and resourceful in complex professional situations;

2. investigate problems and potential solutions;
3. be bold and dare to experiment;
4. be creative when looking at both the issue and the solution
5. Use the Dialogical Approach Toolbox if appropriate

So that

Your innovation-driven approach leads to the development of innovative professional products.

Behavioural indicators and descriptions

Being able to act in an enterprising way in complex professional situations

- You think and act proactively. You show initiative and do not wait for others; you go and investigate. You come up with possible innovative ideas and solutions of your own accord.
- You are decisive. You familiarize yourself with the situation and take quick, well-considered and reasoned decisions about which steps are necessary.
- You can convert opportunities into targeted actions. You can identify effective routes to achieve goals.

Exploring the problem and possible solution strategies

- You prefer to explore other ideas as well as traditional methods because there is evidence that the traditional methods no longer suffice
- You come up with new perspectives on problems
- You translate developments and trends in your own area of expertise into future scenarios.
- You make responsible use of relevant practical research methods and techniques

Demonstrating daring and courage to experiment

- You experiment
- You act, even if the outcome is uncertain
- You dare to stick your neck out; you don't avoid risks

Looking creatively at both the problem and the solution

- You demonstrate the ability to depart from the existing conceptual framework
- You demonstrate that you can make use of approaches from other disciplines to come up with new findings and combinations of solution strategies
- You show that you can think out-of-the-box
- You demonstrate originality, "playfulness" and ingenuity
- You come up with new scenarios if circumstances change
- You are able to think of several solutions, approaches or perspectives for a problem that are unexpected and that bring solutions closer.

2. Demand driven

Role: Critical observer

Domain: Professional practice

Specification: Awareness of the environment

Competence

In working innovatively, the tutor demonstrates an awareness of the professional environment in which he or she operates and identifies opportunities to introduce innovations into professional practice.

Context

As a developing professional you will learn as much as you can about working practice. You will follow developments in your field. You are interested in why certain developments take place and what forces drive them, enabling you to place trends and developments in practice within a broader context. You notice that this allows you to identify cause and effect of relationships more easily. You also see that certainties are fast disappearing. You realize that change is sometimes so rapid it makes tasks more complex, raising the bar for professionals.

At the same time, you see great potential in this dynamic environment and actively seek opportunities to contribute, with others, to making a difference. You want to make a worthwhile contribution to a social issue. You explore the possibilities and discuss these with relevant stakeholders and other groups, but without jumping straight to the solution. You show your worth as a well-informed and equal discussion partner. Your preparation has given you a thorough grounding in the dynamics of the situation and you can explain and justify why you think the situation is promising. At the same time, you listen closely to what your discussion partners say. You maintain a dialogue and make sure the problem is clearly defined by asking critical questions of the client and other stakeholders, equipping you to assess the context in even greater depth. You know this exploratory phase is essential if you are going to help deliver feasible solutions or, if necessary, come up with good arguments for abandoning them.

To

Cultivate an awareness of what is going on around you, both generally and in innovative professional practice in particular,

You must

1. be aware of your environment
2. identify and describe issues relevant to professional practice
3. be able to translate theory into practical action
4. Use the Dialogical Approach Toolbox if appropriate

So that

Your analysis of the situation leads to the identification of issues recognized as important to professional practice, and practical steps can be taken towards solving them.

Behavioural indicators and descriptions

Demonstrating awareness of surroundings – social context

- You know or explore the trends and developments in a wider context than your own area of expertise and you can connect their significance to the problems you are working on
- You can look further than your nose; you foresee changes

(earlier than others) and anticipate them

- You look actively for practical situations that might provide new evidence and you make use of them in discussions.
- You see opportunities / chances and make use of them
- You recognize that external factors affect or may affect the problems you are working on
- You demonstrate social engagement, and you can account for your professional actions

Being able to identify and specify questions relevant to the profession

- You investigate the problem at hand in dialogue with the client and other relevant stakeholders
- You delve more deeply into the definition of the problem outlined; is this really the problem, is more preliminary research needed, will that lead to a different definition of the problem?
- You explore what is already known about the problem; you are able to edit it and

present it

- You can make the question explicit and adjust it
- You demonstrate knowledge of the social climate that plays a role in finding and accepting solutions

The ability to convert solutions into practical applications

- You come up with unexpected and feasible solutions
- You can convert solutions discovered through a combination of knowledge and experience of various areas of expertise into practical results

3. Collaborative working

Role: Team player

Domain: Innovative professional practice

Specification: Communication and collaborative working

Competence

In participating in innovative processes, the tutor becomes a team player who can draw on communicative, collaborative and networking skills to work effectively and efficiently with other professionals to achieve results.

