SME Green Skills HUB Training Modules

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Supporting the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises through VET

SME Green Skills HUB

Supporting the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises through VET

www.smegreenskillshub.eu

Intellectual Output 02

SME Green Skills HUB Training Modules (Virtual Campus)

Developed by

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Introduction

SME Green Skills HUB is an Erasmus+ project aimed at assisting and guiding Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals by fostering green sectorial skills through innovative and new generation training methods using gamification and workplace learning pedagogies with the guidance of VET teachers, trainers, and mentors. SMEs will experience sustainable change as a result of this, moving from transactional to transformational partnerships, exploring new methods and approaches to measuring impact or finding meaningful ways to collaborate with local communities.

SME Green Skills HUB provides companies and educators with a compendium of innovative new generation tools to make the leap to sustainable development. The second of these tools is the Virtual Campus, which includes:
- Online Instructional Guide on Digital Competencies for Virtual Learning
- SME Green Skills HUB Training Modules
- Vocational Open Online Courses (VOOC) on the implementation of the SDGs in SMEs

The present document, SME Green Skills HUB Training Modules, has been designed as a pedagogical tool aimed at education providers to facilitate the development of training activities on the implementation of the SDGs in SMEs, addressed to VET teachers, trainers and mentors. This will help to upskill these professionals to support SME staff on implementing the SDGs in their enterprises.

The Training Modules provide a structured set of innovative training contents and practical activities developed on the basis of the European Framework of Competences to implement the SDGs in SMEs, first project result of SME Green Skills HUB.

The document is structured following the six Units of Learning Outcomes identified in the European Framework of Competences:
- Unit 1. Introduction to the SDGs in business
- Unit 2. Understanding the role of green skills in SMEs
- Unit 3. Defining sustainability priorities
- Unit 4: Designing sustainability strategies and action plans
- Unit 5: Applying the PDCA cycle
- Unit 6: Outreaching sustainability achievements

Unit 1: Introduction to the SDGs in business

Developed by INFODEF, Spain

Training Contents

Title of the Unit of Competence
Introduction to the SDGs in business
Aims of the Unit of Competence
This unit aims to offer a comprehensive understanding of the SDGs, as well as to expand on their relevance for business, setting the necessary background for the development of the upcoming units of competence.
Suggested contents

Overall introduction to the SDGs on business based on the "SDG Compass". This reference document includes 5 steps to guide companies on how they can align their strategies as well as measure and manage their contribution to the SDGs. SMEs are encouraged to use it as a source of inspiration and adapt as necessary. Designed for use at entity level, but may be applied at product, site, divisional or regional level as required.
  - 01. Understanding the SDGs
  - 02. Defining priorities based on an assessment of their current and potential impact on the SDGs
  - 03. Setting goals, aligning company goals with the SDGs
  - 04. Integrating sustainability into the core business
  - 05. Reporting and communicating information on sustainable development performance
 	
 As part of the first step (Understanding the SDGs) VET teachers, trainers and mentors should assist SMEs in familiarizing themselves with the SDGs and understand the opportunities and responsibilities they represent to their business. To do so, the following topics should be covered in any training activity.
 	
 What are the SDGs?

- Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
- Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
- Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
- Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
- Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries
- Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
- Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
- Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
- Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
- Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
- Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Understanding the business case

Identifying future business opportunities

SDGs represent market opportunities for those companies able to develop and deliver innovative and effective solutions.

Enhancing the value of corporate sustainability

By integrating sustainability considerations across the value chain, companies can protect and create value for themselves: increasing sales, developing new market segments, strengthening the brand, improving operational efficiency, stimulating product innovation and reducing employee turnover.

Strengthening stakeholder relations and keeping pace with policy developments

The SDGs reflect stakeholder expectations as well as future policy direction. Companies that align their priorities with the SDGs can better engage with customers, employees and other stakeholders,

Stabilizing societies and markets

Business cannot succeed in societies that fail. Investing in the achievement of the SDGs supports pillars of business success.

Using a common language and shared purpose

The SDGs define a common framework of action and language that will help companies communicate more consistently and effectively with stakeholders about their impact and performance.

The baseline responsibilities for business

Recognition of the responsibility of all companies – regardless of their size, sector or where they operate – to comply with all relevant legislation, uphold internationally recognized minimum standards and to respect universal rights.

Link between competitive SMEs and achieving the SDGs

The SMEs can contribute to improving the SDGs through four main channels:

- Employee impacts (Goals 1, 2, 3, 8)

SMEs employ about 60%-70% of the workforce in many countries. Investment that increases their competitiveness can foster decent job creation and have a positive influence on wages, with significant effects for reducing poverty and inequality.

- Business practice impacts (Goals 5, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16)

How managers choose to run their firms affects environmental and social aspects of surrounding communities. Human resource policies can improve gender equality, for example, while energy-efficient production methods can reduce the environmental footprint.

- Sectorial impacts (Goals 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 11)

Small businesses in the sanitation, water, health, education, manufacturing, agriculture and energy sectors deliver goods and services that can be crucial to providing the basic needs at the heart of the SDGs.

- National economy impacts (Goals 1, 8, 9, 10, 17).

Value-creating SMEs stimulate backward and forward linkages that can foster competition, innovation, diversification, international trade and growth. Investments in human and physical capital improve productivity and hasten structural transformation

Methodology

Experiential learning and inquiry-based learning approach
During the provision of knowledge combine presentations (PPT) with videos and animations about the topics to be covered.
Present the content about links between SMEs and achieving the SDGs on online platforms where the participants can brainstorm on the subject using Web 2.0 tools
Give the participants the chance to share ideas, discuss and analyze the challenges and opportunities of implementing the SDGs in their SME.

Case study or business case
Demonstrating applied practices from real SME experiences will bring authenticity into learning environment and support meaningful learning. Therefore, participants can be exposed to real life examples so that they can make connections between what is learned and how it is applied in real world. For this method, SME case studies or business cases with external testimonials can be made use of.

Assessment

Open debate
Promote a group debate with the participants asking about the challenges and opportunities of implementing the SDGs in their SME. Focus can be done on the four main channels SMEs can contribute to improve the SDGs.

In your words
Ask participants to describe challenges and opportunities of implementing the SDGs in their SME in their words. They could imagine they need to explain it to a colleague or someone who has not been familiarised with the SDGs so far.

Satisfaction questionnaire
To be distributed at the end of the training, aimed at verifying the learning and satisfaction of participants. It is suggested to include questions about how much participants have learned about: the SDGs (in general) and the connection between SDGs and SMEs.

Tips for target users

- When introducing the SDGs you can adapt the content in order to highlight those Goals more directly related with the activity of the SMEs taking part in the training.
- Stimulate interactivity by asking participants to relate the content of the training with their

own experiences in the work place.
References

The 17 SDGs https://sdgs.un.org/goals

The SDGs Explained for Business https://www.unglobalcompact.org/sdgs/about

SDG Compass. The guide for business action on the SDGs. https://sdgcompass.org/

CEO Guide to the SGDs https://sdghub.com/ceo-guide/

SMEs and SDGs: challenges and opportunities https://oecd-development-matters.org/2019/04/23/smes-and-sdgs-challenges-and-opportunities/

MSMEs and their role in achieving the SDGs https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26073MSMEs_and_SDGs.pdf

Big money for small business. Financing the SDGs https://www.intracen.org/smeco2019/

Practical Activity 1

Name of the Activity
Ideas to help achieve the SDGs in SMEs
Aims of the Activity
The aim of this activity is to make SME staff familiar with the SDGs by means of providing and discussing practical ideas which may contribute to support each of the SDGs from a company perspective. This activity will help participants to: - Develop an understanding of each of the SDGs - Explore practical ideas to connect and implement the different SDGs in the company routine.
Description of the Activity
Introduction Briefly present participants the 17 SDGs. You can take advantage of the official UN SDGs web or

elaborate your own presentation.

Group work
Discuss with participants some practical ideas to implement each of the SDGs in the company routine. A list of suggested ideas is provided below. Ask participants to provide their own ideas.

- Goal 1. No poverty

Install a Donation box in the common spaces in your company and donate 1 euro whenever someone feels happy or grateful. At the end of the year, donate the money collected to NGOs working for poverty eradication. Make sure to let your employees know that their happiness is contagious.

- Goal 2. No hunger

Hosting a company retreat or a conference with guests usually means extra food at the end of the day. Make your company's event more purposeful by sharing leftover food instead of wasting it.

- Goal 3 Good health and well-being

One of the ways to ensure good mental health of employees could be to introduce complimentary counselling services. Organising yoga classes or health awareness workshops can be popular among employees and helpful for dealing with work related stress.

- Goal 4. Quality education

Companies can help in this by gifting an hour of their employees' work time to take online classes for deprived children in different countries. Many international NGOs offer the chance to teach basic courses and this can be an interesting way for many people to share their knowledge.

- Goal 5. Gender equality

Companies can ensure gender equality at workplace by paying same salary to for the same position, qualifications and experience, or promoting a culture of mutual respect and zero tolerance for all forms of workplace harassment.

- Goal 6. Clean water and sanitation

Make sure that the toilets in your company are inclusive in their designs, such that it is accessible to different groups (elderly, transgenders or persons with disabilities). Also, the number of toilets should be proportional to the number of workers.

- Goal 7. Affordable and clean energy

Old appliances and heaters in companies can consume a lot of energy. Retrofitting such equipment to energy saving devices can be a long term investment. Switching to a green energy provider is also a very good idea for the long run.

