



Be Your Own Boss

Trainer Handbook

This handbook contains suggested approaches to training for use with trainees who want to 'Be their own Boss'

BYOB ETHOS AND BACKGROUND

Be Your Own Boss is a business start-up course aimed at giving good basic knowledge on the requirements of starting a small business to delegates who are about to start or have just started a small enterprise. It is not specific to any sector or industry or business type, but gives a general foundation of knowledge about starting a business.

Be Your Own Boss was an EU funded project researched and developed under the Leonardo da Vinci programme 2000-2006. To quote the body responsible, "The Leonardo da Vinci programme focuses on the teaching and training needs of those involved in vocational education and training."

It aims to establish and bolster the competitiveness of the European labour market by helping European citizens to acquire new skills, knowledge and qualifications and have them recognised across borders.

It also supports innovations and improvements in vocational education and training systems and practices. One main objective is to increase the quality and attractiveness of vocational education and training in Europe.

Leonardo da Vinci is open to the entire spectrum of subjects covered by vocational education and training. It supports the transfer of knowledge, innovation and expertise between all key actors in this domain.

Leonardo da Vinci funds a wide-range of actions, notably transnational mobility, European projects focusing on the development or the transfer of innovation and networks. It addresses trainees in initial vocational training, people available on the labour market and professionals in vocational education and training, as well as any organisation active in this field."

Source: Europa Education Programmes

http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/leonardo/index_en.html

Five trans-national partners in four countries have been involved in the research for this trainer handbook.

The partners are:

Business Initiative Stoke, United Kingdom
Euroface Consulting, Czech Republic
Euro Training, Bulgaria
Kaunas Regional Innovation Centre, Lithuania
Staffordshire University, United Kingdom

This is an EU funded adult training development Partnership project.

For trainer information please see: www.eu-byob.eu

THE 'BE YOUR OWN BOSS' COURSE

The text based modules are available as a separate workbook, designed as an accessible introduction to business start-up, underlining the main points where possible with examples, case studies, graphics and illustrations. Trainers may use the content as a guide to delivery or use their own materials to underpin the key learning points in each module.

This handbook has been produced as suggested approaches to training and provides the results of a survey of trainers in the participating countries.

Survey methodology

A questionnaire was designed to capture information on the considered importance by trainers: 1) Before people attend training, 2) During training and 3) Post-training. For an example of the questionnaire see Appendix 1.

Numbers of trainers surveyed:

UK:	14
Bulgaria:	17
Czech Rep:	13
Lithuania:	33
Total	77

Focus Groups

Further trainer focus groups and observations were conducted on the Partnership visits and comments and suggestions given at these workshops are at Appendix 2.

Results of trainer feedback and suggested approaches:

PRIOR TO THE COURSE



1. Screen clients for ability
2. Screen for learning styles
3. Issue info about course
4. and profile of tutors
5. Expectations and course needs of trainees
6. Anticipate problems with difficult trainees
7. Tailor materials to group

It is important the business support organisations and their trainers gather information about delegates prior to the course so that the delivery may be correctly aimed at the needs of the majority of the group. Profile of trainers was not considered as important as long as competency has been proved.

Business support organisations should collate more information to determine the education, knowledge and experience levels of the delegates – as this will help the trainer determine the level and depth at which they will deliver the training course. This will make the delivery more appropriate to the group.

Business support organisations should ask delegates the following:

- What educational levels they achieved
- What type of business they want to run
- What knowledge they have of that type of business
- What business knowledge they have
- What knowledge they need the most (i.e. sales, marketing, finance, business planning, sector specific information)

This might lead the trainer to focus more on one module if there is a shared priority.

It is important to point out that delegates will not receive sector specific information or learning, but these can be addressed by referral to a specialist advisor or organisation after the course. This will help delegates understand that the course will give them important basic business training and that more specialised and specific assistance can be arranged after the course.

Sector specific support and information

At the back of each delegate training manual, the business support organisation should add any other material or information helpful to the individual delegate.

This will guide the delegate towards additional specific advice and further courses appropriate to their sector or business type.

Special requirements and assistance

The trainer(s) should check with the business organisation whether any delegates have special requirements such as wheelchair access, support workers, signers or any other appropriate forms of assistance and aids which might assist a person with a disability.

This might mean booking or taking into account special assistance and equipment, and ensuring training takes place in properly accessible rooms.

Some delegates may have a support worker with them to help them through the course.

Anticipate problems

Organisations booking the training need to make trainers aware of any potential difficult clients beforehand and consider the need to offer alternatives (for example on a one-to-one basis instead of with a group).

Trainers should have the option of excluding trainees. The opportunity to set the boundaries at the beginning of the session should be taken – requesting questions relating to individual issues to be saved and answered at the end.

Screening before booking has been suggested to ensure potential problems can be avoided as far as possible and to agree core objectives are similar.

