

Project „digiskill-retail“

Development and Use of flexible and digital tools for increasing digital skills of vocational students and employees in retail trade.

Evaluation – interview

"Digital skills in the retail industry"

Estonia

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Evaluation interview "Digital skills in the retail industry"

INFORMATION AND DATA LITERACY

Products and services of the training company (AO - training regulations, §4 paragraph 2 number 1

Introduction: In order to advise customers according to their needs, prospective salespeople and retail clerks need in-depth knowledge of goods. This is one of the key qualifications in retail.

Knowledge of goods includes knowledge of:

- the production
- the product characteristics
- the advantages and benefits
- the application and use
- the care, storage and, if necessary, disposal of goods
- alternative offers and of course the price of the goods

1. What role do digital information sources play in your institution in imparting commodity knowledge?

a) Do they use digital media to search for information and which ones?

They generally do not teach it to everyone, and many employees do not have to use digital tools, as it is not necessary for many of our jobs.

b) What does she/he name? Is there a tendency?

Their own internal product and commodity environments, which are used mainly by people whose specific duties relate to ordering products etc. So only people who specifically need them for their jobs are being taught them.

c) If she/he does not use anything, are there reasons why not?

- lack of technical equipment
- lack of user skills

This is not generally taught, as many employees do not need those skills for doing their job.

2. How do you develop skills for data analysis of your trainees?

a) What does he/she understand by data analysis?

When she is thinking about her company and the employees, then Excel is still the most used and necessary tool for data analysis.

b) Which software tools/sources are used for data analysis? Individual e-learning platform Skillaby

c) What methodology does he/she use? Individual e-learning

d) What data do trainees need to analyse?

She brought out that the Excel courses are usually very general and often do not include some specific functions their employees need. For example, when an employee has a huge Excel file with a lot of data and a lot of functions to do, they might get stuck on something, as this specific thing was not taught in the platform/course. So, more individuality is needed and they would be

happy as some specific study bites could be developed. Unfortunately, she couldn't name specific examples as data analysis is not so specifically connected to her job.

e) Do trainees have open access to the tools/sources?

All employees have the possibility to pass a general Excel e-course.

3. How do you teach your students to find the information in order to better advise customers on relevant product information?

- a) Which methodology do they use?**
- b) Which methodology do they prefer and why?**
- c) Which sources of information do they recommend?**
- d) Do trainees use digital media? If yes, which ones?**
- e) If no, are there any reasons why not?**

Generally, no, as this is not a general skill that is relevant for most employees and they do not expect that customer service in store has to have this kind of deep knowledge on the products. Customer service agents usually learn more thoroughly about new products when procurers come to stores to introduce new products or new lines or products.

4. How do you instruct your students to find information about recycling/reuse/reduce of products?

- a) How important is the topic of environmental friendliness/sustainability?**
- b) How does she/he encourage her/his trainees on this topic?**

Is one of the topics in the focus?

- c) If yes/ what sources of information do they access?**
- d) If she/he does not mention anything, are there reasons why not?**

At the moment the employees are introduced to relevant documents (legislation, instructions, regulations) about the topics of recycling/reusing and sustainability. As this topic is very relevant and important, they are currently developing an e-course in their internal learning platform on these topics.

COMMUNICATION

Presentation of goods and advertising measures (AO - training regulations, §4 paragraph 2 number 2)

Introduction: Advertising is part of a company's communication policy. Customers need to know what services the trading company can offer them. Advertising is the communication with the customer to inform, maintain one's own image, create purchase incentives and build trust.

5. Which communication channels do you use in the company / vocational school / training provider to prepare students to inform customers about advertising campaigns?

- a) Do they use communication channels?**
- b) Which communication channels are mentioned preferentially?**

They do not teach any digital or analogue communication channels as a separate course, as there is a huge number of employees and most of them do not need this information to do their job.

They offer a training course called “Welcome Pack” to all new employees, where the topics of ethics, general communication and behaviour on social media is talked about. But this is more about good customs and good representation of their company, not advertising. However, they are planning to add digital communication/digital advertising channels topics to their existing internal e-learning platform, but it is only a plan at the moment and will take some time.

- 6. What methods do you use to enable trainees to use these channels? (Teaching methods)**
a) How does she/he support the trainees in using the communication channels?
b) What methodology does she/he use and why?

The “Welcome Pack” course is in the company’s internal e-learning platform and they plan to include more digital communication/advertising topics on the company’s internal e-learning platform in the future.

- 7. How do you train your students to choose the right channel for communication with the customers?**
a) Which of the methods used is well accepted by the trainees? (digital vs. traditional)

They do not train it generally, as there are specific jobs for people who are communicating with customers through digital channels, who are expected to have those skills and who receive specific onboarding from their supervisor.

