



Erasmus+ KA2 project STORIE

Development of capacities of rural businesses to design and promote sustainable tourism products based on intangible cultural heritage

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Intellectual Output 1: STORIE Learning Programme

Activity 3: Pedagogical Approach

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1. Introduction

The Erasmus+ project STORIE (2018-2020) aims to improve the competitiveness of small rural companies by developing their skills and capacities to design and promote sustainable tourism products based on intangible cultural heritage. The project will introduce an innovative Learning Programme and an online Learning Tool, will facilitate the development of local business communities and test pilot tourist experiences in partner regions.

The project will develop 3 Intellectual Outputs:

- O1 - STORIE Learning Programme
- O2 - STORIE Learning Tool
- O3 - STORIE Insights and Experiences

The activities leading to Output 1 aim to:

- Identify and exchange the best practices and methodologies for the development of skills and capacities of small rural businesses in the area of tourism product design and promotion, and cooperation,
- Analyse the training programmes previously developed by project partners,
- Adapt existing programmes to create a new, tailored programme specifically and directly aimed at filling the skills gaps of rural businesses.

There are 4 activities leading to Output 1.

Activity 3 aims to define

1. Define learning type/ mode

- Select approach based on needs analysis
- Design/ document learning paths

2. Define requirements for the e-learning space

- Attractive presentation of learning materials
- Collaboration space

2. Methodological approach

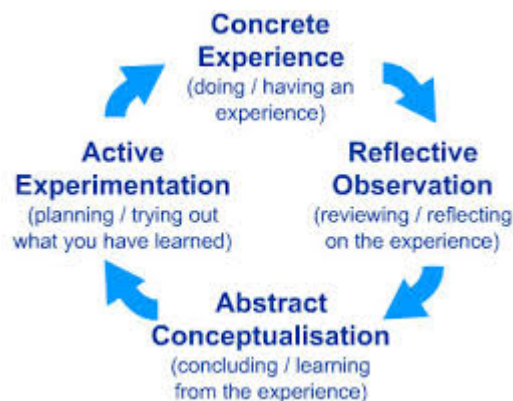
“People are different: they learn, take in information and communicate in different ways. Not everyone thinks like you do.” [Jim Buddin, The GÉANT Association, Training Coordinator]

During specifying our pedagogical approach, we considered that people learn in different ways, and STORIE Learning Programme should cater for those different needs.

Below we shortly present the learning theories and the needs analysis that define the STORIE pedagogical approach.

1. Learning by doing

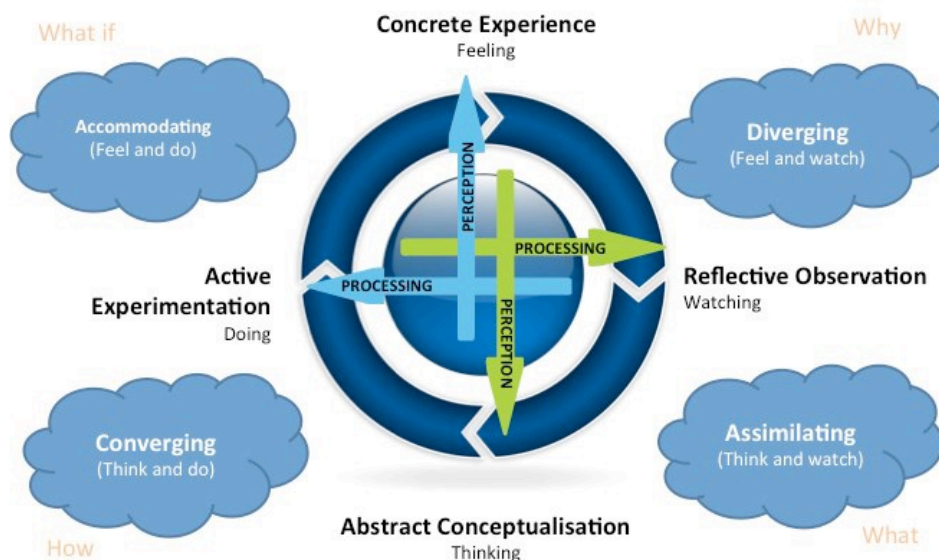
David A. Kolb pioneered the idea of experiential learning, which is learning by reflection on doing. Experiential learning’s focus is the individual learning process.