- Goal 8. Decent work and economic growth

Companies can be proactive in employing people from diverse backgrounds, and provide decent work conditions: Young workers can be provided with career counselling to help them identify

their aptitudes, Parents and caregivers can be provided flexible work hours and possibility to work from home as and when needed.

- Goal 9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure

Buying or renting a new company space? Renovating the conference room? Invest in eco-friendly non-toxic paint options or install water saving faucets in the toilets.

- Goal 10. Reduced inequality

No matter what sector your company works in, being aware of the supply chains is important. Research where the raw materials are coming from and the conditions under which things are being produced. Find out whether the workers at the end of the supply chain are being paid adequately.

- Goal 11. Sustainable cities and communities

A sustainable city or community is created through sustainable investments. As a company, tie up with a fair-finance bank that invests in sustainable projects. This way, the company's capital can be use for green projects.

- Goal 12. Responsible consumption and production

Depending on the type of your company, contracting local companies for supplies for a long term period can result in cost efficiency and contribute to the local economy. Encouraging office lunches from local shops and supporting organic and ecological products can help building sustainable habits among workers.

- Goal 13. Climate action

With the recent experience of work-from-home minimising all sorts of travel unless crucial should become a business mantra for all companies. However, when business trips are necessary, purchasing travel options that offsets carbon emissions and reduces footprints can help companies to do their part for climate action.

- Goal 14. Life under water

Install drinking water taps at the workplace and provide reusable glass bottles to discourage people from buying bottled water. Plastic bottles are one of the biggest source of plastic pollution in our oceans and harms aquatic creatures.

- Goal 15. Life on land

Companies who have some space can create a small kitchen garden or get flowering plants to put on the terraces in offices. This can immensely help in attracting bees, which are vital to our ecosystems.

- Goal 16. Peace, justice and stronger institutions

Every company should invest in forming a grievance redressal person that is responsible for providing fair and impartial support for all sorts of workers' complaints. This person could also share resources on workers' rights and fair working conditions with all the employees.

- Goal 17. Partnerships to achieve the goals

Companies can find enterprises working in the same sector, and create online campaigns and

workshops about a particular SDG, to help spread the news on what they are doing to achieve the SDGs.

Optional:
Use miro platform to create an online collaborative whiteboard to share practical ideas proposed by the participants, more valuated ideas, more easy to implement ideas, etc.

Resources

TV or laptop with Internet to present the SDGs

Blackboard and markers for the group work

Optional: https://miro.com/

To find out more

The 17 SDGs https://sdgs.un.org/goals

The SDGs Explained for Business https://www.unglobalcompact.org/sdgs/about

Practical Activity 2

Name of the Activity
My environmental impact
Aims of the Activity

The aim of this activity is to sensitize SME staff for environmental topics around the SDGs, e.g. climate impacts, waste, water and energy use, etc.

This activity will help participants to:

- Develop an understanding of environmental topics, especially regarding one's own actions and workplace behaviour
- Gain insights into personal carbon footprint and understand the various fields in which it occurs (e.g. food, transportation, waste, etc.)
- Explore different strategies to minimize environmental impact at work as well as in one's private life

Description of the Activity

Part A: Videos

In order to raise SME staff awareness on environmental topics and personal actions, a videos series can be introduced. Each video shall tackle a different relevant topic and educate staff by giving a general topic introduction in a first step, and then in a more interactive second part relating this knowledge to the everyday experiences and work place processes and foster positive actions to avoid emissions and waste.

A list of possible topics:

- Climate Change and Climate Impacts
- Renewable energy and energy efficiency
- Resource consumption
- Mobility
- Biodiversity
- Recycling & Waste Management
- Health & Nutrition

Which topics are most relevant needs to be decided on a case by case basis. Look at the SME situation in terms of where is currently at and which local circumstances and topics may play a particular important role (e.g. is situated close to the sea; is related with a special-needs community; is already implementing sustainability projects or is it only just starting).

Part B. Interactive workshop

Interactive workshop to repeat generated knowledge and work interactively in group building on the inputs from Part A (Videos). The workshop can follow the following structure:

1) Welcome and short recap of what stuck most with participants after series of videos

2) (Optional) Use online tools to discuss with the group the topic of climate change. E.g. online games, surveys, simulations, etc.

3) Group work:

a) Let SME staff discuss the topic at hand from their personal perspectives and concerning how it affects them in daily life

b) Now let participants brainstorm on how this topic from their personal perspective is also relevant at the work-place level: Is this something you only consider at home? Why is that? If you find it to be relevant in the work sphere: How so? What could you do to push this even more in your daily work or in your company?

c) Let participants develop an action plan on how to push the topic further within the work place. Who are the most important stakeholders for action? How can co-workers work jointly on the issue at hand?

Optionally, you can carry out these additional steps:

d) Collect and prioritize the actions seen as most relevant by all participants and agree on the three concrete steps that they can take in the (1) next two weeks (2) next two month (3) until end of the year

e) If applicable, assign responsibilities to hold people accountable to the actions and progress

Resources

TV or laptop with Internet for the videos

Laptop or Smartphone for the online tools

Blackboard and markers for the group work

To find out more

Online tools for elaborating and discussing the topic of climate change (in English)

https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/#/

https://en-roads.climateinteractive.org/scenario.html?v=2.7.36

https://edition.cnn.com/interactive/2019/04/specials/climate-change-solutions-quiz/index.html

https://climatefootnotes.com/2020/06/16/knowledge-quiz-explanations/

Unit 2. Understanding the role of green skills in SMEs

Developed by Mindshift, Portugal

Training Contents

Title of the Unit of Competence
Understanding the role of green skills in SMEs
Aims of the Unit of Competence
This unit aims to support VET professionals and consultants in recognising green skills and new business models related to them, forecasting their relevance for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in SMEs.
Suggested contents
In this training module, VET teachers, trainers and mentors will guide SMEs in the identification of green skills in their business and usage towards sustainability, through the analysis of the following contents: - Understanding green economies and green skills - Defining the relationship between green skills and the SDGs - Analysing the current situation of green skills in SMEs in general and their own businesses - Supporting SMEs staff in the development of green skills towards sustainability. Green Economy and Green Skills The most widely used definition for Green Economy comes from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). It is one that results in improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. The green economy can also be viewed as a set of principles and goals which include: - Equity and fairness, both within and between generations - Consistency with the principles of sustainable development

- A precautionary approach to social and environmental impacts
- An appreciation of natural and social capital
- Sustainable and efficient resource use, consumption and production
- A need to fit with existing macroeconomic goals, through the creation of green jobs, poverty eradication, increased competitiveness and growth in key sectors

Green skills are those skills needed to adapt processes, services and products to climate change and the environmental regulations and requirements related to it. They include the knowledge, abilities, values and attitudes needed to live in, develop and support a sustainable and resource-efficient society.

Circular Economy

In our current economy, we take materials from the Earth, make products from them, and eventually throw them away as waste – the process is linear.

A circular economy is an economic model designed to minimize resource input, as well as waste and emission production. Circular economy aims to reach the maximum efficiency in the use of finite resources, the gradual transition to renewable resources, and recovery of the materials and products at the end of their useful life.

The circular economy is based on three principles:

- Eliminate waste and pollution
- Circulate products and materials (at their highest value)
- Regenerate nature.

Importance of Green Skills in the implementation of SDGs in SMEs

The need to transition towards more environmentally sustainable modes of production and consumption has become imperative.

Sustainable Development Goal 9 includes the target of upgrading infrastructure and retrofitting industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource-use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes by 2030.

Sustainable Development Goal 12 includes the target of achieving the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources by 2030.

The transition to a low-carbon, resource-efficient economy requires systemic changes that will result not only in new products and services but also in changes in production processes and business models.

This greening of the economy will inevitably change the skills required and the tasks involved in many of the existing occupations.

Supporting SMEs identifying and acquiring green skills towards sustainability

The Green Action Plan for SMEs, created in July 2014, is intended to support small and medium-sized companies to turn environmental challenges into business opportunities. The Green Action Plan sets a series of objectives and corresponding actions which can be grouped in five thematic areas:

- Greening SMEs for more competitiveness and sustainability
- Greening entrepreneurship for the companies of the future
- Opportunities for SMEs in a greener value chain
- Access to the markets for green SMEs
- Governance.

Methodology

Combined theoretical and practical approach

In this unit trainees will be presented with many new concepts and definitions, therefore a combination of theory with a more practical approach is recommended. Trainees can be asked to relate the concepts learnt to the reality of their own organisation and/or extend with examples from their own life.

Selection and analysis of case studies

Participants can be introduced to real life examples so that they can make connections between what is learned and how it is applied in real world.

Peer/group activities

It is suggested that trainers setup small group activities to ensure trainees discuss thoroughly each proposed subject and brainstorm ideas to apply green skills in SMEs to create a more sustainable working environment.

Assessment

Debate

By using a more practical approach to the lesson, trainers should allow participants to engage in open debate regarding Green Skills and how they can be used to improve the results of their organisation.

Self-analysis

Participants are invited to have a reflection on their own skills and abilities and find ways to improve and implement green skills in their day-to-day job and in their communities.

Satisfaction questionnaire

To be distributed at the end of the training, aimed at verifying the learning and satisfaction of participants. It is suggested to include questions about how much participants have learnt about: the Green Skills and how they can develop their organisation.

