

AVE

Assessing voluntary experience

**Pilot project in the framework of the programme
Leonardo da Vinci**

Proposal of a tool to document and assess competencies
acquired in voluntary work

German Version

June 2005



INBAS-Sozialforschung GmbH
Dr. Jürgen Schumacher
Patricia Eilsberger
Nonnenpfad 14
D-60599 Frankfurt am Main
Tel.: +49-(0)69-654459
Fax: +49-(0)69-655096
patricia.eilsberger@inbas-sozialforschung.de
www.inbas-sozialforschung.de

Dear participant,

this portfolio intends to guide you during the process to quote all your competencies you have acquired and enhanced during your work in your organisation. It had been developed in the project “AVE – Assessing Voluntary Experience in a Professional Perspective”, whereas the aim of the project was to create a tool which could be used by the volunteers in order to take advantage of the competences they gained in the voluntary field especially under the perspective of an entry or re-entry into the labour market.

The following pages contain an exemplary portfolio which might be useful for you while establishing an individual abstract of the abilities which you have developed. Please note the main topics:

1. Short portrait concerning your person and the voluntary work done (personal data)
2. Activities and roles fulfilled (presentation of the main characteristics)
3. Presentation of the competences (confirm and proof by examples)
4. List of competences (overview of the competences you acquired or enhanced, self-evaluation)
5. Further training (adding a certificate if possible)
6. Presentation of the organisation (short description of the data, aim, target groups and demography of the initiative)

First of all we would like to ask you to fill in your personal data, some information about your educational and professional career and trainings or further education seminars you took part in. As you are going to be asked for a detailed description of the training later on, please quote this topic shortly. Furthermore you might answer the question, why you decided to enter the field of voluntary work (optional).

The next pages deal with the specification concerning your profile of tasks, roles and activities. Please take your time to quote your function/role, your personal aim, the time span and also the activities you were consigned to do in the different organisations. This might be also the right moment for a first reflexion of the competences you gained while fulfilling this functions.

The third part treats the competences and their presentation. On pages 10 to 18 there are several competences listed you may consider. If these skills apply to your personal competence profile, please be so kind to proof them by giving examples of situations or

cases you have been confronted with. Feel free to add those you might have missed in the given list. After this extensive catalogue there is a further short list, which should provide an additional overview about your abilities.

In the fourth part of this instrument you are asked to indicate the further education and training you participated in. Please note the provider, the title, the subject and the time span of your participation. After that, please give a brief summary of the content and quote the abilities and competences you have acquired or enhanced due to this training. If possible, any certifications can be attached.

Finally there is some space for the presentation of the organisations in which you were engaged as a volunteer. To make your biography useful for a potential employer it is necessary that the responsible person of the organisation gives proof of your engagement by a signature and/or a stamp.

As a basic principle, please be aware of the fact that this instrument had been developed under the perspective of an entry or re-entry into the labour market. For this reason please note your experience in a way, a potential employer on the one hand will be able to relate to it and on the other hand might draw his conclusions concerning your abilities.

Even though this introduction sounds a little complex, for each of those topics you will find a detailed description and further instruction below.

So now take your time and thank you for your attention,

The German AVE-Team.

Biography	4
Voluntary Activities	6
The Presentation of the Competences	9
Level of Competence	19
Training Related to Your Voluntary Work	21
Presentation of the Organisation	23

Biography

The first section of the portfolio is designated to general information about yourself. Please enter your personal data in the table and indicate your professional education. For an application you will be asked to send in your professional CV, so please give only a short comment on your career. The question for further training can be answered in general with Yes or No. This issue will be emphasised in a more detailed way later on.

The last point in this section gives you the chance to tell the reader of your portfolio what gave the reason to become a volunteer. This question is optional.

Last name	
First name	
Date and place of birth	
Martial status	
Do you have children? If yes, please note how many children you have.	
Professional education	
Further education/training (outside the field of volunteering)	
Hobbies	

Please shortly note the professional certificate(s) you have successfully passed and the professional fields you have worked in.

