

# THE L-COACH

Integrated literacy training  
in vocational training

## STEP-BY-STEP

Commissioned by the Ministry of the Flemish Community,  
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Centrum voor  
Taal en  
Onderwijs



Centrum Basiseducatie Leuven-Hageland

# THE ROLE OF THE L-COACH IN VOCATIONAL TRAINING

## WHAT IS YOUR SITUATION?

Do you have a large number of people on your training course or at your sheltered workplace who are not performing so well simply because they are unable to count, read or write?

Or do you have participants in your numeracy, ICT or Dutch language for native speakers group who would like to learn a trade? If so, contact a Basic Education Centre or providers of vocational training courses in your area and put together an integrated pathway. You can find relevant addresses to contact towards the end of this document.

If you are a training manager who feels that this arrangement has something to offer, organise an information session to enthuse instructors and teachers about this idea.

There is a test which companies can use to analyse their situation in terms of literacy skills. It can also be very enlightening for trainers and those involved in employment initiatives to carry out this test.

Do the L-test!

<http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/geletterdheid/G-factor/bedrijfsbeleid/G-test/default.asp>

## WHAT IS AN L-COACH?

An L-coach is a literacy teacher who provides extra help to the instructor and support to participants with poor literacy during vocational training courses. The instructor and coach combine their activities to make the training course as rich a literacy-related environment as possible, which will boost and support the development of all the participants' literacy skills. The training manager and whole team are involved in this task. The instructor and the L-coach also look at areas which are difficult for many people with poor literacy and decide on the best approach to adopt. The L-coach produces customised material and provides support to everyone who needs it in the training environment. The instructor and L-coach also jointly monitor the progress of each participant on the course.

## GETTING STARTED

Begin by reading in full the report "The G-coach. Integrated literacy training in vocational training". If necessary, seek assistance from a suitable support agency.

Plan an initial meeting with the course training manager and the Basic Education Centre, along with the course instructor and L-coach. The following points must be included on the agenda:

- Duration and intensity of training: you cannot achieve more objectives, specifically, particular literacy objectives, without also allocating more time



to this. Pool the resources of the 2 training providers.

- Discuss the timing of the preparatory, practical and concluding phases.
- Specify the following points in an agreement:
  - location: make sure that for the duration of the training the instructor and L-coach share the same office and use a common materials cupboard. A quiet place should also be provided in or close to the training room where they can also go and work on their own at certain times.
  - all the roles, tasks and responsibilities of each partner during each phase
  - specific consultation times and intermediate evaluations during the course of the project
  - promotion of expertise and a consultation schedule
- Recruitment, selection and composition of groups: refer to point 4 of the preparatory phase below.

You will find more information about these points later on in this step-by-step plan.

## PREPARATORY PHASE

### 1. Profile of course and participants.

Analyse the learning environment in the vocational training course. You can use the following materials to do this:

- Nederlands op de opleidingsvloer (Dutch in the training environment) (CTO/VDAB 2001) ([http://cteno.be/downloads/publicaties/berben\\_van\\_nuffel\\_2004\\_taalondersteuning\\_op\\_de\\_opleidingsvloer.pdf](http://cteno.be/downloads/publicaties/berben_van_nuffel_2004_taalondersteuning_op_de_opleidingsvloer.pdf))
- Handvatten voor taalbeleid (Guidelines on language policy) (CTO/VGC 2001) ([http://cteno.be/downloads/publicaties/drijkoningen\\_2001\\_handvatten\\_taalbeleid.pdf](http://cteno.be/downloads/publicaties/drijkoningen_2001_handvatten_taalbeleid.pdf))
- Taalgericht naar werk (Language for work) (HvN Antwerpen/Linguapolis 2007) ([http://www.nt2antwerpen.be/actieplannen\\_taalgericht\\_naar\\_het\\_werk](http://www.nt2antwerpen.be/actieplannen_taalgericht_naar_het_werk))

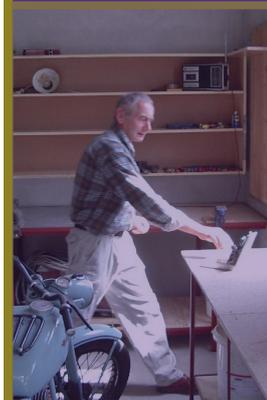
### 2. What are the literacy requirements specific to the training course and the relevant trade?

Before starting to draw up an inventory, you can take a look to see whether there is already material available for your training course.

- Stappen vooruit (Step Forward) (Roggen, 2005) for the construction, sanitation, metal and electrical industries.
- Basiscompetenties in kaart (Record of basic skills) sets out the literacy skills for the following vocational training courses: builder's assistant, cooking & professional cleaning services, decorator and care home assistant (Dierckx, 2007).