Tips for target users

- Encourage participants to relate the content of the training with their own experiences in the workplace.
- Be available to answer to any requests for clarification and further information from trainees.
- Make the training session as practical as possible, relating subjects to the company's reality and giving examples that participants can relate to.

References

UNEP http://www.unep.org

European Green Deal https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_e

EU SME and the Green Deal https://www.smeunited.eu/publications/smes-first-reaction-on-the-european-green-deal

The European Green Deal Industrial Strategy – The Role of Start-ups https://www.startup-energy-transition.com/the-european-green-deal-industrial-strategy-the-role-of-start-ups/

Green Action Plan for SMEs – Turning environmental challenges into business opportunities https://www.switchtogreen.eu/green-action-plan-for-smes-turning-environmental-challenges-into-business-opportunities/

GreenComp: the European sustainability competence framework https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/greencomp-european-sustainability-competence-framework_en

Generic Green Skills for TVET https://www.greenskillsresources.com/

Green Skills and Knowledge Concepts: Labelling the ESCO classification https://ec.europa.eu/esco/portal/document/lt/490c2095-85c0-49aa-96a8-264c260d2fc5

Practical Activity 1

Name of the Activity
My green skills

Aims of the Activity
The aim of this activity is to get SME staff acquainted with the most commonly used green skills and helps them identify them within their own department and organisation. This exercise should also support participants reflect on their role in the organisation and skills which support a sustainable and resource-efficient society.

Description of the Activity
Introduction (10 min) Briefly review the objective of the activity and review the definition of Green Skill. Ask participants which Green Skills they can identify in their professional and personal life. Group activity (90 min) Organise small groups of three and/or four, distribute the "Green Skills for Green Industry" article (https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1742-6596/1019/1/012030/pdf) and give them around 10 minutes to read and enumerate the 10 skills identified in the document: - Design skill - Leadership skill - Management skill - City planning skill - Landscaping skill - Energy skill - Financial skill - Procurement skill - Waste management skill - Communication skill. Ask participants to relate the listed skills to the work of their organisation/department and how they can be used in a more efficient manner. When some/no skills are identified, the groups should make recommendations on how they can be introduced and implemented. After the group discussions ask them to present their findings, either verbally or using any other

visualisation support they consider pertinent.

Self-reflection (20 min)
Ask participants to reflect on their personal abilities, values and attitudes and relate them to the identified clusters of green skills previously discussed. Ask them to undertake a self-assessment test, where they recognize those green skills, they already work with and how they can incorporate others in their professional life and as a contribution to a more sustainable society. You must prepare the green skills self-assessment in advance, use the links provided to create one.

Resources

Whiteboard and markers for the group activity

Article: Green Skills for Green Industry
https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1742-6596/1019/1/012030/pdf

Pen and paper

To find out more

European Green Deal
https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_e

EU SME and the Green Deal
https://www.smeunited.eu/publications/smes-first-reaction-on-the-european-green-deal ~

Generic Green Skills for TVET
https://www.greenskillsresources.com/

Green skills and knowledge concepts: labelling the ESCO classification
https://ec.europa.eu/esco/portal/document/lt/490c2095-85c0-49aa-96a8-264c260d2fc5

Practical Activity 2

Name of the Activity
How to become a green SME

Aims of the Activity
The aim of this activity is to debate on how to address sustainability in SMEs through green skills and to use best practices to make recommendations on how to support SMEs staff develop green skills towards a more environmentally friendly organisation.

Description of the Activity

Introduction (10 min)
Start the activity by reintroducing the topics of green economy or greening the economy, previously mentioned. Introduce the concept of circular economy and brainstorm on how your company is already applying this concept in its operation.

Video "How to become a Green SME in a Circular Economy" (20 min)
Explain to the group that they will be watching a video on how to become a Green SME and that three main questions will be addressed:
- What can you do on your own to become a Green SME?
- What can you do with your business partners?
- What is the EU doing for your company?

Brainstorming exercise (40 min)
After the video visualisation ask participants to gather in groups of three and/or four for a brainstorming exercise. In the group they will be answering the questions listed above, considering the reality of their organisation and their country.

Each group will then nominate a speaker to present their findings to the whole group. Ask groups to present their conclusions in turns and take notes on a whiteboard/flipchart/digital board of the main characteristics outlined.

Let participants develop an action plan on how to address the topic within the workplace in practical terms and nominate a taskforce to undertake these actions.

Resources

Whiteboard and markers for the group work

TV or laptop with Internet to present the video "How to become a Green SME in a Circular Economy"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V1Tszs48xCl&t=357s

Pen and paper

To find out more

National Industrial Symbiosis Programme in the UK

http://www.nispnetwork.com/

EU Cluster Portal

https://clustercollaboration.eu/

Green Action Plan for SMEs

https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/af5e014f-af83-11e8-99ee-01aa75ed71a1

The EU's approach towards a circular economy

https://ec.europa.eu/environment/strategy/circular-economy-action-plan_pt

An overview of funding opportunities within the EU

https://ec.europa.eu/environment/zero-pollution-stakeholder-platform/funding-opportunities_en

Dedicated Euronews Business Planet to EU financial support tools for SMEs
https://www.euronews.com/next/2017/06/02/business-planet-european-funding-tools-helping-small-businesses-thrive

Entreprise Europe Network

http://een.ec.europa.eu/

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Unit 3: Defining sustainability priorities

Developed by AEICE, Spain

Training Contents

Title of the Unit of Competence
Defining sustainability priorities

Aims of the Unit of Competence
The unit aims to provide trainers and consultants with tools and strategies to identify business needs and opportunities within the framework of the SDGs. Specifically, methodologies and keys will be offered so that VET managers and consulting firms can help those enterprises interested in committing to sustainability to clearly define their priorities (selecting objectives that are fully aligned with their activity) and to become more competitive as a result.

Suggested contents

Section 1: Assessment of strategic priorities for improving competitiveness in SMEs.
What does "defining sustainability priorities" mean?
   - Theoretical insight into the Sustainability Objectives & priorities in the business environment, addressing barriers, opportunities and strategic keys to identify and implement them. Special emphasis should be placed on:
      - The contribution of the objectives to performance improvement in SMEs, including some basic examples on how to start making contributions from a sustainability perspective.
      - The challenges and barriers, and the consequent importance of aligning day-to-day business objectives with sustainability objectives and priorities.
      - The analysis of impacts as a ground for identifying priorities.
   - Analysis of practical examples of other companies and SMEs where prioritisation is contributing significantly and simultaneously to both competitive improvement and commitment to sustainability.

Section 2: Analysis of SME´s strategic objectives and procedures

Identifying an organisation's sustainability priorities. Step 1

Mapping the organisation's activities to find out those SDGs where it has an impact

2.1 Overview of the organisation: mission, vision, values

- Definitions: Mission (defines the company's business, objectives and approach to reach them) / Vision (future position desired). Purpose and values.

- Tools to address the analysis.

2.2 Specific characterisation of the organisation: main and secondary activities
Introduction of methodologies for the analysis of a business processes, stressing the importance of mapping the activities so as to be able to analyse impacts and priorities in subsequent phases, especially those that are cross-cutting. It is recommended to explain Porter's value chain, process mapping by means of flow charts or LCA, among others.

Section 3: Analysis of sustainability priorities in SMEs

Identifying an organisation's sustainability priorities. Step 2

Analysing sustainability priorities on the basis of those SDGs where the organisation´s impacts are higher

3.1. Impact analysis: (based on the analysis carried out in section 2)
Methodology for the analysis of impacts and priorities of the organisation linking the activities analysed in section two with SDGs. and tools (such as the Logic Model) for identifying the most significant ones.

3.2. Analysis of complementary sustainability priorities
Keys to identify additional sustainability focus areas not currently addressed by the company and assess their possible inclusion as complementary priorities.

3.3 Final definition of priorities
Explanation of the final review procedure, consisting of analysing the results of the work in the previous phases, and conducting a final characterisation of those that represent a high impact and a priority area for the company.

Methodology

The methodology proposed is based on the combination of theoretical perspectives and practical insights, including basic examples.
Two major aspects should be considered when approaching this unit from a methodological perspective. On the one hand, the preliminary approach to the topic, deemed essential for SMEs. On the other hand, the implementation of strategies, designed to be sustained in the long term.

Thus, it is suggested:

For section 1:

-Preliminary introduction (explaining what the prioritisation of objectives is, from a theoretical point of view, combined with practical examples of cross-cutting priority objectives easily achievable for any organisation). The possibility of describing specific priorities of large companies or entities familiar to all participants is also strongly suggested.
- It is also recommended to use game-based dynamics aimed at familiarising organisations with the basic process of aligning a specific business activity with a sustainable development objective and goal.

For section 2:

-It is strongly suggested to begin with a discussion session involving the trainer/consultant and each SME in a relaxed meeting environment. The trainer will ask questions aimed at helping the participants to clarify the interests, needs and goals of the enterprise as well as their current links with sustainability.
-Afterwards, Porter's value chain model can be explained and explored. This management tool works by breaking an organisation's activities down into pieces: on the one hand those primary activities which directly contribute to the development of a valuable product or service, and on the other hand those support activities thar enable the proper functioning of the organisation. The focus in this case will not be placed on the profit margin, but on those activities that have a direct or indirect impact on sustainability issues, exploring how each of them could contribute, in short, to the improvement of the whole.
The business process flow chart can be explained as well. This diagram provides an overview of the company's structure, showing the main processes of the company and the links among them.
Life cycle analysis or other tools and methodologies can be explained for medium-sized or larger companies with more resources available for the analysis.
The next step is to study the definition of impacts and prioritisation of objectives.