Why did you become a volunteer (optional)?

Voluntary Activities

Due to the matter of clearness and traceability, on the following pages you might note all your voluntary activities in different organisations. Before giving further specifications on them, please also indicate the name of the organisation, your function or role, the time span you have been involved and your personal aim.

As already mentioned above it might be useful to have now a first reflexion of the competences you have acquired or enhanced while performing your specific functions in the specific organisation, since you will be asked to describe you competences in detail on the pages 10-18.

1. voluntary activity	
organisation	
function/role	
personal aim	
time span	
activities	

Please quote all your past and present activities as a volunteer.

2. voluntary activity	
organisation	
function/role	
personal aim	
time span	
activities	

3. voluntary activity	
organisation	
function/role	
personal aim	
time span	
activities	

Please quote all your past and present activities as a volunteer.

4. voluntary activity	
organisation	
function/role	
personal aim	
time span	
activities	

The Presentation of the Competences

The main section of this portfolio regards those competences you gained while working as a volunteer. On the following pages we have listed several competences. For each you will find some explanations on the right side of the page. Please check for every single competence, if it applies to your personal voluntary profile and proof your experience by giving examples of situations you have been confronted with. While doing so, please also remind of the professional perspective your future employer represents. In other words: Try to phrase those situations, which clearly state the relevance of gaining the competences due to your role or function. As you will see there are already examples listed in the tables. This should give you a lead for the examples you may give and furthermore explain the meaning of the competences in the daily work routine.

Please feel free to leave those competences blank you are not able to identify with and enrich this list of those competences you might have missed. There is some space left at the end of this chapter where you can add them. Again, please take your time to remind yourself carefully of every item which may be relevant for your future employer to know.

guidance

e.g.: I am responsible for the preparation of the task schedule.

guidance means: in-group responsibility, motivating other volunteers, overview of the tasks,...

foreign languages

e.g.: Due to my variety of contacts I decided to learn Spanish.

foreign languages like: French, Italian and also business English,...

conductorship

e.g.: One of my task is to direct the helpers.

conductorship means: superior function, making decisions, directing other volunteers, ...

personal responsibility

e.g.: Last year I attended in the personal reviews of our association.

personal responsibility means: appraisal interviews, employment decisions, knowledge of personnel policy and psychology, ...

teachings

e.g.: Sometimes it occurs that there is some know-how I need to convey.

teachings mean: to refer to learning contents, to convey specific knowledge in a training, to lecture,...

to phrase reports

e.g.: Besides the annual report I have to write down little essays for the press.

to phrase reports includes: letters, annual reports, newsletters, summaries or minutes,...

accounting

e.g.: I administer the budget of the association, whereas I have to calculate the gains and the costs.

accounting means: fund-raising, taking care of the cash-book, listing gains and costs,...

moderation/interviews

e.g.: It seemed to me that there were some misunderstandings between the volunteers. So I decided to interview each of them to get an idea how to solve the problem.

moderation/interviews include: to interview applicants, moderation of sessions, ...

to take a speech

e.g.: Today it is much easier for me to orate in front of a large quantity of people, because that is one of my tasks.

to take a speech means: presentation of the goals of the initiative in front of an audience, ...

handling a pc

e.g.: I create the program of our annual courses by using MS Office.

handling a pc comprehends: to edit, to correct or to create tables, use of specific programs to ease daily occurrences, ...

internet competences

e.g.: This kind of competence has been enhanced by the voluntary work, because I am responsible for our homepage.

internet competences include: research, online banking, creating a homepage, use of programming language,...

legal knowledge

e.g.: I had to deal with special laws for associations.

legal knowledge means: in domains like law or other specific knowledge in administration, insurance, psychology, ...

external cooperation

e.g.: I abide the contact between us and other associations and do also care for the networking.

external cooperation refers to: media or public locations, other associations or initiatives, to follow common interests, ...

public relation

e.g.: I arrange that our projects will be public.

public relation means: representing the organisation, to get in contact with the press and to arrange public interest,...

