



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme



SOS-MOBILITIES PROJECT 1.10.2013 – 31.12.2015

# Supporting VET Staff to include Students with Fewer Opportunities in International Mobilities

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Written by the SOS-Mobility project partners

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## **Part 1: INTRODUCTION**

- Why is such a booklet needed?
- Why include students with fewer opportunities in the international mobilities?
- What are the existing fears and prejudices?
- Pros and cons of including students with fewer opportunities in international mobilities.
- Time and resources needed.

### **THE WORLD CAN BE YOURS!**

*Our goal with SOS-Mobilities is to provide students dealing with learning difficulties, low motivation and/or self-esteem & social obstacles, with equal opportunities to take part in international mobilities.*

*The aim is also to advise teachers on how to include and motivate students to take part in international mobilities.*

### **1.1 Why is such a booklet needed?**

***International mobilities improve the students' social skills and problem solving skills!***

***Are these not the skills that students with fewer opportunities need to improve?***

Taking part in mobilities is a huge step for any student, but for those at a disadvantage it may be an even bigger one. Mobilities offer students a completely new experience; an escape from their everyday school situation, to a brand new experience where they need to show independence and resourcefulness which hopefully will then benefit them in their studies when they return.

The aim of the SOS-mobilities project is to provide staff members (teachers, support workers, social workers etc.) within VET, a few tools that will help them include students who are at a disadvantage academically, have low self-esteem and lack motivation and therefore might require more

attention and preparation when it comes to international mobilities. By implementing the tools and methods described in this guidance book everyone should be able to start using international mobilities as a way to improve retention and achievement. However, the amount of success depends on how well we succeed in engaging everyone, teachers and students alike. Hence it is very important to introduce the program in a positive way, emphasizing the role that teachers and support staff have in making this possible for their students.

The idea to include students who normally would not take part in international mobilities, began in 2008 in Bordeaux at a Leonardo da Vinci contact seminar. Five project partners from Germany, Greece, Finland, Poland and Sweden agreed on the need to include students at risk of social exclusion in international mobilities. This became the Leonardo da Vinci partnership project called [Enhance Mobility for Students at Risk of Social Exclusion](#), in short Enhance Mobility.

The project was a success in many ways. Those students involved in the project all graduated and most have either continued in education or have been employed. The project also proved to us that including students with fewer opportunities is important, and that with the right tools and support systems we have a new way to support students in completing their secondary education and in battling social exclusion.

We already know that students benefit from international mobilities. They experience improved social, linguistic and problem solving skills, amongst others. Are these not the skills that our target students need to improve too? International mobilities work as a confident booster for privileged students who have been allowed to take part. Shouldn't we therefore use international mobilities as a tool to improve the confidence of all our students, especially those at a disadvantage/with fewer opportunities?

The SOS-mobilities project deals with a few of the topics and issues that arose during the Enhance Mobility Project. The Enhance Mobility Project proved that there is a need for clear and easy-to-use frameworks that clarify the process of including students with fewer opportunities in international mobilities. Tools, such as checklists, that describe what the sending and hosting schools or organizations need to do before, during and after an international mobility, can be helpful. We also need to get more teachers/staff members involved in the process of including the target group of students in international mobilities. This motivational guidance book will be one tool that can be used when motivating staff members to get involved in this work.

***The booklet is divided into five parts;***

- 1) Why is it important to include Students with Fewer Opportunities in International Mobilities?
- 2) Pros and Cons of including Students with Fewer Opportunities in International Mobilities
- 3) Time and resources needed

- 4) How to motivate your colleagues to include the target group in International Mobilities.
- 5) Coaching as a Motivational Tool
- 6) Our top 10-list to get started
- 7) Attachments:
  - a. Framework for international mobilities
  - b. Checklist for sending special needs students on international mobilities
  - c. Checklist for hosting special needs students that take part in international mobilities

## ***1.2. Why is it important to include Students with Fewer Opportunities in International Mobilities?***

We would like to start by asking; WHY NOT include students with fewer opportunities in the international mobilities? Many will object with:

- “They will cause a lot of trouble!”
- “They will portray a bad image of our school!”
- “If we send those students, the hosting partner will never take another student from us!”
- “It is too much work and trouble!”
- “We should not reward those behaving badly!”