Or you can specify the literacy requirements for existing vocational skill profiles.

- SERV-beroepscompetentieprofielen (SERV vocational skills profiles) ([http://www.serv.be/dispatcher.aspx?page\\_id=20-00-00-00-003](http://www.serv.be/dispatcher.aspx?page_id=20-00-00-00-003))
- Vlaamse Kwalificatiestructuur (Flemish Qualifications Framework)



(the draft text of the decree was adopted by the Flemish Parliament on 22 April 2009). Document 2158 (2008-2009 – No.6)

If you fail to find anything suitable among this material, you can also provide your own. For example, carry out observations in the class and gather relevant written material: work rotas, written instructions, manuals etc. The following procedures are available to help you with this:

- Klare taal rendeert (Clear language pays) (HvN Antwerpen/Brussel; UA/Linguapolis) (<http://www.nt2antwerpen.be/werkgevers>)
- NodO (Dutch in the training environment) (CTO) (<http://cteno.be/doc=260&nav=6,1,1,0>) (VDAB) (<http://vdab.be/inwerking/nt2-opleidingsvloer.shtml>)

These tools enable you to carry out a SWOT analysis of the course and participant. This allows you to define areas of collaboration for the instructor and L-coach and include them in the planning. Finally, indicate in the inventory where you expect to encounter the biggest problems. Prioritise this list of sticking points.

### 3. Draw up an integrated list of objectives together.

Go through with the instructor and training manager the objectives of the training course, determining which literacy objectives are also required.

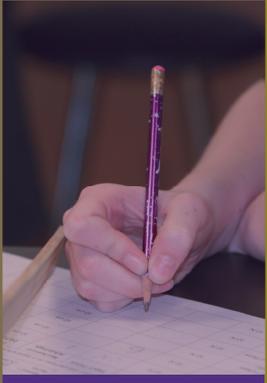
The following resources may be used to do this:

- the list of sticking points in point 3
- the list of vocational training objectives. For example, for the construction, sanitation, metal and electrical industries (Roggen, Stappen vooruit (Step Forward), 2005) or for builder's assistants, cooking & professional cleaning services, decorators and care home assistants (Dierckx, BIK, kaart (Record of basic skills), 2007)
- the Basic Education training profiles (<http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/dvo/volwassenen/inhouden/basiseducatie/index.htm>)

### 4. Look for integrated assignments, adapt existing material or create new material.

Look at the training course's teaching material in the light of the sticking points and adapt certain elements as necessary (instructions, lesson structure, way of working, texts, visual aids etc.). Involve the instructor and training manager in this process. You should also devise task-orientated activities and objective-related interventions based on the list of sticking points or problems envisaged as a priority. If there is no suitable teaching material available for working on the necessary literacy skills, you must adapt existing material or create new material.

- The examples available in English on the website <http://rwp.qia.oxi.net/embeddedlearning/search.cfm> may provide you with some inspiration.
- The pack "De G-coach. Geïntegreerde geletterdheidstraining in de beroepsopleidingen – Voorbeeldmaterialen" (The L-coach. Integrated literacy training in vocational training - Sample material) can provide you with a number of sample materials. (This sample material is available from the Leuven - Hageland Basic Education Centre.)



The SWOT analysis (point 1) can indicate to you which points need to be worked on. For example, certain aspects of the learning environment may still need to be tackled, certain interventions agreed etc.

## 5. Recruitment, selection and composition of groups.

Discuss together how you are going to go about the recruitment process: target group, message and channels. Or do you already have a sufficient number of candidates wanting to take up the same trade who also require further development of their literacy skills?

Another point to discuss is the best composition for the group. The course participants must obviously want to take up the same trade and have the practical opportunities to take part. It is less important to have a homogeneous group from a literacy perspective. Everyone will need certain literacy skills for the training course. Heterogeneous groups offer more opportunities and variation in terms of interaction during the learning process.

A selection process is still carried out only at a few places. Providing support and adopting the right approach during the pathway seem to be more important success factors than a preliminary screening process.

## THE LESSONS

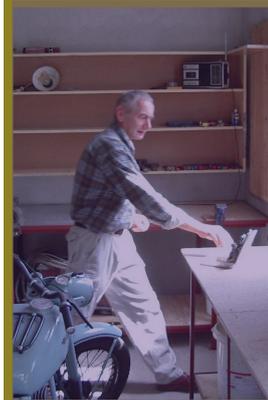
### 1. Initial analysis and individual development plan

Observe (both the L-coach and instructor) each course participant carrying out a number of carefully selected activities. Carry out an initial analysis of the participants and draw up a development plan containing individual specifications. You can do this by using an integrated analysis instrument that can provide a broad overview of the initial situation.

