



Tools for Trainers

THE SELF-AWARENESS and EVALUATION TOOL

Executive Summary

IO2:A1



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FORWARD

A key goal of the SAVE project is to ensure that young people at risk of dropping out of education (Early School Leavers) and/or employment, including those Not in Education and Training (NEETs), are provided with every opportunity to become, and to remain, actively engaged in learning in order to prevent exclusion from school and/or work.

We aim to do this through a range of interventions targeted at both young people at risk of exclusion and the trainers that seek to support them thereby:

- For young people at risk of exclusion: Improving their motivation and active engagement in learning and work by supporting their personal development, particularly in relation to their soft skills, confidence and self-esteem and by enhancing their employability
- By supporting trainers with approaches, methods and resources that will help them improve learning personalization for these young people and enhance their engagement and personal development

Educators and employers agree that there is a growing gap between the Soft Skills that companies expect from their employees and those that many job candidates currently possess. In many cases young people are not aware of the soft skills they have, and even if they are aware, have difficulty in articulating them.

With an increasingly competitive job market, it is imperative that job seekers are equipped with a range of skills and competences that move beyond the technical knowledge and ability to perform specific tasks. These skills include emotional and social attributes that allow young people to demonstrate their motivation, self-confidence, ability to solve problems, initiative and communication/teamwork skills.

There is a body of research to suggest that most skills can be acquired through greater self-awareness, recognising potential and building on strengths through a range of developmental, targeted activities.

To this end, we have sought to identify tools, techniques and processes that have been proven to work in supporting employability and to adapt and refine to meet the needs of trainers who are working with these young people.

Intellectual Output 2 involved the realization of a Self awareness and evaluation diagnostic tool which trainers would be able to use with young people and which would help young people to become more self-aware.

The purpose of the Self Awareness and Evaluation Diagnostic and its associated resources is, therefore, to give VET Trainers the tools through which they can help the young people they support to gain a better understanding of their soft skills and key competences and the importance of these in the world of work.

THE DEVELOPMENT AND REALISATION OF THE SELF AWARENESS AND EVALUATION DIAGNOSTIC TOOL

The development of this Intellectual Output involved a series of interlinked steps and processes as determined in the Action Plan for the Output:

	Process
A1	PRE - VALIDATION
	Questionnaire design Questionnaire administration
A2	VALIDATION
	Assignment of accounts to access self awareness tool Design of the grid to collect feedback
	Administration of the tool
A3	VALIDATION REPORT Document gathering and reporting the results of pre-validation and validation
A4	ADAPTATION
	Guide/checklist for the adaptation
	Trainers guidelines and handbook adapted
	Operative adaptation of the self awareness tool
	Translation: self awareness tool translated
	Technological adaptation: version of SAVE system/portal with detail on self awareness tool adapted

A1 Pre-validation: The Pre-validation stage involved partners reviewing the Self Awareness diagnostic managed by Apricot. Initially partners experienced this diagnostic for themselves and then 36 trainers from Italy were offered the opportunity to trial it.

Each of the trainers was issued with a feedback questionnaire so that qualitative and quantitative feedback could be obtained on their reactions to the diagnostic and its appropriateness for the target market.

The result of this feedback was that the majority of trainers felt that the Apricot Tool was too complex for their needs with the target market of NEETs and ELS and also that, as a result of the commercial nature of this product, it would be preferable to build a new diagnostic tool. It was agreed that similar principles would be used in the development of the new tool and that it would draw on and adapt key elements of the approach to profiling soft skills.

As a result, Apricot designed a 'simpler' questionnaire for the SAVE self-evaluation tool, based on the broader principles of DISC theory (Marston's 4 Quadrant theory) and the researched needs of employers (using the Needs Analysis with particular reference to soft skill requirements).

A2/A3 Validation and Reporting: Partners were given direct experience of the self-evaluation tool, and the supporting resources including a Trainers Guide and

feedback materials, with the aim of collecting the feedback about the lexicon of questions, the usability with the two target markets, attractiveness to young people who are NEET and ELS etc.