The SOS Mobilities Project Partners have seen that students, who are considered lazy, unmotivated, and no good, can often be hidden gems when given an opportunity to prove themselves. With a little extra support and faith they show themselves to be capable and skilled youngsters who have the potential to become excellent workers and colleagues. When teaching and working with these students at school, we don’t always see what capabilities they hide. What is more worrying is that the students themselves don’t see their own capabilities and skills. What these students need is for somebody to see and believe in their hidden potential, taking a leap of faith and giving them a once in a lifetime opportunity.

Many of the students with fewer opportunities who have already successfully taken part in international mobilities were close to tears when they started their journey. They were terrified of going and many of them told us that they even thought about not going! But they all left because they didn’t want to let the teacher/the social worker or the person responsible for sending students on international mobilities down as these people had worked so hard for them and because they believed in them. Deep inside they knew that this was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

One comment we hear a lot and which upsets us is: “We should not reward the students behaving badly!” In our opinion the opportunity to take part in an international mobility should not be considered a reward. The opportunity to take part in an international mobility is an opportunity for

students to grow, develop and learn new things about themselves as well as develop their professional skills. Something that should be offered to everybody.

### ***1.3. Pros and Cons of including Students with Fewer Opportunities in International Mobilities.***

***A very shy and insecure student wanted to go for a work placement abroad. She had never travelled alone by train or plane before and had never been further than 90 km's from where she grew up. She was terrified and close to tears during the final coaching session before her departure.***

***Afterwards, she told us she felt like fainting, sick to her stomach and very, very scared on the day she was leaving for her placement. After she had arrived safely to her destination she felt a new kind of a pride and joy at overcoming so many obstacles. She realized then and there that she could do much more than she had ever thought she could do. This girl's work placement became such a success that she was offered a job at the end of her placement.***

In the past the main objective of sending students on international mobilities was to develop their professional skills and make them more employable. Taking part in international mobilities can have that effect but we are of the opinion that taking part in international mobilities gives students so much more. It is a huge confidence booster.

It might be the first time these students notice that we see their hidden skills and that we do believe in them. Slowly they begin trusting themselves and to accept and make their hidden skills more visible. This will be beneficial when applying for a job after they graduate.

Another hidden skill that we, those working within VET, often miss is the curiosity factor. There is a saying that everybody is curious at heart. People want to learn and experience new things. By including students with low self-esteem in international mobilities, we give them the opportunity to be curious in a new way. Our experience has shown that most of the students that have lacked

motivation for the theoretical subjects and who have low self-esteem have many more questions to ask before they go on international mobilities. Students with fewer opportunities learn to become more curious, to ask questions and to look for information. They consequently learn to become much more independent.

International mobility is a way to improve a student's resilience. Many times these students choose to take the easy road and avoid challenges. We have observed that by including students with fewer opportunities in international mobilities, we gently encourage them to become more resilient. They experience new and often uncomfortable situations that they are forced to overcome. They need to adapt to the new situations and will grow as individuals.

International mobilities force students to step out of their comfort zone. They have to open themselves up to new ways of doing things, learning about the culture and the hidden rules existing in this new society.

In order to include these students in international mobilities we need to get everybody thinking positively about including these students in the mobilities. We recognise that the change in attitude will not happen overnight, but when the students see the change in attitude among the school staff and realize that this is an organisation that includes students with fewer opportunities in this adventure, then a change among the attitudes of students will occur and our target students will apply for international mobilities. Once they have witnessed what other students who are similar to them can achieve, they will start to believe that this is something that they should consider as well. This is where we need staff to support and encourage and take care in their approach. A small comment like, “Are you sure you would not become homesick?”, might give students the impression that this isn’t something for them and that their teacher doesn’t want them to go for the mobility.

#### ***1.4. Time and resources needed***

***In order to include students in international mobilities you need:***

- resources***
- support***
- time***
- patience***
- faith***

**However the rewards are worth the efforts!**

To get involved in including students in international mobilities takes time, especially in the beginning! In order to get started with this work you need the support of your management. With this booklet we hope to give you some tools and tips that you can use in order to get the management involved in the process.