Housekeeping

The trainer should check with the venue provider where the fire exits are, the fire safety routine and fire assembly points outside the building. They should check with the building supervisor what the fire drill is and repeat this at the beginning of the course each day so the delegates know how to ensure their safety in a fire.

The trainer should find out where the toilets are, canteen or restaurant and any other facilities which are useful to the delegates. In some buildings smoking may not be allowed and so the trainer should find out where delegates can safely smoke.

The daily start and end times of the course should be given to the delegates along with any break times.

Equipment

Trainers should arrive in good time to check that they have the correct equipment such as whiteboard, flip chart, laptop and projector. Trainers should check electrical and technical equipment prior to starting the course to ensure that everything works.

Materials

Trainers should ensure that all delegates have their packs and keep 1-2 spare packs available should a delegate forget to bring theirs. Any relevant videos or DVDs are useful to illustrate a topic (marketing, book-keeping etc) and the case study produced specifically for this project can be shown at the beginning/end of the course.

Group education/knowledge levels

The trainer should check with the business support organisation what the general ability levels of the group are.

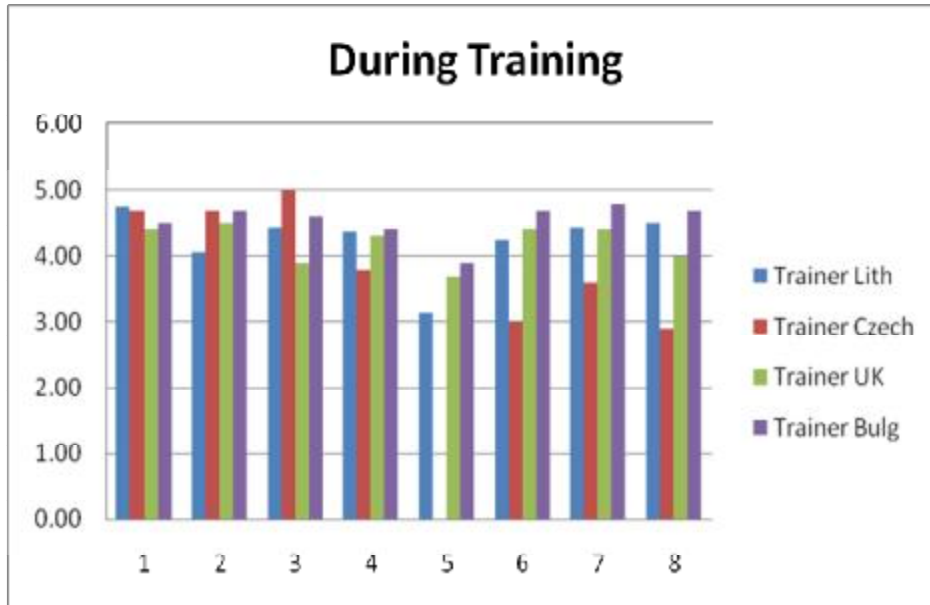
As the delegate handbook contains a good deal of in-depth material, the trainer should decide how to pitch the information according to the knowledge and experience levels of the majority of delegates within the group.

Some modules or business knowledge areas might have to be explained in more detail and some modules will require less focus.

The trainer should study the manual carefully and select the material most appropriate to the group needs and deliver this. The trainer should discuss and agree with their business support organisation what they are to deliver in relation to group needs.

DURING THE TRAINING

Results of trainer feedback and suggested approaches:



1. Confirm expectations
2. Ice breaker to relax
3. Active participation
4. Test understanding
5. Short modules of 20 mins each
6. Combine mix of activities
7. Evaluate if key objectives met
8. Agree SMART action plan

Timing and control

The trainer should ensure that they keep to time and take control of delegate questions to ensure that no one person dominates the group or disrupts the learning of others. They should also keep questioning to a reasonable level to ensure that all the material can be covered in a timely manner.

Course Development

Keep up to date with new information and learning which might be discovered as the programme is delivered throughout different countries. Trainers and business support organisations are encouraged to submit additional ideas.

Introducing course/expectations

It is important to ensure that delegates understand the purpose of the course and how the delegate handbook will be used: as a long term reference for businesses as they progress through their first two-three years in operation. Reassure delegates about the level and depth of material that will be covered during the course, as some delegates might be concerned if they do not have a strong educational background and knowledge.

Ice breaker

Most trainers considered an ice-breaker essential, whether use of working in pairs and introducing each other and interests.

Good practice examples of ice-breakers:

- Work in pairs and introduce each other
- Use random numbers and ask for their most interesting place they have visited.
- See link : <http://www.training-games.com/pdf/40FreeIceBreakers.pdf>

Active participation

All trainers considered active participation important, rather than have all short modules. Examples of good practice for business start-up are:

- Basic book-keeping exercise
- Cash flow forecast exercise
- Selling techniques practice in groups
- SWOT exercise.

See David Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory model (ELT): 1984.

Business Plan Template

As well as the handbook, delegates should be provided with a business plan template. Good practice suggests a **worked example** of a business plan is available to circulate amongst delegates. A guest speaker from someone who has set up a business is ideal before or after a break.