A4 Adaptation: based on this initial feedback from partners adaptations were made to the methods and processes particularly to enable the completion of the algorithms and uploading the questionnaire onto the SAVE Digital Platform

As a result the diagnostic tool was refined into a more logical structure and the associated reports, Trainer Guides and materials were used to:

- Examine an individual's soft skills and competences and related clusters,
- Explain how to relate the competences to behaviour,
- Give guidance on how to interpret/read and use the reporting and also how to give feedback
- Suggest to teachers/trainers a range of tactics and approaches for working with the various behavioural profiles,
- Explain how to give feedback to individuals, including resources with pictures, graphics, diagrams

OVERVIEW OF THE SAVE SELF AWARENESS DIAGNOSTIC

The diagnostic within the SAVE System is loosely based on Marston's 4 Quadrant theory of Behaviour (4QB). Designed to help young people become more 'self-aware', it uses the principles of personality profiling in order to analyse and feedback on the primary working styles/behavioural styles of the learners who have completed the assessment. The tool draws from a questionnaire and algorithms that have been particularly developed for use with young people who are at risk of becoming early school leavers or NEETs.

The outputs of the SAVE system combine to suggest behavioural styles or preferences as well as strategies to make the most of strengths and cope with aspects of work, working relationships and learning that may not come easily to the learner. These features make it an effective tool for employability coaching.

The SAVE system seeks to identify an individual's primarily working style – how they prefer to work and interact – and to make young people more self-aware of these attributes. The outputs from the 'Working Style' questionnaire are designed to be positive and motivational. The benefits of this are twofold - as a result of taking the test and receiving professional feedback, the learner will have both greater self-awareness and increased confidence. For the Trainer/Coach, the reports provide a useful insight into a learner's working strengths, style and potential thus providing an accurate and informed starting point for a Soft Skills development programme. The reports can also be used as an integral or additional part of a broader vocational programme where the Trainer/Coach provides feedback to the learners (using the reports) and then works with the individual to achieve planned learning outcomes.

Working with Learners and the 4 Primary Behavioural Styles

In order to use the Style Reports effectively, the Trainer/Coach needs to recognise the primary behaviours of each of the 4 styles identified by the diagnostic and understand how to work constructively with these when providing one to one feedback with a Learner.

Each primary style is described in the **Trainers Guide** which highlights the main characteristics and what Learners are likely to be good at, ideal job roles, fears and motivators; together with tips on how best to communicate with each personality type. It is important to remember that an individual's unique style will tend to be a mixture of more than one behavioural style.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE and ALGORITHMS

The carefully structured questionnaire is designed to get young people to decide whether they agree or disagree to 48 statements about how they typically behave and like to work.

Based on the range of potential answers to this questionnaire the Algorithm model for mixed variable programming was devised in order to produce individual reports.



No	Statement	Participant Answers			
		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strong Disagree
1	I am someone who will get results.				
2	I am someone who is not afraid of a challenge.				
3	I am direct when communicating.				
4	I make things happen.				
5	I always get straight to the point.				
6	I am someone who stands up for myself.				
7	I always check the facts before acting.				
8	I have a passive manner.				
9	I put others first.				
10	I take instructions well.				
11	I am a mild, non-confrontational person.				
12	I stick to the rules.				
13	I have a positive approach.				
14	I have a friendly manner.				
15	I am chatty and upbeat.				
16	I have the ability to talk and persuade.				
17	I am verbally creative.				
18	I can promote new ideas.				
19	I am objective and cool.				
20	I have a serious approach.				
21	I like to investigate facts.				
22	I can work alone.				
23	I have a suspicious manner.				
24	I think things through.				
25	I am supportive and kind.				
26	I have a calm, patient approach.				
27	I am someone you can rely on.				
28	I have self control.				
29	I am good at seeing things through.				
30	I don't like change.				
31	I can cope with change.				
32	I have a flexible approach.				
33	I am an active, energetic person.				
34	I usually respond speedily to tasks.				
35	I enjoy variety.				
36	I am quick to respond.				
37	I am precise and accurate.				
38	I have a logical approach.				
39	I am careful.				
40	I stick to the rules.				
41	I work in a formal, neat way.				
42	I have a strong sense of order.				
43	I can stand my ground.				
44	I am persistence.				
45	I am an independent person.				
46	I am confident with people.				
47	I am unconventional and unusual.				



The questionnaire and its associated algorithms were loaded onto the web-based **SAVE Digital Platform** enabling learners to complete the questionnaire anywhere and at any time.

THE TRAINERS GUIDE and RESOURCES

The Trainers Guide and associated resources includes:

- A description of the key characteristics of each style (A-D) as identified through the SAVE system
- Guidance on how to explain the different styles to learners so that they become more Self Aware

- How to use reports in order to draw up Individual Development Action Plans for the development of 'soft skills'.
- A PowerPoint presentation for trainers to use with learners that explains the behavioural characteristics of the 4 styles, including their approach to learning and taking on new challenges.
- Exercises and Activities designed to support soft skill development
- Suggestions for evaluating learning and measuring progress
- Fact sheets and handouts for use with learners and as handy tips/crib notes for trainers





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