In some organisations it is the teacher’s responsibility to motivate students to take part and to organise the sending and hosting of students on international mobilities. In other organisations this person might be a support worker or somebody else appointed to the task.

As part of the project, the partners have developed checklists (see attachment 2a and 2b) that are used when sending and receiving students. These checklists were piloted during the project and the average time it takes to send and host students who are taking part in international mobilities was calculated. The process might take a bit longer in the beginning when the staff member responsible is new to the role. When the role is more familiar, the process will be easier and take less time.

As the rules and regulations differ in every country we chose to make the framework and checklists as general as possible. Each country/partner then adapted and developed a framework from the general one which can be used and implemented at their institutions. All the frameworks can be found on the project webpage. These frameworks can be used by others as models when creating a framework that will clarify the process of international mobilities at your organizations. When

preparing the framework it is important to take into considering the rules and regulations as well as the quality management criteria of your organization.

In order to secure the support of the management we strongly recommend the inclusion of equality of access to international mobilities for all students, regardless of their background in the school's strategy as well as in the mission, visions and values. It is also important that the school appoints a person who has the resources and the time and skills to apply for external funding, e.g. Erasmus+ KA1 funding from their National Agencies (e.g. Finland CIMO). By applying for and receiving external funding from Erasmus+ it will become possible to finance some of the work relating to international mobilities.

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## **Part 2: MOTIVATION**

- The magic about motivation  
(a little bit of theory)
- Personal skills and capabilities - The key to motivation  
(a method to present your skills using your own biography)
- Do not try it alone! Team building activities

### **The magic of motivation**

Motivation seems to be the tool to achieve what you want and teachers want their students to want something. We want our students to go on an international mobility, because they refer to it as an outstanding opportunity for development, which will help students to perform better in their vocational studies, and later on in their professional lives. Some students believe in it, some may not. Their starting points for going on an international mobility might be different. In order to make motivation work in this melting pot of expectations we should point out two things:

### **2.1. Motivation has to be inherent in a person!**

Is it possible to motivate somebody for something they do not want to do? We guess it is not. When it comes to motivation you have to keep in mind three key components: willingness, capability and opportunity. Most motivational approaches presume that people are not willing to do something and therefore they focus on the willingness.

***“I don’t believe that you are willing to give your best and therefore I have to motivate you!”.***

These approaches are only to fail as they are de-motivating on the long run. Focussing on the willingness only transports an underlying image of mistrust; instead people’s capabilities and opportunities need to be supported more. Good motivation has to keep in mind all three dimensions of the performance.

Motivation that addresses capability should be understood as help to unfold one’s talents. This is why we introduce tools focusing on revealing students’ hidden talents and supportive measures to help students present themselves the best way they can. Performing one’s

talents is a motivating tool in itself and thus the “virtuous circle” of experiencing, performing and achieving, can start.

## 2.2. A hierarchy of needs

Students and teachers involved in international mobility may start at different levels of need.

We refer here to Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. His theory parallels many other theories of human [developmental psychology](#), some of which focus on describing the stages of growth in humans. Maslow used the terms Physiological, Safety, Belongingness and Love, Esteem, Self-Actualization and Self-Transcendence Needs to describe the pattern through which human motivations move. Maslow adopts a holistic approach to education and learning, and looks at all the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual qualities of an individual and how they impact learning.



Teachers as adults, in their professional life look at international mobility from a relatively safe and experienced status. Their physiological, safety and social needs are fulfilled. They might join the project of international mobility to accelerate their next motivational level of self-esteem or beyond.

Students need to feel emotionally and physically safe and accepted to progress and reach their full potential. Staff organising international mobility should keep in mind these different levels of needs.

## 2.3. Personal skills and capabilities - The key to motivation

### 2.3.1. To explore and describe personal capabilities

The central aim of this booklet is to invite staff to engage in the field of international mobilities for students with fewer opportunities. Presenting various means of motivation will help to get staff and students together. Students with fewer opportunities are mainly characterized by low motivation and low self-esteem. A lack of perception of one’s own

capabilities is one of the main reasons for these deficits. Most people, even those with a lot of work experience and success, find it hard to list their skills and use them as a basis from which they can draw self-confidence and motivation. Understanding how much each and every person already brings with them will be motivating in itself.