(Experimental learning, Kolb)

Kolb suggests that learning is a circular process, and that the best learning is achieved when going through the whole circle repeatedly. Experiential learning is powerful, but does require self-initiative, the intention to learn and be an active participant in learning, so it is not just theory.

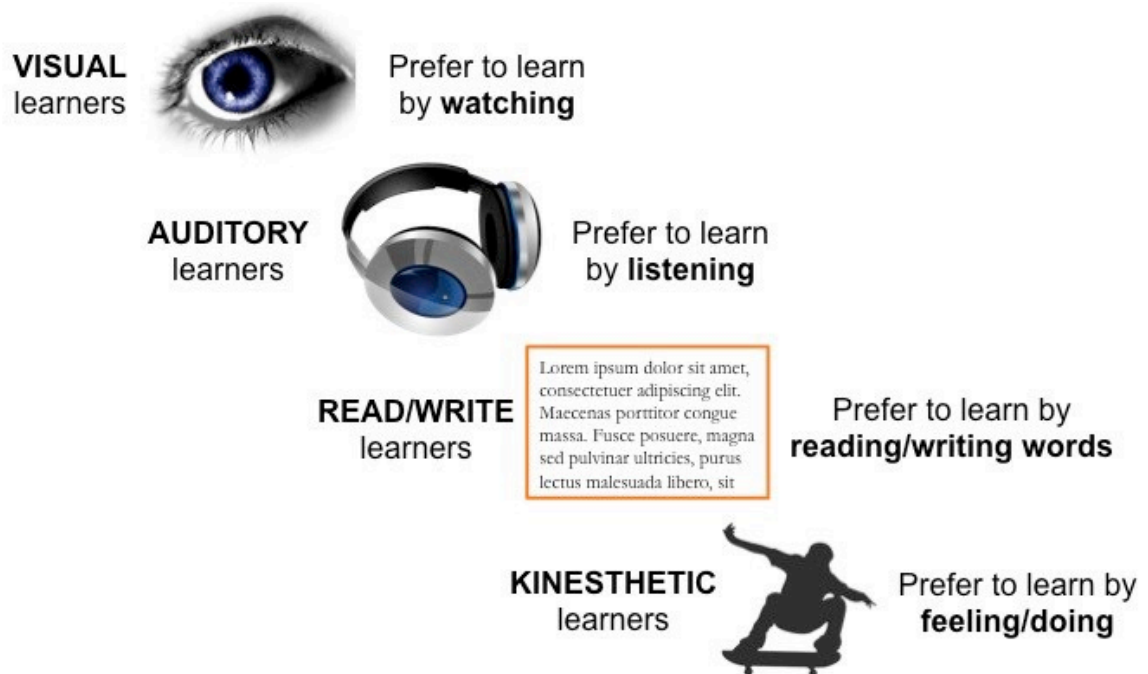
Kolb further introduced four learning styles on top of his experiential learning diagram, suggesting that there are four types of learners: divergers, assimilators, convergers and accommodators. This diagram here explains this concept well:



(Learning styles, Kolb)

