



Incorporating migration-sensitive standards

Intercultural ambassadors assist and support the process of intercultural opening in employment agencies and job centres



IQ | GOOD PRACTICE to the point

Addressees for transfer:

Employment agencies and job centres (gE), in particular migration officers and officers working on asylum

Job training schemes for intercultural ambassadors:

Intercultural ambassadors (ICAB) have the task of putting the issue of intercultural opening (ICO) on the agenda in employment agencies and job centres, as well as sensitizing them, identifying problems, and finding solutions. As experts, they support their management to take ICO as a central management task seriously and to initiate important changes through a perennial process. ICABs are helping develop measures that contribute to transparent, fair, non-discriminatory, and sustainable labour market integration.

Project:
k.l.e.v.e.r-iq

Implementing organisation:
'Bruderhaus Diakonie' foundation

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Offer:

You can find the brochure on the continuing vocational education and training concept at http://www.netzwerk-iq-bw.de/assets/files/Broschuere_IKBO_Download.pdf. The film on the measure entitled 'Auf Augenhöhe' [On Equal Footing] can be found at <http://www.netzwerk-iq-bw.de/de/audio-und-video.html>. All IQ good practice examples published so far can be found at www.netzwerk-iq.de.

Starting position/challenge

Employees of the public labour market service providers often have to deliver measurable results under high administrative and time pressure, and simultaneously have to consider the complex personal living conditions of the customers. In order to work in a non-discriminating and respectful manner, targeted support for the intercultural opening (ICO) is needed. However, if educational programmes for intercultural competence are only implemented selectively for the staff, there is no way to permanently integrate intercultural awareness in the employment agencies and job centres. It was therefore important to launch a process of intercultural opening in the design of job training schemes – supported by the management level and developed as an overall strategy. In order to receive support from the management of employment agencies or job centres (gE), the Federal Employment Agency's Regional Directorate of Baden-Württemberg was gained as a strategic partner.

Implementation of the job training schemes

In the one-year advanced training with five modules over two days each, key personnel from employment agencies and job centres, especially migration officers, were trained as intercultural ambassadors (ICAB) to launch intercultural opening processes in their institution. This advanced vocational training includes elements of knowledge transfer, clarification of roles, strategy development, collegial exchange, and practice tasks with the goal of the ICO, which the participants process from module to module. Inspiration for the ICO is multifaceted and may include the organisation of a seminar for colleagues on the subject of recognition counselling, the development of migration-sensitive quality standards for counselling or intensification of cooperation with regional, external consulting services or migrant organisations. In their institution, ICABs contribute to requesting training requirements, adapting



training concepts in close coordination with IQ for the respective target groups, and subsequently integrating the content long-term in the teams, and stimulating further inspiration for intercultural opening. The support of the Regional Directorate Baden-Württemberg was important for the initiation of the measure, both for the implementation of the practice tasks and for the release of ICABs.

Summary

The training to become an intercultural ambassador has so far been successfully carried out three times leading to a total of 40 trained ICABs. Once a year, there is a special two-day in-depth meeting of the trained people beyond the advanced vocational training on current topics to expand networking and strengthening of roles, in which the Regional Directorate is involved. Beyond the modules, the participants are also being supported to overcome difficulties in the implementation of their specific practice projects for the intercultural opening by the 'k.l.e.v.e.r-iq' training management.

Question your own stereotype

Continuing vocational education and training content: From strategies against racism to examples of simple but correct German

'Integrating people into the labour force works much better with respect for the diversity of our clients.' The quote of a participant in the advanced vocational training for intercultural ambassadors illustrates the great importance of intercultural opening in the employment administration. 'Advanced vocational training is a strategic tool,' emphasises Julia Kaiser, coordinator of the 'k.l.e.v.e.r-iq' job training scheme. 'The newly trained specialists are supposed to provide inspiration for the intercultural opening of their institutions and sensitise their environment.' The participants are often heterogeneous: from professionals, such as migration officers to newcomers from the 'Displacement and Asylum' teams. The trainers

therefore discuss the topics according to the needs of the participants. The content ranges from strategies (e.g. how to respond to openly racist slurs) to examples of a simple but correct German that all clients can understand. In addition, the participants are supposed to work on themselves. In the



seminar, they are encouraged to question their own image of people with a migration experience. The remarkable feature of intercultural competence is the ability to process the reactions of the counterpart in light of its respective history and the awareness of ones own position of power. The overarching goal of the project is to ensure that the labour market integration of people with a migration background is not prevented by discrimination. 'The disadvantages are linked to different diversity categories such as ethnic-national origin, gender, age, and/or disability,' emphasises Julia Kaiser. 'We want to develop actionable measures that contribute to a fair, non-discriminatory, and therefore effective labour market integration.'

Three questions to Elisabeth Yupanqui Werner, project manager of the 'k.l.e.v.e.r-iq' project

'Methodically adapt and further develop content'



What is the innovative aspect of the 'Intercultural Ambassador (ICAB)' advanced vocational training program?

The innovative element of the advanced vocational training is that key personnel from employment agencies and job centres receive technical and methodological skills to strengthen their own facilities in the context of intercultural opening. By doing so, they serve as a bridge between management and employees. Cooperation with the Regional Directorate is also strengthened in the long run. A network of intercultural ambassadors is created, which also trains the individuals even after the advanced vocational training. The advanced vocational training is very efficient with ten days plus practical support and encompasses 14 to 18 participants per year.

Can this measure also be implemented elsewhere?

Thanks to the advanced training concept developed as part of the project, this is possible without any problems. If trainers are available

and the corresponding regional office of the Federal Employment Agency (BA) supports the concept, the training can be implemented in all federal states. It is recommended that the measure be adapted and further developed in accordance with the respective circumstances, in cooperation with the participants and the central professionals. As a result, current developments in the labour market policy and the associated professional challenges can be picked up as needed for the participants.

What can the advanced vocational training affect in the long-term?

It is important for the long-term success of the measure that the leadership level of the employment agency provides the intercultural ambassadors with the necessary time to implement the momentum and practice projects of the advanced vocational training on location. Intense follow-up support is also provided by our team. We provide intercultural ambassadors with training, newsletters, brochures, and other materials after the actual job training scheme. And last, but not least: Institutions that consider themselves to be learning organisations are changing and developing through a structural integration of intercultural opening.

Imprint

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Network IQ

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