This guidance booklet provides an approach on how students with fewer opportunities can explore, explain and describe their own assets and characteristics. This approach is biographically orientated.

Although it is obvious to make use of one's own biography while defining skills, this is often neglected. Young people especially tend to describe themselves with skills they think are positive and useful, e.g. youngsters who are asked what they are good at or where they see their capabilities, talk about "being a team player". When questioned further they normally have difficulty in finding clear and plausible reasoning to justify this or even to give precise examples of their successful teamwork. With our approach, a socially accepted but unreal perception of one's own assets is replaced by a systematic exploration. Characteristics are reflected by one's own experiences.

With a fresh view of self-perception youngsters will realize their strengths. This increases their self-esteem, which may be at a low level due to many negative experiences and failures. With a higher self-esteem their motivation in vocational development will increase. Their chance in the labour market will improve. In the long run this systematic processing of one's own capabilities will lead to the self-development of young people.

Developing an awareness of your own skills is a core element in the qualifying profile of vocational students. During a stay abroad new experiences are gathered, challenges are overcome and situations experienced, which – analysed in detail – provide the biographical justification for individual capabilities.

According to the circumstances of young people, particularly our target group, it would be a counterproductive way just to let them name their skills without any support. Leaving them alone with a task like that would end up in demotivation, because they get the impression that they have no capabilities at all. Useful tools to make hidden capabilities visible are Skill Lists and a biographical approach of an explanatory statement.

### **2.3.2. Finding your skills in your biography**

There are probably more than a dozen different ways to categorize skills. We provide you with a method which helps students to talk about their skills, e.g. soft skills, using their own biography.

This method in preparation for the stay abroad addresses the following objectives:

- To find out more about the experience of the student

- To make hidden skills visible
- To give capabilities to express skills
- To motivate the students to develop self-confidence
- To create needs to obtain more skills during the stay abroad

### **Instructions**

A list of capacities / soft skills is attached at the end of this chapter. It is recommended that you make it clear why you use the skills lists during a one-to-one interview.

- 1.) Present the lists and read them carefully. It may be necessary to explain some items in detail. If the students start asking what is meant exactly, you should consider this as a good sign.
- 2.) Let the student tick column No. 1 for the skills they believe they have.
- 3.) You pick out one of the marked soft skills and start asking for details. In fact, you want to hear the story behind it, searching for the biographical link. "When, where and under what circumstances could you demonstrate this soft skill?" It may have happened at school, working on a project during vocational training or in their spare time. It is essential to find out if the student used his capability willingly and whether he liked applying it.
- 4.) While listening to the story you may find more skills or reject the proposed explanation. Discuss the reasons, pros and cons, and decide whether you tick additional boxes or clear those stated.
- 5.) Consider the blank boxes. What skills does the student want to improve or learn during the stay abroad? What can he/she expect at his work?

An inventory of skills provides a lot of benefits:

- It can be helpful while writing a letter of motivation to future work placements
- It helps to follow up what has improved during the work placement
- It motivates the student sustainably.
- It encourages the students to believe in their own skills and capabilities
- It helps the student to describe his personal capabilities
- It is a good way to think about the requirements of a new job – analysing a workplace description and comparing it with your own skills
- It helps the student focus at a job interview, answering some typical question like: "What are your capabilities?", "Why should we employ you?"

### **2.3.3. What about other capabilities?**

If you want to find out about other capabilities related to information, people and items (head, heart and hands), you can go further with this method. Samples of lists applying to

these capabilities can be found on our webpage ([www.sos-mobilities.com](http://www.sos-mobilities.com)). Feel free to adapt them to the cultural characteristics of your target group.

## **2.4. Do not try it alone! - Team building activities**

### **2.4.1. Upside down methods**

Describing your favourite team members:

Start thinking in a completely different way! Don't imagine your favourite team members and the people you would love to have in your work group for this project - think of the opposite!

1.) Collect all the worst characteristics and traits that people might have. Imagine colleagues you don't even want to share the room with for five seconds! You may find characteristics like "egotistical" or "boastful". Short expressions like "joining meetings totally unprepared" are very good as well. The more you find, the better the outcome. Write down everything you found out on a sheet of paper. Just complete the sentence:

***" I totally dislike people in my team who ... "***

2.) Share your results with others who are already in your work group. The more people are willing to contribute, the more unacceptable attributes you will find. Start naming what you find to be the most horrible characteristic of people you work with, the others go on like you. Don't stop until everything has been named. Keep in mind you don't need to write everything down. If a mentioned trait doesn't bother you and you could live with it don't write it down on your personal list.