Context

Working effectively in a team on solutions to real problems demands a broad range of competences. In effect, they are tools that enable you to understand the innovative context and make you an equal discussion partner. Innovative professionals are real team players; they learn from each other and share ideas.

Learning and working in real-life situations is a social process in which cooperating and networking with others is essential. Not only does it spread knowledge and experience, but it gets people more involved. As a team player you know how important collaborative working is. You are not out to 'steal the limelight'. The real value of collaborative working is that you can fill in each other's ideas, 'spar' with each other, discuss your ideas and suggestions for strategies and solutions, and scrutinise them critically – to say nothing of the added value of being open to possibilities for giving and receiving feedback. Effective professional communication prevents any unnecessary 'noise' from clouding the collaborative working process.

To

Work effectively with others on improvements, new developments and innovations

You must

1. be willing to work with others and let shared goals take precedence over individual ones
2. contribute to developing a network of experts and make strategic use of this network
3. make correct and well-timed use of a variety of communication skills
4. use the Dialogical Approach Toolbox if appropriate

So that

Team players with complementary personal and professional skills can work together and communicate with each other during a development or innovation process.

Behavioural indicators and descriptions

Being prepared to collaborate and have general goals prevail over individual goals

- You align yourself with the common goals that arise through looking for new answers to problems at hand
- You acknowledge that co-creation from professional disciplines contributes to arriving at innovative solutions
- You look for opportunities and ways to work cooperatively on answers to problems
- You are able to work in an interdisciplinary/trans-disciplinary context; i.e. you work closely with people from other areas of expertise by making constructive contributions and gaining recognition for your own area of expertise
- You contribute to the best possible alignment between contributing your own

knowledge, experience and qualities and that of team members.

- You put the interests of the team above your own personal interests, and you hold your fellow team members accountable for their behavior and responsibility. You are also accountable yourself
- You can make concessions in order to arrive at a common goal or result.

You can substantiate these concessions

Being able to contribute to the development of a network of experts and able to consult this network in a targeted fashion.

- You build up a functional network
- You use networks in a targeted fashion

Being able to make use of a variety of communication skills in the right way and at the right moment.

- You kindle enthusiasm and stimulate others
- You have effective and efficient discussions
- You share your work with others
- You contribute constructively to the collaboration

4. Interactive learning

Role: Learning

Domain: Communities of practice in innovative professional practice

Specification: Interactive learning

Competence

In guiding his or her further professional development, the tutor acknowledges the need for lifelong learning and works to gain the necessary learning skills.

Context

The world of work is changing rapidly. Many different demands will be made of you, and you run the risk of not keeping pace with events. Education faces the same problem. Despite doing our best to keep your vocational course as up to date as possible, it is not always possible to cover the latest developments. This means you must prepare yourself for work in a rapidly changing professional environment. You will not just be expected to solve problems you have prepared for in your degree and which you know well enough to be able to implement real solutions; you will also encounter problems that are new to you, problems that cannot be solved using current know-how. These new problems may require new knowledge, knowledge yet to be acquired and new contexts within which existing knowledge has to be used in different ways.

You will also increasingly collaborate with people qualified in other subjects. In such a working and learning setting you will be challenged to learn with and from each other, actively, effectively and focused on getting results. As you work jointly in this innovative process, your desire to learn will often come from within – you come across problems you really want to solve. This makes you the one with a desire to learn ‘something’, or even to ‘unlearn’ something.

The complexity of the situation does not scare you. You see a challenge, and you take it up. You throw yourself into it, and don’t give up. You know you will regularly hit a wall and have to pick yourself up again – but you will soon discover that you are learning more than you thought possible, that what at first seemed a confusing jumble now makes sense. You are much more capable of seeing the big picture.

To

Learn from and with each other

You must

1. show self-directed learning ability
2. be willing to learn in varied and challenging settings
3. be able to reflect on the effectiveness of your learning goal, method and result
4. Use the Dialogical Approach Toolbox if appropriate

So that

You can guide the further development of your learning capacity.

Behavioural indicators and descriptions

Demonstrating self-directing learning ability

- You give your own learning process substance and direction; in other words, you can set yourself developmental and learning goals and act accordingly.