For section 3:

-This task will be based on the work carried out in section 2, explaining how to follow a tailored analysis of those processes and/ or activities of the organisation that have the greatest impacts on the SDGs and the priorities. To this end, the trainer will provide practical examples on how to analyse the positive and negative impacts of the SDGs for each activity defined in the mapping task developed in work section 2.
One suggested approach for this purpose is, once again, a simplified adaptation of the SDG

compass model. The quantitative analysis and/or detailed study approaches (such as the Logic Model for the definition of impacts and priorities) could be replaced with a qualitative analysis guided by the trainer and developed with the SMEs managers who are aware of the results and strategy of their respective organizations. It is suggested to first link the activities with the SDGs they impact according to their thematic area, and then analyse whether these impacts are positive or detrimental.

For larger enterprises, the possibility of also explaining how to analyse the impact according to quantitative data, by defining indicators, is advised.

-Analysis of complementary sustainability objectives

-It is suggested to explain how to make an analysis of complementary sustainability objectives that, without being a current priority for the enterprise, may be of interest in the future. Serious Games or practical exercises are strongly recommended for this task, inviting some workers or people in charge of each area of the company or entity to join. Regardless of the results of the Porter´s analysis or the Flow Chart analysis, each participant will be encouraged to think of important priorities for their respective organisations in the future, first Individually and then sharing their views in small groups.

-Final definition of priorities:

Explanation of how to obtain an overall perspective and reach the final prioritization, through an effort / impact matrix including all the selected priority objectives, having as output a final characterization of those that should become the basic priority of the entity.

Assessment

Two assessment paths are suggested:

- On the one hand, concerning the level of adequacy and degree of satisfaction of both the trainers and the organisations. A satisfaction survey can be distributed among all the members of the participating team once the process has been completed, aimed at analysing:
  - whether the methodology has been adequate
  - whether the priorities defined are realistic (achievable) and strategically interesting
  - to what extent they believe that such priorities will allow their respective organisations to improve their competitiveness and their commitment to sustainability

- On the other hand, regarding the skills of the SMEs in the application of the knowledge gained. Testing whether the participant SMEs would be able to replicate the analysis independently, reproducing some or several parts of the process through an example (this analysis is strongly recommended, given that consolidating the organisation's commitment to sustainability requires it to periodically repeat the prioritisation work, for example in each revision phase of its strategic business plan).

Tips for target users

- It is recommended that trainers provide the participants whose organisations are to be analysed with elementary and general examples of sustainability objectives from an early stage. It is suggested to focus on those that are useful for most organisations and simple enough to be clearly understandable and make the first approach to the subject easy, enabling a smooth transition.
- For the success of the task, once the basic concepts have been covered it is essential to carry out a proper characterization of the organisation. As a result, those objectives which are essential to the company, its interests concerning sustainability, and the first steps or actions undertaken in such direction, should be made clear.
- It is suggested to use tools such as the survey, with multiple-choice answers, to better characterise the needs and orientation of the organisation's strategy. This will contribute to the subsequent alignment.
- When using Porter's model or flow charts it is recommended to focus not so much on the fine-tuned use of the tools, but rather on understanding and clearly characterising the current activity and workflows of each company, so that the prioritisation strategy can be adapted as much as possible to its needs and capabilities. The key to the success of the strategy to be implemented in the long term lies in gradually but surely working towards sustainability, aligning the organisations' day-to-day tasks with the SDGs.

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Practical Activity 1

Name of the Activity
Initial approach to the analysis of priority objectives for the enterprise/organisation
Aims of the Activity
To learn, through a simple approach, which are the most relevant objectives for an enterprise, and the goals and targets that, without having made an in-depth analysis of the activity, are considered a priority for its proper development.   To become familiar with the process of linking day-to-day objectives of an enterprise to sustainability objectives.
Description of the Activity
Two complementary possibilities are suggested: - On the one hand, the analysis of the objectives of a single organisation in small groups.   One of the participants will explain the main goal and fields of activity in his/her company. The

trainer will compile them in a table and each group will identify the SDGs which are most related to each field and or activity, explaining the reasons for their decision. Some priorities to assess the potential negative or positive impacts, should also be outlined.

- On the other hand, the self-assessment impact analysis. The use of an online form where all the SDGs and their targets are broken down in a multiple selection model is strongly recommended for this purpose. It should be aimed at allowing each entity to make a preliminary approach to those sustainability goals and targets that are of greatest importance to them. It is suggested to compare the results of such surveys with the subsequent deeper analysis of the impacts of each entity's activity to determine not only the goals that are crucial for each one, but also those that may be of interest in the future.

Resources

For the first exercise: blank board, post-it notes

For the second exercise: pre-defined online survey, created on Google Forms or similar.

To find out more

Specific reference for the preliminary approach to the principles, keys and general priority objectives (R2): SDG Compass. La guía para la planificación empresarial en los ODS

Practical Activity 2

Name of the Activity
Analysis of the organisation's value chain and of the main SDGs impacted by their activity
Aims of the Activity
To teach SMEs and organisations how to apply the value chain mapping to conceptualise and structure their activity and the impact analysis methodology to understand their sustainability priorities.
Description of the Activity
The methodology proposed for this activity is partially based on the path established by SDG

Compass for the definition of sustainability priorities. Thus, it is addressed at working with Porter's value chain model as a basis for understanding the organisation´s or SMEs activities. However, it is specifically adapted to those SMEs that require guidance and support throughout the process. Also, and especially, for those whose operational flows are complex (due to the overlapping of tasks resulting from the lack of human resources and/or departmental separation). The workflows and the extent of the analysis have been simplified accordingly.

The task will be carried out in groups. The instructor will remind the participants of the guidelines and objectives of the Porter's model and will split them into teams. All of them will work on the same example (so as to compare the answers and reflect on them afterwards).
Each team will analyse the value chain by completing Porter's model template (using post-it to describe each of the organisation's activities, primary and secondary, in a collaborative manner). The trainer will go around the tables helping and giving tips to each team.

Once finished, the trainer will briefly explain the 17 SDGs and invite the teams to identify the SDGs on which each activity or set of activities (defined on the previous section) impacts, detailing whether it is a positive or negative impact.
Then, the participants from each table will move to the neighbouring team's board and go over their work, adding new SDGs if they deem it necessary. At the end of the session, each team will explain the results of the analysis of the board and their final contributions, justifying them.

If the exercise is successfully completed, it is suggested to go one step further and work in teams on the prioritisation matrix. The instructor will give a brief explanation on how it works and get the teams to familiarise with it.

The estimated duration of the entire task is two hours.

Resources

Board (blank sheets), post-its and markers.

Template of Porter's value chain
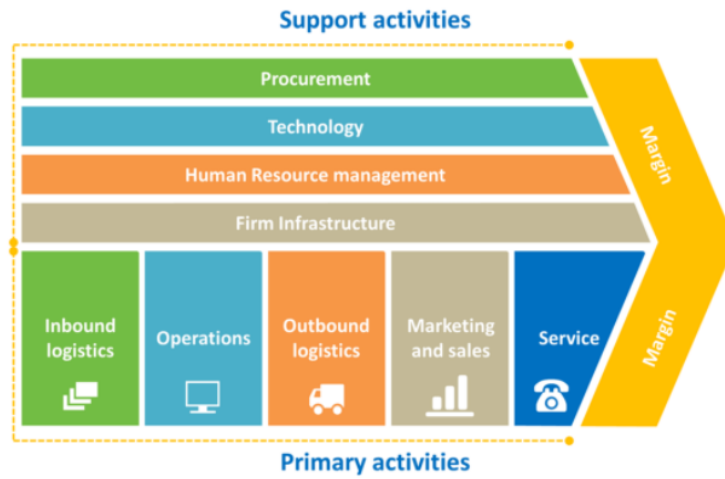
Template of impact/effort matrix

To find out more

Specific reference for the preliminary approach to the principles, keys and generic priority objectives (R2) (Spanish)

SDG Compass. La guía para la planificación empresarial en los ODS

Unit 4: Designing sustainability strategies and action plans

Developed by FRI, Italy

Training Contents

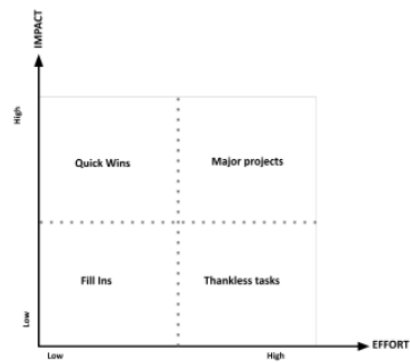| Title of the Unit of Competence |
|---|
| **Design of sustainability strategies and action plans** |
| **Aims of the Unit of Competence** |
| In continuity with the previous ones, also in this unit we will promote the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in SMEs. The objective of the unit is to make available to VET teachers, trainers and tutors, a series of innovative methodologies and tools that allow starting a process of sustainable change in the company, through the introduction, development and implementation of new strategies for sustainability and related action plans. |
| **Suggested contents** |
| **Why a strategy for sustainability?** Today companies operate in a socio-cultural context in which they cannot talk anymore about value creation without integrating the term sustainability. It is therefore important to develop innovations also at the level of strategy and business organization, to make sustainability a business opportunity, integrating economy, environment and society into the entrepreneurial design. In a firm management, a sustainable approach guarantees not only the reduction of costs, but also and above all, the efficiency of processes, employees' satisfaction, the strengthening of its reputation and visibility on the market. Therefore, defining a sustainability strategy, drawing up an action plan on the basis of it and adapting the business model accordingly to the new challenges related to climate change in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in agenda 2030, is much more than an opportunity, but a question of competitiveness over time. |

What is a business strategy? How do you introduce a new strategic approach in the company? Who are the players involved in the development of the new strategy?