3.) Reduce all attributes found and create your personal "top seven of a horrible colleague list". It doesn't matter if they come from you personally or if they have been added by the other members of your group.

4.) Now start thinking of diametrically opposed terms, do a "handstand" in your mind and find out the characteristics you would love to see in the person who joins your team. So "egotistical" turns to "unselfish" and "joining meetings totally unprepared" is now "coming to meetings well-prepared".

5.) Share your results with the others and reduce them again. Discuss the items and explain your ideas and your decisions to the others. Don't stop until you have found out seven characteristics the team player should have, for all members of your work group. Try to come to an agreement.

6.) Order them by writing down the seven features you have found on small cards and deciding on which are the most important when it comes you a colleague..

### **2.4.2. Start with the worst-case**

Start thinking in a completely different way! Don't imagine a successful project but think of the opposite!

- 1.) Collect attributes of a worst-case scenario! Write them on small cards. The more you find, the better the outcome will be.
- 2.) Share your results and present the cards on a table.
- 3.) Separate into couples. Each couple chooses 2-3 attributes and thinks separately about how to avoid these very attributes in a mobility project.
- 4.) Present solutions to the group.
- 5.) Bring the solutions into order by deciding which is the most important one?

Most groups will go on to identify human resources who will take responsibility for the very task. Resource allocations and time frames are certainly important tools to organize a mobility project. Please find some examples attached to this booklet.

This method is a tool that reinforces the very basis - which unfortunately gets lost from time to time in the overall organizational tasks. It can be used at different steps during the project to keep the focus on the goal:

**“to organize a successful international mobility for students with fewer opportunities!”**

### 2.4.3. Biographical Approach List

My capacities/ soft skills (I am.../ I have ...)		1	2	3
<b>A responsible person</b>	I take responsibility for other people, animals or things which do not belong to me			
<b>Pro-active</b>	I can define my own goals and follow them			
<b>Adaptable</b>	I am able to adapt myself to various people and situations			
<b>Keen to learn</b>	I am willing to familiarize myself with new issues and tasks			
<b>Self-reliant</b>	I can accomplish my work alone and only rarely need assistance			
<b>Strong powers of comprehension</b>	I quickly understand if someone explains new things to me			
<b>Emphatic</b>	I can put myself in other people's shoes			
<b>Open-minded</b>	I allow people to correct me if I do wrong or if I'm given advice to improve myself			
<b>Power of concentration</b>	I don't allow s.o./ sth. to distract me and I can be attentive for a long time			
<b>Accurate</b>	I fulfil my tasks thoroughly and exactly			
<b>Dependable</b>	I am a person you can rely on			
<b>Patient</b>	Even if a task takes a long time, I stay calm and collected			
<b>Tolerant</b>	I accept other people's views and opinions			
<b>A team player</b>	I am good at working with others			
<b>Polite</b>	I have good manners			
<b>Determined</b>	I try to achieve what I have resolved to do			
<b>Resilient</b>	I can cope with exhausting and difficult tasks			
<b>Persistent</b>	I am willing to perform my tasks			

## **Part 3: COACHING AS A MOTIVATIONAL TOOL**

- **Why coaching?**
- **Benefits of Coaching**
- **Coaching methods**
- **Skills of a coach**
- **Case study**

### **3.1. Why Coaching?**

*“Coaching could be seen as a human development process that involves structured, focused, interaction and the use of appropriate strategies, tools and techniques to promote desirable and sustainable change for the benefit of the Coachee, and potentially for the stakeholders.” – Clutterbuck, 2010.*

SOS Mobilities has a particular focus on students with fewer opportunities, with a view to inspiring them with international travel and work experience.

These students already need support and at Chichester College we employ a coaching strategy to help students find focus and motivation. This strategy involves dedicated personnel that work on a 1:1 basis with students that present with barriers to Learning and Development.

