

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"

Germany

Project duration: 01.09.2022 – 31.08.2024

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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
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1. **What role do digital information sources play in your institution in imparting commodity knowledge?**
2. **How do you develop skills for data analysis of your trainees?**
3. **How do you teach your students to find the information in order to better advise customers on relevant product information?**
4. **How do you instruct your students to find information about recycling/reuse/reduce of products?**

The training provider works a lot with disadvantaged young people who find it difficult to search and filter information themselves. Practical knowledge must therefore be visualised so that the apprentices can make the reference and link. They have to be introduced in small steps. At the beginning of the training, all apprentices receive intensive training in the area of EDP handling/use. A school e-mail is set up for them and personalised access to the school's learning platform is created. The teachers upload the respective learning materials in digital form (mostly PDF) onto the learning platform. The teacher notes that the provision of digital learning materials by teachers has decreased after Corona. Learning materials are again provided in printed form in class.

The knowledge about commodities is taught through different methods (method mix). In the field of digital media, the classical search engine is used to collect information or analyse data. The apprentices search for information via the search engine Google. There is no introduction on how apprentices should search for information in different digital environments or identify relevant sources. The apprentices do research rather randomly and intuitively. They analyse product information (texture, content, etc.) on the internet or search for data needed to solve a defined task. The source itself is apparently not examined by the teaching staff. Some teachers teach product knowledge via learning videos they find on YouTube. However, the selection of suitable videos is very limited. The teacher emphasises the limited choice of suitable (teaching) materials that present information on commodity knowledge/product knowledge.

Textbooks are also used for the development of analytical skills in trainees. Apprentices implement the collected knowledge in the form of a lecture or presentation. Group work with situational tasks with information sources filtered by the teacher is also practised in

class. It seems that analytical skills and commodity knowledge are taught more through analogue sources. Presentations are given by the apprentices using the presentation programme PowerPoint. A digital whiteboard is also available.

The topic of environmental friendliness/sustainability plays a rather subordinate role.

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 VET Provider school to prepare students to inform customers about advertising campaigns?**
6. **What methods do you use to enable trainees to use these channels? (Teaching methods)**
7. **How do you train your students to choose the right channel for communication with the customers?**

The teaching focus in the field of communication "customer advice and customer information" is mainly on traditional/analogue communication channels. The teacher mentions various teaching methods how apprentices are introduced to this topic. Digital communication channels are not supported very much. Therefore, apprentices do not get the opportunity to use or apply digital communication channels in these areas and thus develop their skills and knowledge. The point of sale "stationary point of sale" with a focus on face-to-face customer service is the thematic focus. Sales conversations on the phone are simulated, recorded and then jointly evaluated. Other methods include creative project work on product presentation (using shoe boxes), simulations in the training company with scanner checkout, conveyor belt and goods/products, small and large group methods in various social forms as well as business games and role plays.

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 vocational school?**
9. **In the classroom what internal communication channels do you use with your trainees/students?**
10. **What tools, platforms and other methods do you use to develop the co-creation and creativity/exchange of ideas of your trainees?**

There is the possibility to use the communication channel on the school's learning platform or the personal school email. The personal conversation between teacher and apprentice is preferred in class.

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 classroom to observe, recognize and analyse (trade) processes?

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.

Current developments and trends in trade are communicated via the following digital information sources: Information from the Internet (Google search engine) and teaching material that teachers find themselves on the Internet and upload onto the learning platform. The teacher notes that the provision of information is rather analogue and in printed form. The textbook is also used. Another method mentioned is the common exchange of experiences in the class plenary.

No specific tools on digital customer service are used. The teachers develop and promote the communication skills of apprentices in the field of complaint management. For this purpose, customer letters are practised in Word according to DIN standards.

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?

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

The area of "digital content creation" is not taught in class. Occasionally, content from product presentation, advertising or from learning area 5 Marketing - Cross Marketing is touched upon. The optional qualification is an additional topic and is not at the centre of the curriculum. The teacher notes the lack of basic understanding on the part of the apprentices in e-commerce.