2. VARK model

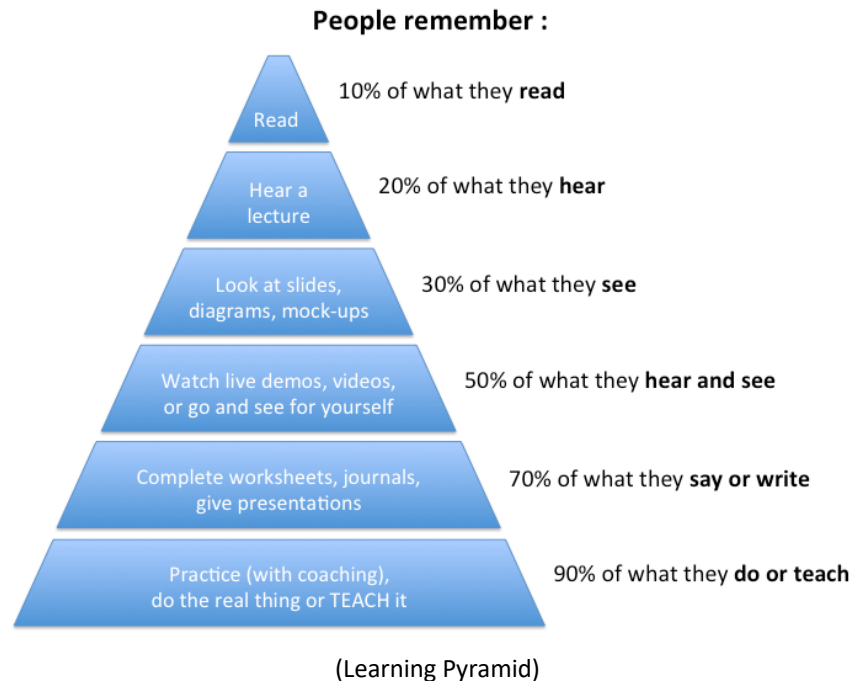
Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) models human communication and provides techniques which help improve the effectiveness of communication at all levels (not just words) and also provides therapeutic applications, mostly for achieving behavioural changes. A result of NLP is the idea that people have a “preferred” sense among the five senses – in most cases visual, auditory or kinaesthetic (feeling via the body) – one that they also engage in learning. The suggestion is that people who prefer visual, need especially visual cues for learning. The same goes for people with an auditory and kinesthetic (feeling) preference. And a fourth category is added for those who prefer internal dialogue and words. The teacher can accommodate all categories by including in a training not only auditory and word elements (the traditional lecture: listening to the professor and reading a book), but also visuals (whiteboard, flipcharts, videos) and kinesthetic elements (learning by doing, feeling, trying it out). Any good learning program should be a mix of these four. For learning purposes this was synthesized by Neil Fleming in the VARK model:



(Learning preferences, VARK Model)

3. Learning Pyramid

The ineffectiveness of the traditional lecture style, but also of just “reading a book”, is apparent in the learning pyramid, presented below. The pyramid shows that a teaching which combines “hearing” and “seeing” already achieves much better results, but that the most effective teaching methods include “seeing and writing” as in workshops, and “doing” as in going through the steps one by one.



Looking at the learning pyramid, you can see that seeing is fairly effective, but doing and teaching are the best vehicles for learning and remembering. In the medical world the “adagio” See One – Do One – Teach One is often used as an application of this. The idea is simple: first see how something is done. Then do it yourself. And finally teach it to others. There is some critique on it saying that See One and Do One are not enough to gain sufficient learning to be able to teach one. This will be correct for learning complex matters or techniques, but just leads to a small attenuation of the “adagio”: See Many – Do Many – Teach One. The essential idea stays the same.

4. Needs analysis

With the needs analysis we mapped the concrete needs of our target group and the results of the needs analysis determined our approach. During needs analysis the participants of interviews were asked **what would make an online course on (tourism product) marketing interesting and attractive for them, and if they have attended any online courses, what they liked and what not.** We took into account their answers presented below during planning our pedagogical approach and learning tools:

- The course should be practical, with examples, case studies, good (and bad) practices
- The learning platform should be visually attractive
- The course shouldn't be boring, it should have different elements – videos, photos, games, etc.
- The learning materials should provide systemized and useful information in simple words
- Good practices and examples shouldn't come from multinationals, because that is difficult to link to small businesses;
- The online platform should be user friendly - not everybody has experience of online learning;
- It should be possible to choose what to study/ what learning unit to choose;
- The materials should include some practical tools that could be easily applied, simple and inexpensive and not complicated;
- The course shouldn't be a traditional marketing course, and the name of the course should reflect it, e.g. design of tourism products;
- Immediate practical application of new knowledge to the product would be very useful;