When a company starts its business or starts a new project, in addition to the idea of product/service, the vision and the mission, it also has to define a strategic plan and operational guidelines for the implementation of the business in the future. In the same way, when a company wants to operate according to a model also based on sustainability, it must make order on ideas, existing projects, define priorities, set objectives and draw up an action plan to achieve them. Sustainability must become a driver for the re-definition of the company's mission, vision and values. The introduction and management of a sustainable strategy (Sustainability Strategic Management) implies the analysis, formulation and implementation of business strategies that are economically competitive, socially responsible and in balance with the cycles of nature. Based on the growing interest in this topic, new models have emerged over the years that combine the issues of sustainability in strategic development actions and reporting systems for measuring the performance of the related processes. This process is therefore not very different from what a company is used to implement, only that it must review its contents with a more specific attention to sustainability, deeping the reasons that lead to the implementation of this new strategy, the changes inside the processes and systems of performance measurement. It is possible to structure the process for the introduction of a new sustainable strategy in two phases:

First phase of analysis
(Internal)
- Analysis of the relevant issues on sustainability, depending on the sector, company actual status and its strategy;
- Analysis of socio-environmental risks (integrating them with Risk Management);
- Analysis of the strategic business plan / industrial plan;
- Analysis of the expectations of internal stakeholders (enhancing all the communication channels already existing in the company).

(External)
- Analysis of the market scenario, of mega trends, (such as climate change, the problem of growth, etc.);
- Analysis of market scenarios, mini trends;
- Benchmark of sustainability strategies developed by competitors/industry best practices;
- Analysis of external stakeholders.

Second phase of analysis
- Identification of expectations based on previous activities;

- Mapping of existing strategies/policies and projects already in place in relation to the identified themes;
- Management interviews;
- Data collection.

Output
- Definition of a strategic sustainability plan including macro-objectives, detailed objectives, monitoring KPIs, examples of projects that can be developed to achieve the objectives;
- Definition of a sustainability governance which approves the sustainability plan and supervises and monitors the achievement of the objectives set and future objectives, adapting what has been defined to any evolution of the business.

Among the planning tools that can be used to introduce new sustainable development strategies within an entrepreneurial reality, we point out the Sustainability Balanced Scorecard and the Sustainable Business Model Canvas.

Sustainability Balanced Scorecard
The Sustainability Balanced Scorecard places a strong emphasis on sustainability, which it identifies as the mean to achieve a competitive advantage based on reputation and attention to the products and services provided by the company. To transform the traditional Balanced Scorecard (BSC) into the sustainable one, an approach has been developed that adds a perspective to the standard layout: the non-market perspective. In the literature, the non-market perspective is declined in five dimensions: environmental, social, economic, cultural and organizational. For each dimension, the objectives and the related Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) necessary to compare the result achieved with the set result must be identified. The outcome of the comparison will signal the achievement of the objectives or the need to take new actions.

1. ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION: focuses on the respect and conservation of natural resources (Haffar and Searcy, 2018).
2. SOCIAL DIMENSION: expresses the ability to guarantee conditions of human well-being equally distributed by classes and gender by requiring a careful analysis and evaluation of the elements of strength and weakness that characterize the economic context (Vurro and Perrini, 2013).
3. ECONOMIC DIMENSION: expresses the ability of an economic system to generate lasting growth of economic and financial indicators.
4. CULTURAL DIMENSION: it is essential to deal with a sustainable culture; it is necessary to measure the awareness of employees on the issue of sustainability. In fact, we can no

longer speak of sustainable models or systems if there is no strong impact on individual culture (Bortolotti et al., 2015; Gupta and Kumar, 2013).

5. ORGANIZATIONAL DIMENSION: it is necessary to pay attention to change management to accompany the whole process and make it permeate within the organization, first defining the objectives to be pursued (Cardoni, 2018).

Sustainable Business Model Canvas

It is a tool that allows you to describe and synthesize business models that are both innovative and sustainable. The scheme can be used both in the brainstorming phase during company workshops, for start-ups that are in the process of defining or rethinking their business model, but also to present a project to external stakeholders interested in being involved in its development. The main difference compared to a BMC derives from the inclusion of a section dedicated to the description of sustainability, where it is possible to explain the positive impacts in the economic, environmental and social fields, thus also facilitating the measurement of the impact related to sustainability (define a series of indicators to measure and monitor the impact within the Key Metrics section). To compile the part on sustainability, the framework of the SDGs must be taken into account, dividing these 17 objectives into the 3 sustainability components (economic impact, environmental impact, social impact).
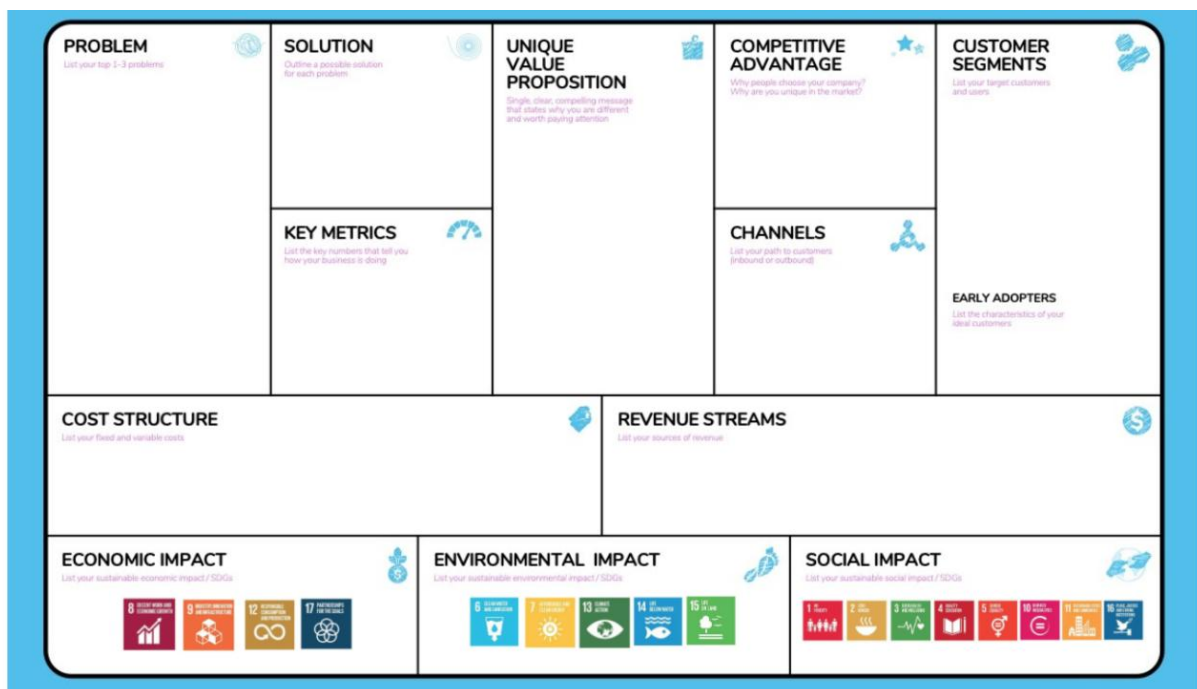
Methodology

Among the methodologies that can be used to share and convey the contents set out above, we point out some that are based on the resolution of complex problems through the interaction of learners:

- Design thinking: human-centered methodology that offers tools, methods and process models for the development of creative and innovative solutions involving stakeholders from different backgrounds. Design thinking is not a rigid process, rather it can be defined as a framework that integrates creative and analytical modes of reasoning, mindsets and skills, different tools and techniques (Liedtka, 2015);
- Lego Serious Play: comparison-oriented facilitation methodology in collaborative contexts, aimed at developing thinking, communication and solving complex business management problems through the use of Lego bricks as a representative and metaphorical tool;
- Gamification: innovative tool of business organization at the service of companies. It is a methodology oriented to the use of elements, mechanics and dynamics deriving from gaming experiences (Hunter, 2011) and Game Design techniques in real contexts, in order to motivate and guide human behaviours (Deterding et al., 2011);
- Pitch designing: the pitch represents an important promotional vehicle for a new project and must contain the information useful to favour a business idea. To achieve the goal, it's required speed, resolution, ability to synthesize, clarity and also the ability to be interesting. It is therefore a question of providing, in the context of pitching sessions or pitch competition, a series of key information on the project to be carried out.

The activities must be introduced and explained in detail by the trainer. First of all, some team building activities will be launched to obtain preliminary interactions between learners, create an environment of collaboration, trust, constructive exchange and finally train soft skills with a view to sustainability. Before starting the activities, it is suggested to divide the learners into N groups based on their number and their hard skills in a cross-fertilization perspective. To support the above methodologies, various training tools can also be used in hybrid mode (remote presence) such as: webinars; workshops; focus groups; business case with external testimonials etc.