The barriers can be anything from needing study skills, to help with social and financial issues that impact their ability to focus on college life. In weekly meetings, students are encouraged to find solutions to those issues that work for them as an individual, and are then supported to take actions to reach a resolution, and move forward as productive students. We find that this is very effective in improving retention and achievement, which in turn is a positive outcome for both the student, and the college as a stakeholder.

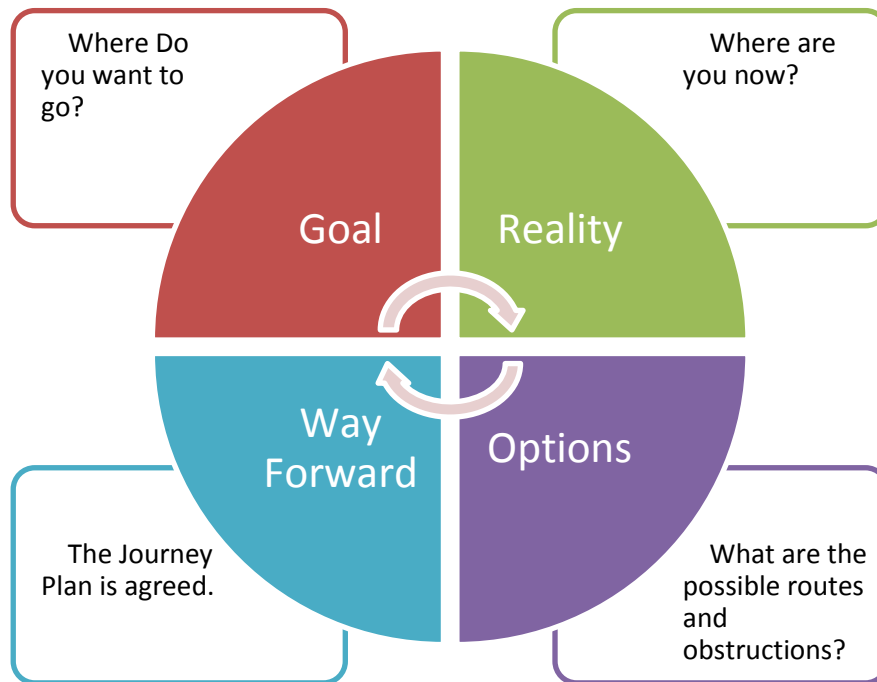
Students who qualify for the SOS Mobilities will need that level of support in order to help them make the most of this opportunity.



### 3.2. Benefits of Coaching:

- **Motivation.**  
Giving a student time and space to think about their own lives is often all that is required for them to identify what their own personal goals are, and this helps them to find the motivation they will need to achieve those goals.
- **Equips individuals with the tools to develop themselves**  
With a goal established, the student can start to identify the steps they need to take in order to achieve that goal, and gives them a route to follow.
- **Develops potential**  
With a goal and a route, the student now has motivation, and the opportunity and ability to succeed.
- **Increases confidence and self-reliance**  
Students see that they can make the changes necessary, and their own confidence and resilience to future issues improves.
- **Promotes change in thinking and behaviour**  
The student sees that a new way of acting and thinking works for them.
- **Personalised goal setting**  
The student is able to identify and create their own goals.
- **Encourages reflection**  
Student is able to think about their own behaviour and identify positive and negative consequences.

### 3.3. GROW – A Coaching Model



The Grow Model is a simple and widely used coaching strategy that helps the Coach and the Coachee develop a clear plan.

**G – Goal** - The Coach and Coachee employ a number of strategies that enable the clarification of a clear and achievable Goal. These can be anything from a guided meditation on “What is success?”, to exercises on identifying barriers. The Goal is the end point, where the Coachee wants to be. The goal has to be defined in such a way that it is very clear to the Coachee when they have achieved it.

**R – Reality** - The Coachee reflects of the truth of their current situation, and identifies current barriers to achieving the goal. This is where the client is now. What are the issues, the challenges, how far are they away from their goal?

**O – Options** - Once Obstacles have been identified, the client needs to find ways of dealing with them if they are to make progress. This identifies strategies that will remove the barriers.

**W – Way Forward** - The Options then need to be converted into action steps which will take the client to their goal. These are the Way Forward.