- It would be good to be able to access the course from different devices (e.g. computer and mobile phone), and to be able to download some materials to study off-line;
- The online course should be combined with a workshop or several short workshops;
- Those that have already attended an online learning course have mostly liked that they could study on their own at any time, but they also said they needed more guidance, and for some it was difficult to find time and motivate themselves to study, even though they thought learning was useful.

The last question of the interviews was aiming to establish if the participants had any specific expectations related to STORIE Learning Programme. The participants expect:

- To have a learning possibility
- It should be easy to interact with the rest of the participants on the platform
- To receive knowledge in a friendly way and achieve friendships that will, in the future, result in better cooperation.
- To exchange ideas and experience with peers/ other entrepreneurs
- To establish cooperation with other companies and maybe develop new products together
- The learning materials presented on the platform should be short and practical
- To learn about marketing tools, more effective (and cost effective) marketing
- To learn how to present a new activity to the market, the trends in tourism sector, the interests of the travellers
- Include some tools or tips on how to market the products and services when the budget is limited,
- It should include advise and tips on how to improve the tourism products/ services
- To have STORIE platform as a place of access to useful materials to apply them in own products and services
- It should help to develop innovative products/ services
- To increase the number of clients
- The STORIE learning platform should take advantage of what is already developed from other projects so as not to repeat it
- STORIE platform should be attractive, contain useful information/ tools and be easy to use
- It could provide examples on how companies cooperate to offer better tourism services, examples on how to integrate the cultural heritage so that it adds value to the tourism product,
- Funding schemes for integration of the cultural heritage or joint marketing activities could be presented,
- A good learning tool about a few concepts would be better than a poor learning tool about all the concepts
- The platform should be useful and widely disseminated so that it can be put to good use, and that the project continues
- Companies should have profit of it, it should give results, there should be benefits for the companies that are in charge of marketing the destination

The survey and interviews in STORIE partner countries have confirmed the main findings of the desk research: the partner countries of STORIE are rich in intangible cultural heritage, small rural companies are willing to learn and want to improve their marketing knowledge, they prefer very practical learning programmes/ resources as their time is limited, online learning is acceptable and sometimes preferred but face-to-face contact is also important aiming to provide practical support and encourage networking and cooperation of local companies.

Based on needs analysis the STORIE learning programme is expected to be practical, modular, with sufficient examples and useful tools, to apply easily in practice. The potential participants of the learning programme are ready to allocate several hours per week to improve their marketing knowledge.

The STORIE learning platform should be attractive and user-friendly, so that also people with less experience in online learning would be able/ would be encouraged to use it. In most partner regions is it advised to combine online learning with face-to-face interaction, i.e. blended learning would be the type of learning that mostly meets the needs of the target group.

3. Details of learning – teaching types

3.1. Blended learning methodology

No single, reliable definition of blended learning exists, or even a universal agreement on the term itself. Many use terms like hybrid, mixed, or integrative to describe the same trend. But the trend is significant. In 2000 an estimated 45,000 K-12 students took an online course, but almost a decade later more than 3 million took courses that way, many of them using computers in the schools themselves.

Blended learning is a term increasingly used to describe the way e-learning is being combined with traditional classroom methods and independent study to create a new, hybrid teaching methodology. It represents a much greater change in basic technique than simply adding computers to classrooms; it represents, in many cases, a fundamental change in the way teachers and students approach the learning experience.

Blended learning is an approach to education that combines online educational materials and opportunities for interaction online with traditional place-based classroom methods. It requires the physical presence of both teacher and student, with some elements of student control over time, place, path, or pace.

The terms "blended learning", "hybrid learning", "technology-mediated instruction", "web-enhanced instruction", and "mixed-mode instruction" are often used interchangeably in research literature.