Assessment

It's suggested to the trainer to prepare an entrance test (survey tool) to be administered before the start of the activities, whose function will be to evaluate the hard skills of the learners and the homogeneity of the skills on the subject of sustainability. With the same procedure, the

preparation and administration by the trainer of a test at the end of the activity is envisaged, with the aim of verifying the learning and satisfaction of the learner. To complement the tests it will be possible to imagine, as a further moment of verification of learning, the organization of a business case, based on real experiences, with the object of introducing sustainability strategies within a company sector. The goal will be to make learners work in teams, stimulate the application of the skills and tools shared during the course, stimulate contamination, the generation of ideas and train soft skills.

Tips for target users

- Take advantage of the entrance tests to calibrate the depth of the contents and to know the participants.
- Define the learning objectives, what are the results that you want to achieve with the training.
- Monitoring the learning status of the class and customized the course by stimulating the interactivity.
- Be available to requests for clarification and further information from learners.
- Stimulate contamination and cross fertilization of the class.

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- https://unric.org/it/agenda-2030
- https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment

Practical Activity 1

Name of the Activity
Sustainability Business Model Canvas
Aims of the Activity
The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable development Goals (SDGs), encourages the SME to respond effectively to sustainability's challenges and be proactive towards their environment and their community. To address this new sustainability challenge, an alternative version of Business Model Canvas was developed; a new framework that takes into account all the variables supporting the innovation of business models of companies in favour of

sustainability. The aim of this activity is to introduce the participants to the knowledge and use of the Sustainable Business Model Canvas (SBMC) tool, which can be useful both in the brainstorming phase for start-ups that are rethinking their business model, but also to share a project with external stakeholders interested in being involved in its development.

Description of the Activity

Step 1
30 minutes for sharing the objectives and the organization of the exercise, the introduction to the SBMC tool and the launch of the company's sustainability challenge.
Step 2
60 minutes for splitting the participants in different groups and carrying out the exercise. Each team will develop a SBMC starting from the company's challenge. It's recommended to
the trainer to actively follow the work of each team in order to support / facilitate the activities. We suggest the simultaneous presence of several trainers in the case of particularly large classes.
Step 3
10 minutes for each team to present the work. 30 minutes for the group debate and the finalization of the shared SBMC that will be presented to the company.

Resources

- Pc, Multimedia projector, Wi-fi
- Flipchart
- Whiteboard
- Sheets of A3 for printing the SBMC
- Post-it
- Markers

To find out more

- https://www.peekaboovision.com/2021/03/09/sustainability-business-model-canvas
- https://www.strategyzer.com
- https://canvanizer.com

Practical Activity 2

Name of the Activity
Sustainability Pitch: how to enhance sustainable entrepreneurship in a company
Aims of the Activity
The pitch isn't a start-ups' exclusive, but also an important tool for the presentation of a winning idea even within consolidated companies. In fact the corporate can be mines of innovation and entrepreneurship, but unfortunately, they frequently don't know it. The employees' teams will have to design and present their own innovation projects to their manager and / or to the stakeholders, developing them as it would be done within a start-up; thinking outside the box of daily business, which for a company could represent a precious capital in terms of innovation and sustainability. The goal of the activity is to trigger innovation processes within certain business areas, where the main characters will be; the manager and the employees. Once some topics of interest have been defined with the governance, the manager will stimulate the employees to design business ideas related to the development of innovative and sustainable company projects.
Description of the Activity
Step 1 The manager introduces the project to the employees, stimulating their active participation. Step 2 The manager launches the call with the company's areas of interest, for the development of sustainable pr Step 3 Creation of the employees teams who will select a topic to work on. Sharing of the pitch format and instructions to build it. Step 4 Carrying out the exercise with the active support of the trainers. Step 5 Pitch session: each team will have 5 minutes for pitching. 30 minutes for the group debate (demolition pitch). Step 6

Conclusion of work and sharing of the final outputs.

Resources

- Pc, Multimedia projector, Wi-fi
- Flipchart
- Employees' pc

To find out more

- Klaff, 2011, Pitch Anything: An Innovative Method for Presenting, Persuading, and Winning the Deal
- Thiel, 2015, Zero to One: Notes on StartUps, or How to Build the Future
- McGowan and Bowman, 2016, Pitch Perfect: How to Say It Right the First Time, Every Time

Unit 5: Applying the PDCA cycle

Developed by INQS, Ireland

Training Contents

Title of the Unit of Competence
Applying the PDCA cycle

Aims of the Unit of Competence
The aim of this unit is that users are autonomously capable of applying the PDCA cycle in order to successfully put into action strategies for sustainability. This implies that they have complete clarity about what is to be done and considered in each step of the process. Users will be able to reach mastery in this as a tool as a means of reaching optimum results in a continuous improvement process.

Suggested contents
Theoretical basis First of all, it is important to be completely aware of what the PDCA cycle is all about. It is a universal model and tool for quality management and dedicated problem solving or reaching objectives. It is purposely described as a "cycle" due to the fact that the described steps can be undergone and adjusted several times (as many as required) until reaching the ideal result. Step 1 – Plan The first step focuses on planning activities. In order to come up with a plan it is necessary however to define a goal that wants to be reached. This goal can also be a certain problem that needs to be addressed. In either case, it is fundamental to make a status quo analysis first. Take note of facts that describe the present situation. Proceed with defining the goal and the measures sin order to reach the desired status.

It is also an option to plan variant plans. Through acting upon them and checking the results later you will learn which way is the preferable one.

Step 2 – Do
Now it is time to get going and put the plan into action. All measures that were planned in step one are now to be executed. It is of great importance that you document in a transparent way what is (or is not) happening. In case there are hindering factors, do not give up, just make sure you take note of them. Analysis and reconsideration will come later.

Step 3 – Check
After having executed the plan that was lined out in the first place it is time to reflect on the results. It will be extremely helpful to have good documentation on the tasks and measures as well as on the problems encountered. The key question is: Was the objective reached?
Take notes of what has to be improved or modified.

Step 4 – Act
This is the time to define actions based on the experience through step 1 to 3. All measures are in place now and you have gathered data about the success of these actions. Your learnings are the key to move on and follow through with the improvements foreseen.

Maybe up to this moment (through step 1 to 3), you have tested different approaches on approaching your goal. Now you have learned which option has provided the best results and you can act upon that.

This step of the process may also lead you to define new actions, redefine your goals or to implement a new cycle of improvement.

Common pitfalls and how to overcome them
See the common pitfalls described as typical exclamations you might hear your team or yourself saying.

Plan – Be careful and precise!
Pitfall: *"No one does anything"* or *"People seem to lack motivation."*
Lack of acceptance, motivation or action is a very common symptom when performing improvement or change processes. Whenever you plan something you need to a) take the time to really capture the status quo as objectively as you can and b) be precise when you define measures. It is very frustrating when activities are defined but nobody is either capable or responsible for the execution. Consider this carefully in your planning and make sure you get your

people (emotionally) on board and clarify responsibilities as well as accountabilities.

Do – Start out small
Pitfall: *"The process takes too long!"* or *"This is simply overwhelming."*
Whenever introducing something new it is the strong recommendation to start off small. Introducing a new sustainability strategy or picking up an SDG as part of the company mission is most likely a big thing.
If you do want to apply new measures, start in a small area (e.g. in subdepartments) before extending your efforts. Small and short cycles are faster, easier to overview and control.

Do – Form follows function
Pitfall: *"Somehow we seem to not be getting anywhere."*
Strict execution of predefined measures leads to demotivation or constant deviation.
It is not all about mindlessly doing what was predefined nor about improving everything whilst you are executing what was planned before. Whenever you do something differently make sure you document well what you are doing. AND make sure there is an adequate amount of time for this step. If you do not have enough time you don't gather enough feedback. If you remain too long in the doing and you are on the wrong track you also loose.

Check – Stick to the plan in a smart way
Pitfall: *"It's all working perfectly now"*
This is a very catchy exclamation. It is often painful to recognize that things are not all that great. Hopefully it is true, but do not be too trustful that it really is that way. Do NOT skip or rush the step of checking your results. It is utterly important to really look at the data(!).
The purpose of step 3 is to revise the documentation and the improvements made and those still to be done. If things really are working perfectly than a thorough documentation will help you to replicate and scale by transferring this experience to other areas.

Act – Striving for excellence
Pitfall: *"Everybody is interested in excellence"*
You may be disappointed to learn that not everybody is looking for excellence and the best result possible. This is why it is even more important when implementing a quality improvement strategy to inspire those implicated in the process. It may be helpful to ask yourself: What is in it for them?

Methodology

The theoretical framework applied here is rather easy to understand but it can become tricky in

its application. This is why the strong recommendation regarding the methodology is to pursue a highly practical approach.

It is possible to work with real situations or with hypothetical cases. So, either they actually go through the process personally or they think it through (alone or together with a group of people).

It probably is more vivid to actually apply the circle in a real-life situation however also thinking through a case can help learners improve their understanding of the PDCA-process. There are some example activities described in the practical activities corresponding to this unit.

Whichever approach you choose, start small and use interactive sessions together with the learners to share and truly "harvest" their experience. Workout common difficulties as well as success strategies. Highlight these things to promote cross-experiential learning.

When going through a hypothetical case study on paper it is very useful to work with several individuals or (small)groups. Have each individual or (small)group, take notes about one step of the cycle and then pass it on. The next person or group works on the next step based on what had been written down before. This approach will strengthen the awareness of the character of each phase.