### 3.4. Skills required to be a Coach.

In order to coach your students there are certain skills that you’re going to need, and others that you’ll need to steer clear of.

Skills Required	Skills Not Required
Demonstrator	Supporter
Communicator	Friend
Guide	Sympathiser
Questioner	Door Opener
Rapport and Trust Builder	Problem Solver
Assessor	Counsellor
Motivator	
Researcher	
Active Listener	
Challenger / Confronter	
Facilitator / Enabler	
Role Model	
Resource	
Confidante	

### 3.5. Coaching - A Case Study.

AP joined the College from a large, local comprehensive school which he did not particularly enjoy attending. Being unsure of what direction he wanted to go long term, he enrolled upon a Level 3 Sports course.

Shortly after joining the College it became obvious that AP’s anxiety and lack of confidence had a negative impact on his motivation to achieve. Whilst his attendance to classes remained good, his lack of participation in activities was poor and resulted in under achievement. AP’s parents were supportive of him being in education but they struggled to understand him as he has a very different personality to his two siblings. The family were also struggling financially to provide him with the equipment he required or to pay for College trips. AP was able to access the College’s bursary funds but this was adding to his confidence issues and he was finding it increasing difficult to communicate with staff and his peers. However, through 1:1 meetings he had developed a good working relationship with his Student Tutor so it was considered that coaching may help to break down some of the barriers he was experiencing and help him to set some goals to improve his motivation and attainment. AP agreed to participate with the coaching session with very little enthusiasm, but by

involving him fully in drawing up a coaching contract and setting an agenda he slowly became a willing participant.

The coach was able to establish from AP that his lack of confidence was the root of his anxiety and low motivation. Through using Visualisation and the GROW model the coach was able to get AP to acknowledge that he did have personal goals and career aspirations but felt he would never be able to achieve them. As AP wanted to be a professional sports coach he was encouraged to identify the skills and qualifications he would need and the possible barriers he may encounter that would prevent him doing this. At each coaching session two or more barriers were discussed and short term goals were set to overcome them. As AP's interests were sport, especially badminton, and reading, initial targets revolved around career research. This began to improve his motivation as AP had not realised he could attend university to achieve his goal. To improve his confidence and communication skills, AP's targets from his third coaching session was to prepare a set of questions to ask the College's Sports Maker about his role and to arrange a meeting with him. Although AP was anxious about the meeting, his coach had ensured that he had fully prepared for it to lessen his apprehension. From this meeting AP was invited to shadow the Sports Maker and 3 months later offered two weeks work experience.

Alongside the career focused coaching, AP was also encouraged to research into badminton clubs and opportunities for him to play badminton within College. This he did which highlighted to his previously unaware teachers how good he was at this sport, which greatly increased his confidence with both staff and his peers.

The coaching sessions were delivered over an eight week period, with sessions lasting for approximately one hour. Each session began with a review of previous targets so that AP could see what he had achieved or what more he had to do. Progress wasn't always linear as issues outside of College in week 4 of the sessions resulted in AP experiencing great personal doubt and wanting to leave his course. The coach revisited their discussions in week 1, getting AP to refocus on his short and long term goals which was successful.

AP's confidence and motivation has continued to grow to the extent that he has run badminton sessions at College for staff and students, as well as independently organising work experience at a local school. AP's achievement has also improved and he is currently on target to obtain grades for him to enter his chosen university to study Sports Coaching & Teaching.

Applying the same method to those students that you think might benefit from an international mobility could bring some excellent results. We already know that students who actively engage with Mobilities already develop in confidence and employability. If we take the time to work with students who currently lack the confidence to even consider international travel , what could we achieve?

### 3.6. *Our top 10 tips on how to get started*

Ever tried? Ever failed? No matter.  
Try Again. Fail again. Fail better.

- Samuel Beckett

We are aware that it is not an easy task to include students with fewer opportunities in international mobilities. There are a lot of colleagues who still believe that international mobilities should only be for those who are self-sufficient and who have the best grades at school. However, we encourage you to start the process of providing equal opportunities to all students as we strongly believe this will be a way to battle students dropping out of VET and a way of making these students gain skills and bring out the hidden skills that are useful when they apply for employment after they have graduated from VET.

