



## LEONARDO DA VINCI PROGRAMME

Second phase: 2000-2006

# "CompTrain" Reference material

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## R 4.1 Training modules recommendations to training providers

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## **Introduction:**

CompTrain – Competence Needs for Formation and Training for Multimedia Jobs is a co-funded project inside the Leonardo Da Vinci programme of the European Community.

Comptrain was driven by professional associations, training organisations, mainly gathered in the European Multimedia Associations Convention.

Companies, training organisations, and young professionals were interviewed through a website and a trial phase and it was asked to them which competencies are important for each multimedia/ICT job in their company.

The target group for companies was mainly SME, not only multimedia and internet companies but SMEs that use the internet and multimedia tools in general.

Those SMEs employ mainly below 20 employees. Previous studies on employment show that 80 % of non public employment is in companies under 20 employees.

By surveying previous studies we can see that all reference tools and specially jobs profiles are made through surveys which are done by, in or for big companies. This makes the main difference when we survey the requirements needs: the results we provide are on the core multimedia employment market. And most of this consists of SMEs.

## General information

SMEs with less than 20 employees have a different working approach and there are not big teams with split responsibilities like, on one side project managers, developers, graphic developers, marketing, etc.

Nevertheless, all jobs are found in those SMEs but profiles are less specialised than in big companies. Polycompetences (or multi-tasking) is the rule, and competencies in technical parts are not the only ones that the recruiters need. They need also communication and marketing competencies, and the final choice is done on "non evaluable competencies" such as behavioural competencies.

In the recruitment process, company managers eliminate candidates in the first round on technical competencies, and on the second round they have a positive choice which is mainly done about the polycompetencies and on behavioural competencies.

When we compare the results from companies and from training institutions, and if we match those information with the experience we have gathered during CompTrain, we can say that training organisations are basically *competent* for teaching students in the way that companies needs. However, because the references profiles are defined on bigger companies, there is a *teaching gap* which must be reduced to help (small) companies to find the employees they need, and to help students to find a job.

The recommendations we publish in this document are based on requirements for SMEs as they represent approx. 80% of employment in this sector. These recommendations can be used *mutatis mutandis* by larger companies.

## **Recommendations on Training Modules:**

### ***Recommendation 1***

Internet and Multimedia are by definition communication tools. These mediums are the support for communication, marketing, sales.... On a national basis, but increasingly so on an international basis.

Orthography and grammatical mistakes push down the credibility of a company or a website. It is obvious that no company manager will employ someone in charge of the website content , if s/he cannot write properly a text.

Those matters are usually in charge of school, and not in charge of University, nevertheless it seems necessary to have a review of the main rules during a training where the objective is the content. Whereas this need has been particularly evident in France, other countries like Germany do not focus on it. However, despite of the development of "new" languages and informal language patterns through the new technologies, the credibility (and consequently, trust) depends to a large extent on (traditional) recognised values.

We recommend to training providers to set up a module of about 35 hours on grammar and orthography in the native language.

### ***Recommendation 2***

When developing websites or multimedia tools, company managers explain to us that developers have difficulties to work on the code developed by someone else. This is due to the fact that students are encouraged to develop their own style, and during their training they are not used to work on the code written by someone else.

We recommend to train students to understand different ways of developing, to be used with reverse engineering, and to be very explicit in documenting a code, or an application.

### ***Recommendation 3***

Complementary to Recommendation 2, training students to working in a team and not splitting work in parts and isolate them. Training students to work together with a group effect and maximised impact is a great improvement for the future employment of the students.

### ***Recommendation 4***

When a company is designing a website, the aim is that internet users come on this website, thus, to gain visibility. Knowing how search engines work and being able to design websites in accordance with the search engines requirements and referencing system is absolutely important for companies.

Few teaching about this subject is done at Universities and training institutions.

Companies need this competence in nearly all jobs families, not only developers or web designers, all workers in this area need this knowledge.

A module of 20 Hours teaching this subject can be added to most training courses, in particular those that do not have technical specifications at their core training.

### ***Recommendation 5***

There are many informatics and languages tools, training providers try to give a concise overview on almost all of them. At the end of a training course, students have an idea of these different tools but are not specialist of any. Thus, it is difficult for them to find a job. The selection is done on high level competencies on one of the languages, and the abilities in others are the mark of the polycompetence. An example is the lack of specialised Java developers in Germany and Belgium, to mention just one.

Students need to be fully operational in one of them at least. Each student especially for software development, has to improve his/her level, and has to reach an employability level in at least one of the taught tools.

### ***Recommendation 6***

Informatics and internet products' aim is to communicate, hence, a customer orientation is the key for employment. Developers, however, think mainly about the machine, and do not consider the customer side.

Some company's managers call this ability Ergonomics, but most of them think it goes even further. If at each time in the training course, the topics are taught as seen from the customer side, analysed from the point of view of the customer, it will be a great improvement for the practical applicability of skills for students.