- You can find examples of such teaching activities in the pack "De G-coach. Geïntegreerde geletterdheidstraining in beroepsopleidingen II – Voorbeeldmaterialen" (The L-coach. Integrated literacy training in vocational training II - Sample material)
- You can find a sample list of objectives for individual vocational training courses in "De G-coach. Geïntegreerde geletterdheidstraining in beroepsopleidingen II – Voorbeeldmaterialen" (The L-coach. Integrated literacy training in vocational training II - Sample material)
- You can find examples of individual action plans also in the pack "De G-coach. Geïntegreerde geletterdheidstraining in beroepsopleidingen II – Voorbeeldmaterialen" (The L-coach. Integrated literacy training in vocational training II - Sample material). (This sample material is available from the Leuven - Hageland Basic Education Centre.)

### 2. Determine the lesson content

Decide which of the sticking points in the list are the most important with regard to future lessons or elements of the vocational training. Select or devise suitable, integrated practical assignments. Discuss together which points you will work on and agree when either of you will intervene, as well as on giving feedback and on the use of an appropriate method and language for giving instruc-



tions. These interventions can take place on an ad hoc or planned basis, for instance, according to an agreed pattern: going through the work planning, individual notebooks etc. Intervention can be aimed at individuals, pairs or the whole group. Sometimes it may be necessary and useful even to go to a separate room to be able to work on a particular point in a quiet atmosphere.

You can use the following tips for doing this:

- ensure the room is equipped with plenty of writing resources (pen/paper, PC), individual notebooks/folders, possibly as part of a portfolio, a list of standard texts or templates etc.
- focus on written words
- think about using simple written language during the course and explaining difficult texts
- structure the text properly (title, signal words)
- avoid unnecessary repetition or information
- split a long text into chunks
- provide visual support
- provide a secure environment (positive basic attitude; mistakes can happen, but you can learn from them)
- give responsibility to the participants

Look back with the participants at each element of the assignments carried out and reflect on aspects relating to the planning and execution of the task. If necessary or possible, reach agreement with the participants on aspects such as attitude, extra practice etc. Also provide a reflective task in the task template.

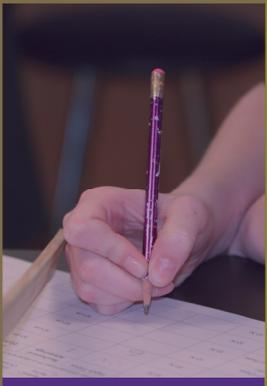
## EVALUATION

### 1. Monitor the participants' progress regularly and, if necessary, change a number of elements in the training.

Set aside regular periods for carrying out an integrated measurement of the predefined functional objectives of the vocational training course. You can do this by using the observation model from the report "De G-coach. Geïntegreerde geletterdheidstraining in beroepsopleidingen" (The G-coach. Integrated literacy training in vocational training) to provide inspiration (in Section 7.4) on how to record the participants' progress. If someone can perform a particular job-related task properly which involves literacy skills, it is perhaps not necessary to still measure these literacy skills separately, focusing on this specific element. You do this by using the score form which comes with the sample observation tasks to rate the participant's performance. Provide a self-evaluation framework for each lesson task so that participants are made aware of how to approach the tasks and be able to make progress in them.

### 2. Evaluate the actual integrated pathway.

Schedule a concluding meeting which evaluates every aspect of the integrated pathway.



## REFERENCES

DIERCKX, T., (2007), Basiscompetenties in kaart. Leuven: CBE Leuven.  
ROGGEN, N., (2005), Stappen Vooruit. Breed kwalificerende opleidings-  
trajecten. Leuven: CBE Leuven.

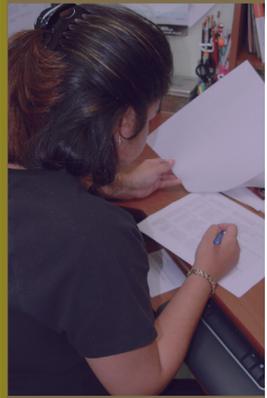
## ADDRESSES

Basic Education Centres (<http://www.basiseducatie.be/>)

Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities  
([http://www.vvsg.be/economie\\_en\\_werk/Pages/MVO\\_en\\_sociaal\\_aanbesteden.aspx](http://www.vvsg.be/economie_en_werk/Pages/MVO_en_sociaal_aanbesteden.aspx))

Flemish Public Employment Service (VDAB)  
(<http://vdab.be/contact/contact.jsp>)

Non-commercial training and employment initiatives (<http://www.sln.be/>)



## IMPRINT

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The L-coach. Integrated literacy training in vocational training –  
Report (90 p.)

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Step-by-step (8 p.)

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