Below you can read the top 10 tips that will help you get started

#### 1) **Get the support of the Senior Management**

If the management will not support the inclusion of students with fewer opportunities in international mobilities you will be fighting a losing battle. The management is also responsible for providing the necessary resources that are needed in order to include students in international mobilities

#### 2) **Motivate the staff members to get involved in the process**

It is a very lonely and exhausting job to do this by yourself. You need the support and encouragement of your colleagues. The support of your colleagues is also vital when motivating the students to take part in the mobilities

#### 3) **Start small**

As it is sometimes a struggle to start changing the attitudes of teachers, it is important to start small. Choose a group of teachers and students that you will start working with. As you get the positive results from these teachers you can use them as a motivational tool and as an example when motivating more and more teachers to get involved

#### 4) **Think big**

Even if you start small you need to have the big picture in mind. Your aim is to eventually include students with fewer opportunities from each department in international mobilities.

#### 5) **Give it some time**

Changing the existing attitudes and fears takes time. Don't expect the change to happen over night. It will take a long time, sometimes it can take years

**6) Create a framework for including students with fewer opportunities in international mobilities as well as checklists for sending and hosting students that take part in international mobilities**

Use the attachments to create your own frameworks and checklists. Make sure they fit your organization and that they are user-friendly. Involve the management in this process. By involving the management you assure that the document will be implemented and used by others working at your organization

**7) Find reliable partners that share the same view as you have**

Be careful with who you choose as a sending and hosting partner. Unfortunately, there are some partners that are in this only to make a financial benefit. Ask your National Agency if they can recommend a reliable partner, take part in contact seminars that are recommended by the National Agency. You can find the contact information of your national agency here: [http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/tools/national-agencies/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/tools/national-agencies/index_en.htm). Another way of finding reliable partners is to join the EFVET network (<http://www.efvet.org/>) and take part in their annual conference.

**8) Make positive results visible at your school**

Don't keep the positive outcomes to yourself. Spread the information at your organization and outside by using all the possible channels that you have available. The more visible you make the positive outcomes the more people will become interested in this topic. However, don't hide the fact that it is a lot of work and that there are also some challenges.

**9) Ask for support and guidance from others who have already included students with fewer opportunities in international mobilities**

It can feel very intimidating to start this process and you might feel very alone. If you need support and help, don't be afraid to ask for help. Many times it helps to ventilate and share the fears you have and sometimes you need a little push to get forward. Include as many as possible from your organization in the process and ask your management for support and guidance when you need it. You can also contact us who worked on this project if you have questions.

**10) HAVE FAITH IN WHAT YOU ARE DOING**

Don't lose faith; believe in what you are doing! It is valuable, worthwhile and rewarding!

## Part 4: Attachments

The tools developed in the SOS-mobilities project are:

- 1) **A guidance book that focuses on why students with fewer opportunities should be included in international mobilities, the magic of motivation, the keys to motivation and how to use coaching as a motivational method.**
  
- 2) **A framework for including students with fewer opportunities in international mobilities.** The framework has been built up as a process showing the different tasks of the persons involved in the mobility at the sending organization, the hosting organization and the hosting work placement and thus making the process as transparent as possible. The framework is available in English, Swedish, Finnish, German, French and Icelandic. (Attachment 1)
  
- 3) **Two checklists used in international mobilities.** Checklist 1 focuses on things to be done when sending students with fewer opportunities on international mobilities and Checklist 2 focuses on things to be done when hosting students with fewer opportunities. Both checklists bring up aspects that need to be considered when involving students with fewer opportunities in international mobilities. The checklists are available in English, Swedish, Finnish, German, French and Icelandic. (Attachment 2)

The tools created in this project have been written as separate chapters and can be used separately, but we recommend that all three tools are used when starting the work of including students with fewer opportunities in international mobilities. We have made the framework and checklists as general as possible and they contain what we believe should be the minimum requirements. When implementing or developing your own framework and checklists for including special need students in international mobilities remember that you should always follow and include the existing rules and regulations of your organization and country.

*For more information about the project please visit the project webpage: <http://sos-mobilities.com/>*

## **Attachment 1**

Framework for including special needs students in international mobilities

## **Attachment 2**

- Checklist for sending students with fewer opportunities on international mobilities
- Checklist for hosting students with fewer opportunities during international mobilities