There are many components that can comprise a blended learning model, including "instructor-delivered content, e-learning, webinars, conference calls, live or online sessions with instructors, and other media and events, for example, Facebook, e-mail, chat rooms, blogs, podcasting, Twitter, YouTube, Skype and web boards".

A learning model in three parts

There is a general consensus among education innovators that blended learning has three primary components:

1. In-person classroom activities facilitated by a trained educator.
2. Online learning materials, often including pre-recorded lectures given by that same instructor.
3. Structured independent study time guided by the material in the lectures and skills developed during the classroom experience.

A course created in a blended learning model uses the classroom time for activities that benefit the most from direct interaction. Traditional education (especially at the college level) tends to place an emphasis on delivering material by way of a lecture, while in a blended learning model lectures can be videotaped ahead of time so the student can watch on their own time. The classroom time is more likely to be for structured exercises that emphasize the application of the curriculum to solve problems or work through tasks.

In some situations, the move to blended learning has inspired educators to redefine traditional roles. The word "facilitator" has emerged as an alternative to "teacher," bringing with it a slightly different focus. The facilitator places an emphasis on empowering students with the skills and knowledge required to make the most of the online material and independent study time, guiding students toward the most meaningful experience possible.

Advantages

- Blended instruction is reportedly more effective than purely face-to-face or purely online classes;
- Blended learning methods can also result in high levels of student achievement more effective than face-to-face learning;
- Blended learning allows students to work at their own pace, making sure they fully understand new concepts before moving on";
- Blended learning facilitates student learning;
- With blended learning method people can communicate ideas effectively;
- Blended learning shows respect for students.

Challenges

- Unless successfully planned and executed, blended learning could have disadvantages in technical aspects since it has a strong dependence on the technical resources or tools with which the blended learning experience is delivered. These tools need to be reliable, easy to use, and up to date, for them to have a meaningful impact on the learning experience;
- IT literacy can serve as a significant barrier for students attempting to get access to the course materials, making the availability of high-quality technical support paramount;
- Other aspects of blended learning that can be challenging is group work because of difficulties with management in an online setting;
- Reportedly the use of lecture recording technologies can result in students falling behind on the materials;
- Another critical issue is access to network infrastructure. Although the digital divide is narrowing as the Internet becomes more pervasive, many students do not have pervasive and ubiquitous access to the Internet;
- From an educator's perspective, most recently, it has been noted that providing effective feedback is more time-consuming (and therefore more expensive) when electronic media are used, in comparison to traditional (e.g. paper-based) assessments.

3.2. Thin slicing

An innovative concept to be employed in STORIE pedagogical approach is the so-called single-concept learning or “**thin slicing**”, which focuses on one behaviour change, one narrow concept and one slim goal at a time. The STORIE Learning Programme will thus be made of small e-learning "snacks" that demonstrate how specific concept works in different situations. Then the learning experience will be integrated into a blended learning intervention, which will provide multiple paths for participants to get the message.

Malcolm Gladwell has written a book called "Blink" (2005) in which he discusses this hidden brain activity and attempts to make this process seem a lot less mysterious. In this book he ignores such words as hunches, insight and intuition in favour of rapid cognition and what he calls thin slicing.

Thin slicing is about isolating thin slices of learning and delivering powerful insights from very limited information. Thin slicing starts small—it isolates a narrow, compelling insight and expands it into a bite-size learning module. Thin slicing is more impressionistic than linear learning event. It's more emotional than logical. And it's incomplete by design.

The research shows that digital natives—and even older workers who are comfortable with technology—want to absorb information in short, compelling, and disjointed bursts.

Single-concept learning differs from other strategies for creating short-form e-learning such as chunking and learning compression, both of which start with a large body of learning and deliver it in smaller segments. Single-concept learning takes the opposite track. “It's the discipline of ‘starting small,’ ” said Meyer. “It's about identifying a ‘thin slice’ of learning, a single compelling idea that's designed to change one behavior and lead to one specific outcome.”