COLLABORATION

Information and communication (AO - training regulations, §4 paragraph 4 number 3

Introduction: In order to exchange ideas with colleagues or customers, digital media are increasingly being used today in addition to personal conversations.

- 8. What digital technologies/media do you use to exchange information or for communication in the company/vocational school/training provider?**
a) Do they use digital technologies/media?
- If yes, which ones?

They use their internal company environment (intranet), Skype, Facebook groups, Slack, Teams, e-mail. It depends on the departments, people’s tasks, and their preferences/necessities.

- b) Which digital technologies/media do they prefer?**

Intranet is very popular, but also the other aforementioned tools and technologies. It is different in different stores and departments.

- c) What challenges do they see in communication, with digital technologies/media.**

It is a big company with many stores and departments, so a lot of different preferences in the communication channels.

- 9. In the classroom what internal communication channels do you use with your trainees/students?**

The company’s internal learning platform, e-mail

10. What tools, platforms and other methods do you use to develop the co-creation and creativity/exchange of ideas of your trainees? – e.g., Mindmap, brainstorming, Miro board, Google Drive, Canva, Figma, etc.

a) Do they use tools, platforms and other methods?

- If yes, which tools, platforms and other methods are mentioned?

- If no, are there reasons why not?

b) Which tools, platforms and other methods are mentioned preferentially?

The trainers use Canva, Miro boards, and Genially in their lectures for co-creation purposes. They are also planning to use 7taps in the future.

INFORMATION

Consulting of customers (AO – training regulations, §5 paragraph 3 sentence 1 number 2)

Introduction: In retail, customers today expect individual, needs-based advice and solutions to their problems as well as a clearly tailored benefit-related presentation. In order to advise customers according to their needs, sellers and retail merchant (KiE) must be able to recognize and analyse the latest trends in retail.

11. Which sources of information do you use in the company/classroom to observe, recognize and analyse (trade) processes?

a) Do they use information sources to observe, identify and analyse (trade) processes?

If yes,

- which digital information sources are mentioned?

- which traditional/analogue sources of information are mentioned?

b) Which information sources are mentioned preferentially?

Fragments of these topics are taught in connection with specific professional skills trainings. For example, managers learn to analyse trade processes, developments to see the bigger picture necessary for their work. Another example is the people who are responsible for stacking shelves. They learn the customer psychology and new trends from that point of view – like what products should be placed on eye-level (they learn how to see the point of view of the customer). These topics are taught as e-courses, and they are supported by live courses with a customer service/customer behaviour trainer.

It is difficult to bring out concrete sources, as they differ greatly.

12. What are the tools and other ways to develop your trainee's digital customer service skills?- e.g., chatbot, company/store app, subscriptions, etc.

a) Which tools are mentioned?

b) Which tools does he/she prefer and why?

These topics are not taught, as these topics are not relevant for most of their employees, and some are not even relevant at all for their company (chatbots).

DIGITAL CONTENT CREATION

Online trading (AO – training regulations, § 5 paragraph 4 sentence 1 no. 6)

Introduction: More and more retail companies set up their own online shop in order to be present for their customers on various channels.

13. Do you integrate content from the elective qualification "e-commerce" into your company/your lessons for digital content creation?

a) if, yes

- Which topics?
- What teaching methods do you use to provide the content?
- Do you use specific platforms, software, tools?

b) If, No

- Why not?
- Where do you see the challenges?

No, because there are very specific people (and jobs) that deal with e-commerce topics, who already have the necessary skills and do not need to learn those topics. E-commerce is not generally taught, as most employees do not need that knowledge and there is no plans to include it in the near-future.

14. In your opinion, which skills for digital content creation are particularly relevant for employees in their day-to-day work in retail?

a) Which skills are mentioned?

Smartphone use and social media (Facebook), also e-mail and simple web searches are generally well-developed skills.

b) What deficits does she/he recognise?

Cyber security and safe use of e-mails/platforms/suspicious links. This topic is weak not only for older people, but for everyone. Also, there is a small number of older people who do not even have an email, but having this is crucial today, so this is also a necessary skill to be taught to some people. One topic that is also lacking for some employees is the digital possibilities of the national ID (mobile ID, digital signature etc.)

c) What role does the age of the employee play?

Age is definitely a factor, older people (and especially older people from smaller places, and the countryside) are weaker in digital technologies. Some older people do not want to learn any digital skills from principle, but there are not so many of these people, people generally want to learn.

d) How can deficits be covered by e-learning?

Many of these can definitely be covered by e-learning study bites. But when they are dealing with older people, who are overall with very few digital skills, then they might have problems using e-learning platforms and in those cases individual support from a manager or a supervisor is needed.