Evaluation

A re-cap of material and testing understanding was considered important by most of the trainers, to allow for further support to be given if needed. Good practice involved short tests, verbal or written as a quiz. Support after the course depended upon funding. Courses should be evaluated but good practice: issue evaluation forms at the start and trainees asked to return them particularly if they do not stay to the end.

POST TRAINING

Results of trainer feedback and suggested approaches:



1. Issue course certification
2. Offer post-course support
3. Review Action Plan

Course certification

Although trainers (apart from Czech Republic) considered issuing a certificate was not particularly important, trainees asked all considered this an important part of the training to indicate achievement. Good practice: to attach a recognised National award with standards for achievement where possible (e.g: NVQ 2 in Enterprise in the UK, VRQ, etc). Issue certificate on last day and provide suggested additional reading materials, contact names and telephone numbers.

Post-course review

Reviews were considered important – and ideally, trainees would be able to be contacted at regular intervals to update progress. However, this may depend upon who is providing the course funding and whether it is part of an ongoing programme of support. Liaison with other providers may be needed for further help.

Specific group support

Have a variety of resources to hand and be prepared to be flexible. Young people are particularly IT literate and course materials should include business references via Face book, Twitter, QR tags, information on social networking and e-commerce.

Women-only courses may be necessary in some localities, and sensitivity to child care issues is needed for all, therefore course timings are important. Evening courses are a useful addition. Crèche facilities may be available in some locations.

Certain festival timings are important for all businesses, but ethnic minority festivals need to be noted and included in discussions where appropriate. Some groups may need to attend separately because of religious reasons.

Appropriate support for people with disabilities will need to be agreed before the start of the course.

Rural

The main issues are transport and distance to a training venue. On-line supported learning may be useful with travel time allowances to access training. Local rural venues are often available.

Appendix 1

Questionnaire of Good Practice for Trainers: Be Your Own Boss

Pre-training attendance – rate the following: 1= low importance, 5 = high

1. Screen clients for ability 1 2 3 4 5
2. Screen for learning styles 1 2 3 4 5
3. Issue information about the course 1 2 3 4 5
4. And profile of tutor(s)... 1 2 3 4 5
5. Preliminary expectations of trainee : course needs 1 2 3 4 5
6. Anticipate problems with difficult trainees 1 2 3 4 5
7. Tailor materials to target group 1 2 3 4 5

During training

1. Confirm expectations/explain evaluation process 1 2 3 4 5
2. Ice breaker to relax group 1 2 3 4 5
3. Active participation is essential by all 1 2 3 4 5
4. Test understanding after each stage 1 2 3 4 5
5. Short modules – 20 minutes essential 1 2 3 4 5
6. Combine mix of activities 1 2 3 4 5
7. Evaluate key objectives met 1 2 3 4 5
8. Agree SMART Action Plan 1 2 3 4 5

Post-training

1. Issue course certification 1 2 3 4 5
2. Offer post-course support 1 2 3 4 5
3. Review Action plan 1 2 3 4 5

Add your own suggestions.....

Appendix 2

Suggested key comments from trainers and trainees

Lithuania:

- Provide take away material: training material
- Agree SMART action plan
- Provide leaflet with contacts, photos from trainings
- Recommendations for literature.

Czech Republic:

- Provide accompanying materials
- Explain SMART action planning to all
- Coffee breaks can act as an ice-breaker between participants and tutors, and casual talk can have positive impact, not to be underestimated.
- Map starting level of trainees

Bulgaria:

- Provoke, stimulate and support the team work
- SMART action plan
- Visualise and “life” examples
- Provide mix of creative and energising activities to avoid boring moments and topics
- Do not forget that your “students” are adult learners

UK:

- Obtain feedback on further needs and sign-post to further training/support.
- Produce a credit-card sized aide-memoir for trainers
- Remember to use visual aids
- SMART action plan
- Have pre-training activities for trainees.

Trainer Aid-Memoir

Side 1:

Trainer Aid-Memoir Pre-course:

- Are materials up to date?
- Visual aids

During course:

- Ice-breaker
- Map starting level of trainees
- Check understanding
- Explain SMART action plan

At end of course:

- Collect evaluations
- Issue certificate
- Reading list
- Sign-post to other courses

Side 2:

Useful trainer websites: www.eu-byob.eu.

Pre-course:

- Business materials: www.businesslink.gov.uk
- Visual aids:

During course:

- Ice-breakers: <http://www.training-games.com/pdf/40FreeIceBreakers.pdf>
- SMART: <http://capsnet.usc.edu/ProfessionalDevelopment/SupportTools/documents/GoalSettingwithSMARTGoals>.

End of course:

Business reading list:

- www.businesslink.gov.uk
- www.business.org.uk
- www.startups.co.uk
- www.startupdonut.co.uk
- www.businessballs.com
- <http://www.wireuk.org/uploads/Training%20Regulations/Reading%20List.pdf>.