Advantages

- This approach increases user engagement because learners are less reluctant to engage in a learning journey that's narrowly defined and lasts just 6 to 10 minutes.

- Managers are more likely to use single-concept learning modules as coaching tools because they feel they have the skillset to coach people on a single learning concept and believe they can accomplish that goal with a limited time commitment.
- People learn best when training is focused on a discrete, narrowly defined concept where learning goals are clearly defined. When training is delivered in small packets, the brain can easily absorb, remember and apply what it learns.

3.3. Product club methodology

A **Product Club** is a management and planning tool that allows a group of organizations and companies work in collaboration, either to develop new products or to add value to the existing ones in a particular market segment. This working methodology is based on the definition of some rules or processes which should be followed by all the members.

The tourist product clubs are built around a common idea or product and try to promote the destination by using as base specific products which have been clearly identified and defined previously.

In general terms, a product club follows some conditions:

- It is associated with a homogenous quality level.
- The common interests are over the individual ones.
- Everyone acts under a unique, common brand.
- It counts on the support of a public administration or a public organization.
- It benefits itself from the collaboration and support of strong organizations, as sponsors or ambassadors of the product club.
- This collaboration and integration is also developed among local communities, administrations and businesses, creating synergies and partnerships, and acting as a whole.
- Everyone acts motivated by a common objective, and everyone gets a benefit from the club: more market opportunities, more offer diversity, visitors trust, strong destination image, impact measurement of the club, competitive advantage, etc.
- Its members come from all of parts of the value chain, thus all of the interests and know-how have representation.

The phases of Product Club creation/ implementation are:

1. Definition and conceptual planning: product design
2. Integration and adaptation of tourism services and infrastructure: investment
3. Club management: implementation, training, quality, promotion and commercialisation
4. Promotion and commercialisation strategy and implementation
5. Re-design of the product, improvement

3.4. Training methodology

In face-to-face sessions we will work applying a training methodology and the product club methodology.

Training is an action-oriented method based on a conscious, voluntary engagement of participants to enable participants to work effectively in group.

Training methodology can be very successful if the participants get a mix of experiences, practices and theoretical knowledge that will enable them to develop short and long term also. We believe in the strength of the

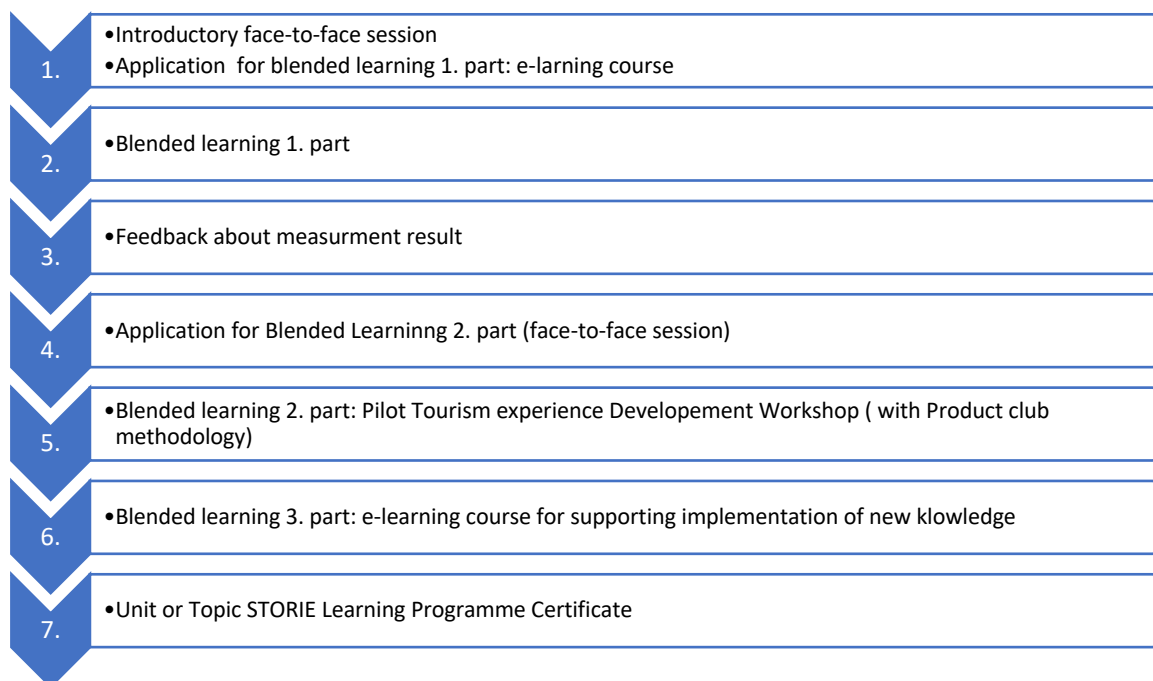
workshop, the joy of mutual creation, respect for creativity and thinking. Practice-oriented trainings of STORIE Learning program are built on these principles.

