



CONFERENCE MENTORING PROGRAMME FOR JOBS AND ENTERPRISE

On November 17, Minerva hosted a conference on growth and development in the region.

Two on-going projects: The Interreg MIA project and The ESF project, Job Innovation, were presented. The day was devoted to illustrating the value of mentoring programmes as tools for gaining admission to the labour market.

Eva Martinsson, HR Director, Dellner Couplers AB presented her view of the value of mentoring by illustrating how the mentoring role also offers the opportunity to work on gender and diversity issues. She also stressed the importance of being allowed to be different and how we cannot take Swedish business cultures lock, stock and barrel with us onto the international scene.

Melviana Hedén from the local energy company, Falu Energi och Vatten, has acted both as mentee and mentor in Minerva mentoring programmes. Together with her former mentor, Ronny Arnberg from the sister company, Borlänge Energi, she showed how their contacts resulted in a continued professional relationship involving exchanges of knowledge, information and networking.

The local Job Centres are collaborating partners both in the MIA project and Job Innovation, which is why it was important that Antonis Kassitas could give the employment agency's views on mentoring as a method available to job seekers. He also pointed out the importance of a common set of values pervading all the work of the Job Centre.

In the afternoon, Veronica Hedenmark and David Lega combined to give their views on disabilities and obstacles that can be turned into opportunities. Both run successful companies and both consider that competing with oneself is more important than competing with others. Veronica thinks we listen too much to others; that we ought to listen more to our inner voices, instead.

They also think it is important to share successes with others, not, as we so often do, share our problems.

jobs and new opportunities for all



Veronica Hedenmark,
Marianne Lundberg
and David Lega.



A well-attended conference.



MENTORING PROGRAMME SEMINAR THE MIA-PROJECT

Activities with the second group of job-seeking immigrant women with academic qualifications participating in the MiA project (promoting diversity in working life), have been underway for some time now with seminars and practical work experience. The participants have now acquired mentors. In order to ensure that both mentors and mentees achieve the best possible relationship during the project period, they receive a full day's special training at a seminar. What is it like, being a mentor and what does it involve, exactly?

The Minerva model offers the necessary tools and support to guarantee that the mentoring role will be both effective and rewarding for both parties.

Marita Norlin, who has imparted the necessary knowledge to Minerva's mentors over the years, took charge of the seminar on this occasion, also. Participants practiced various forms of communication and feedback.

Both mentees and mentors were allowed time to discuss in detail what they aim to achieve during the course of the programme and to cement their undertaking in a mutual "contract".

The seminar will be followed up on two further occasions during the project period to check on progress made by each mentor – mentee pair and to top up necessary information. Mentors also have their own networks and hold their own meetings to further mutual exchange and development as mentors.

INTERREG
An investment for the future

Representatives from Trondheim Kommune, our partner in the project, have been to a mentoring conference in Lille, France, where they presented the MiA project to participants from other EU countries. As we reported earlier, an active network, whose objective is to develop common guiding principles for mentoring in Scandinavia, is in operation. The Norwegian government has granted funding to Ligestillingsenteriet, the Equality Centre at Hamar, to co-ordinate mentoring instruction methods.



Keiko Yokoyama
with her mentee
Ingrid Nordling



Margaret Hammare with her mentee Jing Qiu



CURRENT ACTIVITIES IN THE ESF PROJECT

JOB INNOVATION

The job innovation project is in full swing with 14 participants. The first group consists entirely of women, all of whom have some form of disability making access to the labour market more difficult than for others. The participants, who are all seeking employment, are trained in how best to present themselves at job interviews and in other contacts with presumptive employers. They also receive individual job coaching once a fortnight with process manager, Kristina Naesenius, who has wide experience in the field.



Follow-up research will be employed to evaluate the project. The evaluator, Nina Arkeberg, who has previously evaluated parts of the EQUAL Gender School project, will follow participants, project management and steering group for the duration of the project.

A REWARDING AND LONG-LASTING NETWORK

The second of Minerva's projects for job-seeking immigrant women was carried out in 2001. Karin Rosenberg, who acted as project manager then, has reported that several of the participants still meet within the network to exchange ideas and insights gained over the years.

A network has many different functions, an advantage which the EU sees as one of the most important criteria in the project, which is funded by the EU, namely continued development and dissemination of knowledge long after the closing date.

KICK-OFF SEMINAR

IN-DIVERSITY

The project has much in common with the Interreg MiA project, in that it tackles the problem of how the labour market can make best use of the competence and skills of people who mainly come from countries outside the EU. The project will present several reports on possible methods for coping with diversity and differences on the labour market.

An e-learning programme and a tool kit that can be used by HR personnel and company managers will also be produced during the course of the project. All this material will be available on the project's homepage and platform under the address: www.in-diversity.eu

Information on the products and the benefits derived from using them will be spread during the entire period of the project at meetings, conferences, in newsletters and by tests on the products in various countries, etc.



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