Readiness and a will to learn in various challenging settings

- You reflect on your own actions and naturally ask others for feedback; you weigh up tips for improving them and then apply them immediately and effectively
- You are aware of how your personal standards and values affect your actions and you demonstrate a willingness to discuss them
- You can be held to account for your actions
- You are prepared to change your ways
- You surrender obsolete knowledge if there are good arguments for doing so
- You have the courage to push back your own boundaries in order to develop personally and professionally

The ability to reflect on the effectiveness of your professional actions

- You demonstrate the ability to reflect, and you can analyse your own actions in terms of
 - o content
 - o approach
 - o group dynamics – this might include the actions of all those involved
 - o social and ethical considerations when coming up with new solutions
 - o your own development regarding the points above
- You have learned what your strengths and weaknesses are (or gained a better understanding of them) and you are able to make improvements to both

5. Knowledge creation

Role: Knowledge producer

Domain: Innovative professional practice

Specification: Knowledge creation

Competence

In continually improving his or her knowledge and keeping up to date, the tutor not only learns within a formal context (like school), but also expands his or her expertise by learning in a workplace setting.

Context

With the rapid development of new information technologies, knowledge is expanding at an increasing rate and is available virtually on demand, and new knowledge can be disseminated just as fast. It is no longer enough to know your facts and know how to apply them. The knowledge you need most in an innovation setting is often called 'broad knowledge'. It is all about knowing the causes of many different phenomena, how things work, and understanding principles and processes (knowing who can provide ideas or specific know-how). This is particularly important because factual knowledge can become outdated (especially concrete findings), whereas knowledge of first principles (underlying these findings) does not date so quickly.

You are expected to develop a 'what if...' approach to learning. This means that you dare to ask critical questions about cause and effect. You learn to comprehend the connections and patterns in what happens in professional practice, but also to have a critical, enquiring and learning attitude. You want to uncover these cause-effect relationships and are a critical user of knowledge. Above all, you measure the value of a theory by its usefulness in solving problems you encounter in your work. You do not blindly follow any set of ideas. You find out, working with and in dialogue with other professionals, whether something will work and how it works in practice. In the process, you learn how to combine your knowledge and experience with those of others and discover what works, creating new knowledge which can be used in professional practice. In addition, you can critically assess what the 'active ingredients' are, discovering the value of the chosen approach and the driving principles (which determine how it works). You quickly learn to play with your knowledge. You discover that theories and ideas from other disciplines can also be useful or made suitable for another context. You will also discover that knowledge you acquired for another purpose can also be of practical use in your work. In short, you discover, experiment, apply your knowledge, test how it works, and so generate new knowledge. This is officially called 'productive learning' and 'far transfer'.

You realize how important it is to share knowledge with others. You are also aware that others have knowledge you can benefit from. And so, you look for effective and efficient ways to find the knowledge and experience others are willing to share or exchange. You already know how ICT quickly and easily opens doors to a rich knowledge environment. Social media such as Web 2.0 will become an increasingly useful platform for staying informed and sharing recently acquired new knowledge.

To

Continually work on growing your knowledge within an innovative learning environment

You must

1. ability to share and access knowledge and be able to learn within an application context
2. be able to use knowledge and skills at various levels of application and contexts

3. can share and access knowledge
4. Use the Dialogical Approach Toolbox if appropriate

So that

You can make a real contribution to furthering knowledge.

Behavioural indicators and descriptions

Being able to develop knowledge within an application context

- You can make use of other people's knowledge and practical experience to strengthen your own so that you develop new knowledge that takes professional practice further; you innovate
- You are open to the contribution of other people's expertise, and you actively invite them to contribute
- You build on existing knowledge and can connect the newly developed knowledge to the 'old'

Being able to apply knowledge and skills at various levels and in various contexts

- You make use of knowledge from different areas of expertise in order to discover patterns in problems
- You apply the knowledge and information thus acquired to develop or design new solutions
- You demonstrate awareness of the effect of social, economic, technical, ethical and/or psychological factors that could help to find the answers to problems you are working on

The ability to share and access knowledge

- You actively share the knowledge and experience you have gained in practice with other people
- You actively look for new knowledge and for effective ways of accessing and sharing new knowledge. You do this in a way that is appropriate for your professional practice, and you can substantiate your choices in this matter
- You look for connections that go beyond the shared knowledge and experience of team members and help them to understand these connections