negotiation

e.g.: As our organisation was build up, I had to convince the city council to provide space and money for us.

negotiation means: to realise goals and ideas, to convince others of your plans and to accomplish them, ...

acquisition/promoting

e.g.: At the open days I always try to constitute interest in our work.

acquisition/promoting includes: establishing contacts and acquire new helpers, ...

purchase

e.g.: I take orders from our members and care for the provision of materials.

purchase means: responsibility for buying teaching equipment, groceries,...

conceptual design

e.g.: We used to have an idea for a specific project. In this context I had to write a conception concerning child care and the pedagogical use of it.

conceptual design means: writing concepts, to concept a financial plan for a project,...

ability to work in a team

e.g.: In former times I used to be a lone fighter. Today I rely on the ideas and opinions of my colleagues.

ability to work in a team refers to: team work, to agree with team members,...

autonomy/independence (goal orientation, responsibility)

e.g.: Next month I will have to occupy a position. This decision is one of my duties.

autonomy/independence includes: goal orientation, responsibility, effective action,...

open-mindedness/tolerance

e.g.: I am interested in the work of other organisations and I raised my tolerance concerning different situations in families.

open-mindedness/tolerance means: accepting different views, dealing with distinctions,...

problem solving

e.g.: In general I try to get a common sense, but this seems to be difficult sometimes. Then I need to listen to all opinions and to vote for the conclusion at last.

problem solving means: to be a neutral part in conflicts, to show solutions...

creativity

e.g.: My creativity has been enhanced especially in matters of financing. We had been also very creative as for the formulation of our associations-goals to create public interest.

creativity means: to bring out the best, to deal with little but to gain plenty,...

flexibility

e.g.: We share our rooms with another organisation, that is why we have to be flexible, if there is a spontaneous room change.

flexibility refers to: to be open for new ways to reach a goal, ...

organising ability

e.g.: Especially in order to organise celebrations I have to take everything in account!

organising ability refers to: time and task planning, ...

steadiness

e.g.: Due to my function I have to hand my children sometimes in child care.

steadiness means: trust in your activities and function, ...

toughness

e.g.: I am a mother, housewife, part-time working and also responsible for the budget of our association. Of course the stresses and strains have been increased.

toughness means: self-assurance in the individual work and goals, ...

ability to manage conflict situations

e.g.: I used to represent my own position in opposite to my colleagues. But in general I may be also convinced by good arguments.

ability to manage conflict situations includes: to be diplomatic but able to assert yourself, ...

self-discipline

e.g.: There are several things that have to be done, for example the annual report.

self-discipline means: to motivate yourself in order to fulfil awkward missions, ...

time-management

e.g.: I arranged that my husband will take care of the kids every Monday evening so that I can care of the work to be done in the matter of the association.

time management includes: to ensure your personal time table, ...

achievement motivation

e.g.: I am very motivated when receiving a positive feedback from the participants of my courses.

achievement motivation refers to: anything that motivates you in volunteering, ...

learning aptitude

e.g. Sometimes I have to adapt myself to the participants of my courses.

learning aptitude: to be flexible and adaptable concerning your colleagues, training members and learning contents...

<i>e.g.</i>

<i>e.g.</i>

<i>e.g.</i>

Missed something? In this place you may add all the competences you might have missed.

Level of Competence

After the very detailed presentation and description of the competences above you now find a list where you have the opportunity to weigh your skills and competencies and provide an overview in a one page summary. Please indicate those areas of competences you feel strong in compared to those where this is not the case by ticking the respective sign.