For this purpose, blended training in STORIE Learning program will create a special environment for practice: our aim is to provide an environment where participants can try new tools, practices, methods and situations with the support of our experts and trainers and receive feedback after each practical learning tasks reflecting on their problem-solving skills.

An important feature of the method is the visual presentation, i.e. the conscious and planned use of moderation tools (cards, badges, posters, photos, videos).

4. Learning Path

Learning Path from participant's view



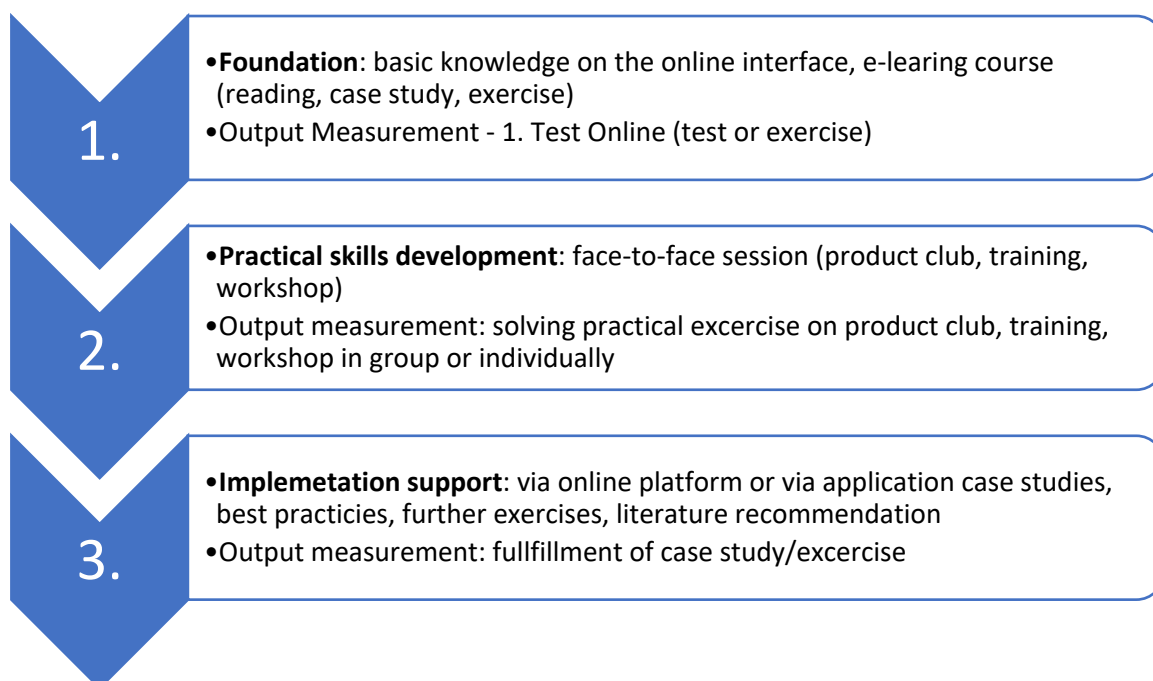
Details of steps:

