

## **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**

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

**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?**

The do group work in searching product/commodity information from Google. Students are also taught how to judge sources critically and how to find trustworthy sources.

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

Open sources like Google.

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

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

**b) Which software tools/sources are used for data analysis? Forms, Excel,**

**c) What methodology does he/she use?**

Co-creation in an Excel file. One example is that students have to do various tasks in a joint Excel, and they also have to analyse and judge the data and results the other students created (are the calculations and results logical and correct). Downloading and analysing big statistics tables.

**c) What data do trainees need to analyse?**

They did exercises with delivery information and data, work schedules.

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

They have access to the tools and sources they need for their studies.

**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?**

They do different exercises in finding relevant product information from web searches and different websites. They also do exercises in how to use different keywords and how do different keywords provide different results. Also, they learn and analyse how the same information is

portrayed differently on the sites of different countries. Also, they look at how to view that information is actually relevant (when was it published, is it still correct (for example for legislation etc)).

**b) Which methodology do they prefer and why?**

Practical exercises connected to web searches and using various keywords is preferred. It is important that students feel that the things they learn is actually needed for them and they can put these skills into use in the future, not that they just do it for the grade.

**c) Which sources of information do they recommend?**

Open sources like Google, national/EU legislations/acts/regulations.

**d) Do trainees use digital media? If yes, which ones?**

They use digital sources mentioned under previous points.

**e) If no, are there any reasons why not?**

**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?**

Yes, it has become increasingly more important. A new curriculum was recently developed for retail and these topics are all covered there. These topics are not taught as a separate module, but they are intertwined with other relevant modules.

**b) How does she/he encourage her/his trainees on this topic? Is one of the topics in the focus?**

It is important to listen to the feedback from students and modifies the topics and approach accordingly. Recycling and reusing packages and waste are definitely very important topics.

**c) If yes/ what sources of information do they access?**

Legislation/acts/regulations. A lot of focus is put on different labels and markings on the packages, students need to know what different labels mean. They are all open-source. Also the materials she created herself.

## 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?**

If yes,

- which digital communication channels are mentioned?

Facebook, Instagram

- which traditional/analogue channels are mentioned?

Couldn't name any

**b) Which communication channels are mentioned preferentially?**

Marketing is taught more thoroughly by a different teacher, so they didn't have very specific answers to the questions concerning channels.

**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?**

Simulations and exercises of real customer situations.

**b) What methodology does she/he use and why?**

Exercises on how to be calm and courteous when communicating with customers, exercises on how to handle customer claims, how to introduce themselves via digital channels and how to end the customer contact. Also analysis on how to market and advertise products in different channels, who are using the channels, what aspects should be considered.

**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)**

Traditional means of communication and advertising are not so relevant anymore. More focus is placed on digital means of communication. The students are taught the basics and etiquette of digital communication, setting up their mailbox etc.

## 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?**

They use Tahvel internal learning system and Moodle. Also email and Teams.

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

It depends on the circumstance and needs. The materials are usually in Moodle. Some teachers prefer to use Teams for communication in their online classes. Tahvel is for important notifications but is not used for everyday communication. When students need to communicate and do group work, they mainly use social media, such as Facebook groups and messenger.

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

Usually there are no problems.

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

Social media (groups on Facebook, Whatsapp), also Facebook messenger.

### **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?**

It was more relevant during covid and distant learning. There has also been some feedback from the students that using many different tools and technologies is confusing and the teachers should stick to the same tools.

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

Moodle, mentimeter, kahoot, crosswordlabs, Teams whiteboard.

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

No preferences from them, all tools mentioned are used according to the topic or task, and all are good if used correctly and in context.

## 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?**

They are not teaching these topics themselves, but a lot of guest lecturers, who are experts and professionals in the field of customer service and trade are invited to speak about specific and relevant topics of processes, trends etc in the trade sector. The aim of this is to offer a practical approach. The tools and methods used is very varied and it's difficult to point to a few. The expertise and experience they bring is more important than tools and sources.

**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? e-mail, self-service checkout, company websites.**

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

Analysing and comparing company websites, simulations of customer situations and customer communication.

## 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?**

There is not separate e-commerce module in the retail curriculums, as this topic is quite specific and not yet very general. That topic is briefly discussed inside different topics, but at the moment not a lot of emphasis is placed on it. The importance of this topic will likely increase in the future and topics related to e-commerce will be more thoroughly studied.

**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?**

Content creation is usually strong. Also, smartphone and social media use.

**b) What deficits does she/he recognise?**

Judging web sources critically, cyber security, safety (including the basics of virus protection). Many young people today have trouble using a desktop computer, as they are so used to using phones and tablets. Also, young people do not really like traditional office programmes (such as Word and Excel).

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

Young students adopt digital skills (new tools, programmes) much faster than older people. Older learners tend to have fewer digital skills and, they learn slower. Older people need to be pushed more to adopt to new digital technologies but at the end they still manage. Older people also can have difficulties in finding relevant information from digital sources. But not only the age is a factor, but previous working experience. When a person hasn't needed to use digital tools and technologies in their work previously, then they are usually a lot weaker in general.

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

It depends on the person and how motivated they are. Some people find learning digital skills hard and give up easily, so they would probably lack motivation to study independently, but other people are more motivated and push themselves to learn things. Learning bites could be very useful in cases when a teacher sees that a student lacks in digital skills in a certain area and could direct them to pass study bites in these topics. One issue with voluntary study bites is also that many students only do as much as is needed to get a grade, and additional voluntary studies are not popular. In this case study bites should need to be part of the grade.