Competences		Competences	
guidance	☺ ☹	ability to work in a team	☺ ☹
foreign languages	☺ ☹	autonomy/independence	☺ ☹
leadership	☺ ☹	open-mindedness/ tolerance	☺ ☹
personnel responsibility	☺ ☹	problem solving	☺ ☹
teaching	☺ ☹	creativity	☺ ☹
to phrase reports	☺ ☹	flexibility	☺ ☹
accounting	☺ ☹	organising ability	☺ ☹
moderation/ interviews	☺ ☹	steadiness	☺ ☹
to take a speech	☺ ☹	toughness	☺ ☹
handling a pc	☺ ☹	ability to manage conflict situations	☺ ☹
internet competences	☺ ☹	self-discipline	☺ ☹
legal knowledge	☺ ☹	time-management	☺ ☹
external co- operation	☺ ☹	achievement motivation	☺ ☹
public relation	☺ ☹	learning aptitude	☺ ☹
negotiation	☺ ☹	what else?	
acquisition/ promoting	☺ ☹		☺ ☹
purchase	☺ ☹		☺ ☹
conceptual design	☺ ☹		☺ ☹

Here you can give a short overview of the competences you have acquired or enhanced during your voluntary activity.

☺ = Yes, I hold it!
☹ = Sorry, my strengths lie elsewhere.

Training Related to Your Voluntary Work

It might be very interesting for the future employer to learn about training activities related to your voluntary activity. On the next pages there is space to document this.

We recommend to document all of your training activities. In case these were a lot, our suggestion is to concentrate on those which might be the most relevant ones for your professional perspective.

Please point out the provider, title and subject and also the time span of the training you participated in. After giving the general data please respond to the competences that are connected to the trainings and give a short overview of the content of it. It might be also useful to attach any document that proves the reality of your education, if possible.

File of training related to your voluntary activity

Sequential number of training event described

Title of training event:
.....

Type of training event (e.g. workshop, course, lecture or seminar):
.....

Which organisation provided the training?
.....

Was the training initiated or recommended by the organisation you are volunteering in?
(If yes: for what purpose?)

.....

How many hours of lessons / of working time did the training event comprise?
.....

Can you please shortly describe the contents of the training event?
.....

.....
.....

What did you personally get out of the training event in terms of skills and competencies
acquired?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Did you get a certificate?

yes no

If yes, please attach a copy of the certificate to this portfolio

Presentation of the Organisation

The last subject refers to a brief presentation of the organisation or initiative you have been (or are) volunteering in. It starts with the organisational data, which should be completed by a person who is responsible for the volunteering in the specific organisation or any representative. The next tables refer to the aims and target groups of the initiative and consider at last some general facts about it. Please make sure, that this page will also be signed and/or stamped.

Data on the organisation in which you are a volunteer	
Name	
Contact person	
Function of contact person in the association	
Street	
City	
Telephone	
Fax	
E-mail	
Website	

Please fill in the data of your organisation.

Can you please briefly describe the mission of the organisation?
Is there a leaflet or a short brochure that provides basic information about the organisation and its mission which you can attach to this portfolio? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no

What are your initiative's most important target groups and aims?	
Target group:	Aim:
Target group:	Aim:
Target group:	Aim:
Target group:	Aim:

Please give a short overview on the target groups and aims of your organisation.

When was your initiative founded and why?	
The initiative was founded in:	
It was founded for the following reason:	

Please indicate when your organisation was founded and why.

How many volunteers are involved in your initiative according to age and gender?

Age	No. of women	No. of men
below 30 years		
30 – 59 years		
60 years and above		

How many paid staff people work in your organisation?

If there is many paid staff people in your organisation, please give us an estimate.

Specimen for a letter written and signed by the organisations you are volunteering in (you have been volunteering in) in order to give a proof of the volunteering experience:

We recommend that you prepare a letter to be printed on the letterhead paper of the organisation you are volunteering in and signed by a responsible representative be filling in the following line and deleting parts which are not appropriate.

(Letterhead of the organisation)

To whom it may concern

Ms / Mr. (put in name of volunteer)
Is volunteering in our organisation since
(has been volunteering in our organisation from to)

She / he fulfils (fulfilled) the following tasks:
.....
.....
.....

(Short open assessment of the performance of the volunteer in her / his work)

We appreciate the work of (put in name of volunteer), because
.....
.....
.....

Signature and stamp of the organisation

(Date, name, function)