When planning your activities carefully consider that implementation, acceptance and/or quality of the process are likely to be affected when training participants in the use of the PDCA cycle as a means of implementation of sustainability strategies and SDG-related actions. It may be a misconception that all participants in such a process are motivated to engage in a process for these purposes. Be aware that there may be severe differences regarding general issues in this field. If there is resistance about this do not ignore it. It is recommendable to have a closer look at it because this may lead to valuable revelations.

Assessment

Characteristics – Is this statement "true" or "false"?
A simple assessment strategy would be do say simple statements and ask the learners to immediately respond whether that is true of false. For example, you say: "*It is important that measures are planned properly before acting*". Learners have to respond immediately "*True*".

Start off with 5-10 simple statements and then increase the complexity of your statements. Make sure you also include a few statements that are subject to discussion. This should trigger a

dialogue which should then lead to a deeper comprehension of the process.

You could say, for example, "*Everything that was planned needs to be done exactly as planned.*" Depending on how you interpret it this can be true and false. Use these types of statements carefully because too many may cause confusion. Discussions about these statements should help increase clarity.

In your words
Another approach of assessing whether learners have understood the process is to ask them to describe the process as well as the stages in their words. They could imagine they need to explain it to a colleague or someone who has not been familiarised with this topic so far.

Tips for target users

- Make it as practical as possible – the more the participants experience the advantages and obstacles of this cycle the better they will be able to put it into practice. If you manage to promote a learning atmosphere where failing is not painful but helpful and you manage to talk about it then you are on the winner's track.
- Promote cross-experiential learning through discussion and common analysis – The obstacles as well as the success factors seem to be repeating itself. The good thing about this is that is very helpful to see someone experience a similar mistake or to recur a similar success strategy. Seeing things from a different perspective promotes reaching insight.
- Keep an eye on the motivation – why are learners participating in this activity? Are they complying with their job or do they have a genuine interest? It is important to address motivation because this will have an immediate impact on the quality of output and success.
- Link the topics (sustainability strategy / SDGs) well to the process. The PDCA cycle is the tool that enables you to implement strategic decisions. The perception of the tool will be affected by the framework and vice-versa.

References

Literature:
- "The Deming Management Method" by Mary Walton, Management Books 2000 Ltd./Penguin Putnam Inc.
- "Deming Cycle PDCA – Plan Do Check Act – Toyota Way" by Ruks Rundle

See these links for more information:
- https://citoolkit.com/articles/pdca-cycle/

- https://kanbanize.com/lean-management/improvement/what-is-pdca-cycle
- https://asq.org/quality-resources/pdca-cycle
- https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newPPM_89.htm
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PDCA

Practical Activity 1

Name of the Activity
Identifying good practices (from the real world)

Aims of the Activity
This activity aims at gathering real life examples for the PDCA cycle applied in practice. The learners will dive into the topic by researching exemplary reports about PDCA-cylce applications. This will increase the understanding for the method as well as getting a better conception for the practical dimension of it.

Description of the Activity

Duration: 2-3 hours (1-2 hours research, 1-1,5 hours comparison & discussion)

Group size: min. 3-4 people; possible to work in pairs, depending on overall group-size compare in small groups first and then collect results in plenum

Steps to be followed:
1. Knowledge base
   Undergo the activity after having conveyed the overall topic. Participants need to have a sound understanding what the PDCA cycle is.
2. Briefing
   participants should research (alone or in pairs) examples for the application of PDCA. There are plenty of reports to be found online. e.g. Toyota-stories; make sure they also read up on the literature references.
3. Take notes!

It is important that the participants document their findings in a way that they can later on present them. It is possible that you provide them with a template beforehand that should be filled.

4. Share, present and discuss

The findings should be shared with the whole group. Be aware that there is a possibility that learners find the same stories. Take this in consideration in the briefing. Incite the learners to go deeper and to find out "interesting details".

Moderate the discussion in a way that there are common conclusions that help understanding the method and make best use of it.

Resources

- To perform this activity learners will need full access to the internet. Although this can be done on the Smartphone it is much more convenient for them to do it on a desktop computer, tablet or laptop.
- It is preferable to write the key information to research on a flip-chart poster, whiteboard or create a handout for this purpose.
- A template for gathering the research results can be of good use for the learners too.

To find out more

General information on PDCA can be found in the references mentioned in the Training Content
These videos will explain the PDCA cycle better:

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e4gOPeHSRo8
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qz-XdI89vUM
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4TcVZNjQp9Q

This video will be helpful to increase research skills:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WPbEznrOGR8

Practical Activity 2

Name of the Activity
Role playing the application of PDCA cycle (SDG specific)
Aims of the Activity

Learners should think through a PDCA cycle in "real life" inspired by an SDG (as part of the sustainability strategy). This way participants in this activity will increase their understanding of the steps involved and the things to take into account when performing it.

Description of the Activity

Duration: 2-3 hours
Group size: 2-4 people per small group

Sample situations:
a) A industrial company is suffering issues with water pollution. There are failures in their industrial processes that cause this issue.
b) A logistic company realizes that they have a very large CO2 impact. Since they want to become a green company they want to reduce their CO2 output.
c) A service organization has continuous issues with customer satisfaction. The major problem is that they get back feedback on their website and on the rating platforms.
d) Define your own situation.

This activity could also be performed by picking examples from the real surroundings of the participating learners. Feel free to modify the sample situations to your liking.

Steps to be followed:
Knowledge base
    Undergo the activity after having conveyed the overall topic. Participants need to have a sound understanding what the PDCA cycle is.
- Briefing
    The participants should go through the PDCA cycle step by step and take notes for each step of the process. It is highly recommended to perform the exercise with various groups (example: group 1,2 and 3) so that each group brainstorms and takes notes about one step of the cycle and then passes it on to the next group.
- Starting the exercise
- Choosing an SDG addressed – which of the SDGs could be used as an inspiration to set the strategic goals regarding sustainability?
- Each group gets a brief description of the situation. In the first step they are asked to let their imagination flow and deepen the problem description. Once the problem is outlined in detail, they basically already have an "analysis of the status quo". The consecutive activity in this first step should be to define a PLAN as foreseen in the PDCA cycle.
- The results from the first step are the basis for step to. Ideally group 1 works on what group 3

worked on before and group 2 on the results 1 and so on. Since the learners can't actually do anything, they should carefully read the results from step one and then take down two things:

- What could go wrong in the activities planned and why?
- How can / would this be documented in a good way?
- Once the groups have profoundly reviewed step 2, it is now the turn to act upon it. Again, another group should perform the CHECKING of the process so far. In a first step they carefully go through the notes on step 1 (Plan) and step 2 (Act) and based on what they read perform a thorough check.
- In the last step "ACT" the group that designed underwent the first part of the cycle should get back the feedback from the other two groups. Now it is their turn to improve the plan and write up a new one.
- Learnings
  Make sure you support the learners in this elaboration process. It can be very challenging because it may be too theoretical. It will help the learners that you choose topics that they can easily relate to.
  After going through the simulation, you should take enough time to go through it with the whole group and review the learnings. Make sure you transfer the acquired knowledge and experience to their working situation.

Resources

If focussing the activity with SDG-based improvements (as suggested), then participants need information about them.
This activity does not require many resources. You can either just work with simple paper and pen or you use flipcharts for taking down the notes. The flipchart will help to also present and share the findings.
For the summary you either use a flipchart or a whiteboard. Of course, this exercise can also be done with the use of digital tools. These tools are not mandatory for execution.

To find out more

Checking out this case will be very useful when preparing this exercise. It shows in a very practical way the application of the PDCA cycle.
https://www.ineak.com/how-toyota-utilizes-pdca/

Unit 6: Outreaching sustainability achievements

Developed by GOI, Turkey

Training Contents

Title of the Unit of Competence
Outreaching sustainability achievements

Aims of the Unit of Competence
Supporting VET professionals and consultants in reporting and disseminating sustainability implemented initiatives and related measured impact.

Suggested contents

Introduction:
Achieving sustainable development goals is an important goal for individuals, societies and countries that should be followed up. When we look at the institutional structures in achieving these goals, SMEs play one of the most important roles. Sustainability reports are transparency reports that provide information about the activities carried out by companies, including other SMEs, to achieve these goals, the economic, environmental, social and management performance of institutions, and which should contain quantitative data.

Topic 1 - Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and sustainability achievements report

Internationally accepted statements and criteria ensure that the information contained in sustainability reports is accessible and comparable, thus providing stakeholders with enhanced information to help them make informed decisions.

The GRI Sustainability Reporting Guidelines are reviewed regularly to provide the best and most up-to-date guidance for effective sustainability reporting. The aim of the last updated report can be briefly stated as helping reporters prepare reports that are meaningful and contain valuable

information about the organization's most critical sustainability issues, and to make sustainability reporting standard practice.

It will be useful to follow the steps below for a reporting in GRI standards.

Steps	Description
Get a general idea	It would be helpful to know the Guidelines on Reporting and the Key Terms required.
Decide on the preferred 'compatibility' option	Based on organization type, size, industry, or location, there are two options: Basic or Comprehensive.
Prepare to make general standard statements	For this, processes should be planned, content and priority elements should be determined, and the quality of reporting should be determined beforehand.
Prepare to make specific standard statements	Handbook for GRI includes specified cases regarding implementation. In addition, the Management Approach should be determined.
Prepare the sustainability report	The prepared information should be available on various platforms, both in paper and on the internet.