1.
 - Introductory face-to-face session: including the introduction of the online platform and the Product Club Methodology - optional, as per needs of the participants in each country - can be replaced by online application to participate and invitation to read the Learner's Guide
 - Online application (according to GDPR) on website of STORIE Learning Programme
 - Choosing of topics (or units) (the progress is variable according to the needs of participant)
2.
 - Receipt of automatic confirmation about the application and receive login information to chosen module
 - **Blended learning 1. part: accomplish e-learning course for basic knowledge**
 - Measurement of 1. part (test or Logbook)

The measurement will be optional and only for those interested in obtaining a certificate. Logbook is a tool for a more practical “exam” in which there are some self-reflective questions and some activities the learner can develop and once they have done that, they have the baseline for a marketing plan for a product.

3.
 - Feedback about measurement result (a threshold will be defined, e.g. 80%, if the participant has less than 80% could try the test again until he/she reaches 80%)
4.
 - Application for Blended learning 2. step: face-to-face session
 - Receiving automatic conformation about face-to-face session, information about course details (e.g. timetable, place)
5.
 - **Blended Learning 2. part:** accomplish face-to-face session, Pilot Tourism Experience development workshop(s) following the Product Club methodology - to be described in more detail in the Validation Methodology
 - The face-to-face session should be optional, if someone does not want to participate in it, can continue the learning process with the supporting phase (blended learning 3. part)
 - Getting login information to blended learning 3. part, to e-learning course for supporting implementation
6.
 - **Blended learning 3. part: e-learning course for supporting new knowledge implementation** (Further exercises, power point presentations, videos, recommended literature)
 - For finishing 3. part participants can upload a “home work” (practical exercise or best practice about one of their developed tourism product or a case study) – optional
7.
 - Receiving congratulation letter and **STORIE Learning Programme Certificate** about completing successfully the whole Learning Program (or Module Certificate if the program is variable and participants can choose modules independently)

Learning progress from teacher's/expert's view



5. Requirements for the e-learning space

The e-learning system that will be used in STORIE is an educational tool for mobile devices (both for mobile phones and tablets). The software enables teachers or educators to easily prepare lessons with editable games and quizzes that fit all subjects through custom templates. The users can use (play) the games on their devices in groups or individually.

The e-learning system is designed to handle a wide range of media. The main supported formats are:

- **.txt**, **.docx** and **.pdf** for text format,
- **.pptx** for presentation and
- **.mov** or **.avi** for video.

An example of an e-learning block:



The e-learning material should consist of the file formats mentioned above. The final version, importing the files into the system, will be done by Interregio.

5.1. Attractive presentation of learning materials

It is recommended to divide the learning material into small blocks. It means that a short .ppt presentation, .pdf text or a video should be followed by 5-10 edugames (questions) to deepen the lessons learned.

The texts, videos and other content should be relatively short, e.g. 5-10 slides per presentation, 1 or 2 pages per text or 1-3 min video.



To create the edugames, you can choose among the given templates in the application. The most successful edugames are the following:

Bubble monster: The task is to pop up the bubbles containing wrong answers. First, you have to specify the question or the task, and give multiple wrong and correct answers. The user has to pop up all the wrong answers to successfully complete the game.

Fish in the pond: The sentence given in the exercise should be supplemented with the solutions written on the fish. In this game, you have to specify the correct and complete sentence, and mark the word that should be found in the pond.

Reading: The essence of the task is that the user has to read a longer text, and the words missing from the text should be deciphered.

True or false: The essence of the task is to decide whether the given statement is true or false. You have to give multiple questions and mark them as true or false.

Hangman: The user has to match the solutions on the right side to the wooden laths.

1 2 3 4 Boom: the task is to tap the correct answer on the screen, and complete the game in time.

Sets: the task is to select the correct answers to the question given.