SMEs can help by contacting other institutions in their communication networks. It is also necessary to support and encourage the institution and employees in this regard.

Topic 2 – Means, strategies, and networks for impact dissemination
Social media; It is a structure that helps people and institutions to interact, which helps them to be in constant communication with the target audience. There are many areas such as Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter in social media, which is active almost every moment of the day, especially through mobile devices and tablets.

You can get professional support while using social media. There are now many start-ups that offer social media expertise for companies. Apart from this, you can find many tools that will enable you to use your social media account more effectively and focus on the target audience, and you can schedule your posts effectively.

Managing social media tools is not just about replying to messages and sharing. Designing the profile, realizing the sharing by establishing a certain understanding and communicating with the target audience using various techniques can be used to define social media management. In fact, this process is a situation that needs to be carried out regularly, and when continuity is

achieved, success comes in the name of dissemination.

Using social media correctly will provide the following advantages in terms of sustainability.

- By using social media rather than outdoor advertisements or TV commercials to promote in the digitalizing world, more cost-effective and larger-scale works can be carried out.
- Instead of limiting the target audience to a certain area, the potential of the company can be reached to much more serious levels by meeting with people around the world.
- A faster and permanent communication with the target audience is ensured.
- Since social media algorithms are structured according to the level of interest, more pinpoint activities are carried out.

3.96 billion (DataReportal) people in the world are social media users. In order to carry out the activities of disseminating the achievements of the companies in an accurate and effective way, they need to be involved in the most appropriate social media for their product, service, target audience and basic purposes. For example, LinkedIn social media environment, where business life is shared and professional networks are built, can be more effective than the social media platform, which is mainly used for entertainment purposes, for the execution of reporting activities specific to the business world.

It would be useful to ask the following question, you may be wondering how many people were browsing the social media, and the success of the company they were interested in came up with sustainability? It shouldn't be hard to guess that the answer is mostly zero. That's why Sustainability achievements are not just searchable, but they should also be a priority for all companies that want to take advantage of the benefits mentioned in the first part above.

Topic 3 – Highlights, best practices, and examples for SMEs
Growth is among the primary goals of all SMEs, but the concept that should not be overlooked or compromised is Sustainable development. Sustainable development is the principle of organizing to achieve human development goals while maintaining the ability of natural systems, economy and society to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services on which they depend. In short, sustainable development can be defined as a development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the competences of future generations. In order to achieve this, the Sustainability reports of SMEs should be prepared according to the principle of accountability.
Using sustainable development goals, companies can shape and guide their strategies, goals and activities and use them as a general framework to take advantage of:

- Identifying future business opportunities
- Increasing the value of corporate sustainability
- Strengthening stakeholder relations and monitoring policy developments
- Balancing Society and Markets
- Using a common language and purpose

Methodology

Although Sustainability Reports are not a new concept, it will be useful to give basic definitions and define key concepts at the first stage, since students to be trained have limited knowledge on this subject.

Processes that allow more social interaction between teachers/instructors and students will enable learning to take place in a more natural way. Instead of providing a passive environment, teaching can be organized in a livelier and more interactive environment to support the learning and the level of attraction related to the subject. The existing structure should be based on learning collaboratively, based on students expressing their opinions. Especially since social media is a versatile medium, hearing interesting ideas from learners will both enable the development of different ideas and enable the learner to actively participate in the lessons. Using the following methodologies will make the lessons more attractive.

It should also be kept in mind that the following contents can be arranged according to the flipclass model, considering the possibility of providing the trainings in the form of distance education,

- Small group activities: This method can be adopted in teaching service and product design by giving students some situations and tasks. This path will help to give more practical lessons.
- Peer interaction: Supporting peer communication among learners on issues such as sustainability and the use of social media will bring along skill development (collaboration, critical thinking, problem solving, innovation, etc.).
- Case studies: Bringing originality to the learning environment, demonstrating practices in a real case of sustainability report design can support the realization of meaningful learning. From this point of view, it is important for learners to encounter examples from real life and to establish a connection between what they learn and how they are applied in the real world. Sustainability reports prepared for this method, sharing examples on social media or websites and Global Reporting Initiative documents can be used.

Although methods such as experimental studies are not recommended because they will not result in immediate results, but hybrid methods can be used.

Assessment

On the subject of disseminarion, verbal or written evaluations that include expressions such as true/false or appropriate/not appropriate according to different scenarios will also show you the level of command over the framework.

In content that requires mastery of a special terminology such as GRI standards, assessment methods in the form of multiple choice tests or "fill in the blanks", which measure whether key concepts are understood or not, rather than open-ended questions, would be more appropriate.

Since the concept of sustainability is essentially a subject where the influence of internal motivations is high, attitude scales can be used to see that students internalize the subject.

Once the assessments are made, they should not remain as just an indicator, but should be used to shape teaching.

Tips for target users

- Provide as much collaboration as possible.
- Approach different ideas with a flexible and constructive approach
- Make evaluations on different situation scenarios.
- Evaluate examples of successful reporting and social media strategies.
- Emphasize horizontally related fields (Ecology, Employment, Profitability, Transparency)
- Have them ask the "why" question often. And give them consistent answers.
- Ask students to summarize the topic and try to express it in their own words.
- Assess their perspective on the subject using attitude scales.

References

https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2020-july-global-statshot *20/02/2022*

Initiative, G. R. (2012). Global reporting initiative. *Online at: https://www. globalreporting.*

org/Pages/default. aspx [20 Dec 2012].

Çetin, F. A., & Taşdemir, N. H. Sürdürülebilir sosyal medya pazarlamasi ve markaların sosyal medyada sürdürülebilirliğe karşı tutumu. *Journal of institute of economic development and social researches*, 4(8), 31-42.

Practical Activity 1

Name of the Activity
What purpose should I serve?
Aims of the Activity
In this activity, 17 sustainable development goals will be given to the students in advance (maybe you can use a table, see: resources). Students had seen various examples of sustainability reports and good practices during the course. The aim here is to explain which content is given and why, what should be included in a good sustainability report, which content is addressed and which development goal is served.
Description of the Activity
Duration: 1 Hour Group size: 3-4 learner per group Instructions: Students will be given the sustainable development goals given in the "To find out more" section. Students will be asked to collaborate as a group to produce a sustainability report. The important point is that they state what content they include in their reports and why they take into account which sustainable development goal. For example, in order to achieve the goal of reducing inequalities, they should quantify the minorities or immigrants working in their institutions, address citizens with disabilities working in their institutions, and list their activities for disadvantaged groups. - Step 1- Let students form groups among themselves. - Step 2 – Groups are given 1 hour to prepare a sustainability report for an SME in this

activity task.

- Step 3 – Students are given time to submit their reports. Before submitting their reports, they should be asked to explain what content they include and why, and which sustainable development goal they consider.
- Step 4 – Students are encouraged to evaluate each other's reports. Comments from students are evaluated.

Evaluation: While evaluating the reports, the purpose of measurement should not be pursued, a correct understanding of the feasibility of the objectives should be aimed.

Resources

https://sdgs.un.org/goals

To find out more

Students can access all SDGs from this link.
https://sdgs.un.org/goals

Students can see the current GRI standards from this section.
https://www.globalreporting.org/standards/

Practical Activity 2

Name of the Activity
Dissemination via social media
Aims of the Activity
Announcing the main features of the sustainability report, which the learners think of and publish as an SME representative, on a social media account. In this way, it is planned to increase their experience on the subject, to increase their knowledge and experience about the importance of the message given on social media and thus to disseminate sustainability achievements.

Description of the Activity

Duration: 40 min
Group size: 3-4 learner per group.

Instructions: Before starting this activity, in addition to the content introduced in the course, what should a good social media post contain, which social media platform should be preferred, how to ensure that the post is interesting, how to create a "catchy word", how to choose an appropriate image and preliminary information should be given about these.

For example, the inclusion of GRI standards in the post may be considered too detailed, but it should not be inconvenient to include the basic keywords that the post tag should contain.

Before the activity: Ask students to find 3 tags that would make a difference in their post

Students will put themselves in the place of an SME and will carry out the activities of dissemination of a sustainability report they have prepared.

Students can be asked which platform they use and why they choose this platform. One product should not be enough. For example, they will be asked to write a news text. The following template can be used for this.

- ➤ Step 1 – Learners choose the social media platform they will use for the dissemination activity. They explain why they chose this platform.
- ➤ Step 2 – Learners identify a short headline, choose an image, and then write a short news text.
- ➤ Step 3 – Learners publish their posts or share the post with the class on the computer. While doing this, they are given a presentation time of 5 minutes.
- ➤ Step 4 - Evaluations are made by students and teacher. (see: evaluation)
- ➤ Step 5 (Optional) – Sometime after everyone has made their presentation, or in the next lesson, they are asked what they remember about the other groups' posts.

- ➤ Evaluation: Evaluation is made here both by the instructor and other groups based on the learners' choices. Feedback must be given to learners through news texts. Positive statements should be appreciated and points that need to be corrected should be given.

Resources
Pencil – Paper A computer for students to fill out a word document while writing a news article, or social media post. Projector
To find out more
Di Gangi, P. M., & Wasko, M. M. (2016). Social media engagement theory: Exploring the influence of user engagement on social media usage. *Journal of Organizational and End User Computing (JOEUC)*, *28*(2), 53-73.