

Good Practice in Mentoring: European Guidelines

Breaking the Barriers

Front cover illustration: Association FETE – Féminin Technique, Dijon, France

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Foreword

Welcome to the EQUAL transnational Good Practice in Mentoring: European Guidelines. The partners in our transnational partnership are all working to overcome gender segregation in the labour market by implementing strategies for cultural and practical change in the engineering, construction and ICT sectors. It is still difficult for women to find work within these non-traditional areas, and we have produced this booklet to share practical ideas of how mentoring can be used to challenge barriers and overcome occupational segregation, with the ultimate aim of mainstreaming these practices in each country.

Funded by the European Social Fund (ESF), EQUAL tests new ways of tackling discrimination and inequality experienced by those in work and those looking for a job. Working within the remit of reducing gender gaps and supporting job desegregation, mentoring is a powerful method for supporting women within the workplace. The partners in Great Britain, Germany and Finland have each developed their own mentoring programmes which reflect their own cultural practice. We have met several times during the 3 year transnational partnership (May 2002 – May 2005) to share knowledge and good practice to inform future programmes.

The intention of this booklet is to share our experiences of running mentoring programmes with evidence of good practice as highlighted in case studies of women involved in mentoring within non-traditional careers.

We have also published a companion booklet sharing practical ideas of how to challenge barriers and overcome occupational segregation in careers guidance and counselling.

Our Vision Statement

We want to aim for a world where girls and women can make their career decisions based on their interests and abilities, rather than having their choices limited by their gender. We want them to be able to follow a career, and be supported in that decision with no resistance based on their gender.

We know that this world is not yet a reality, but these projects have been working across Europe to identify and develop best practice in addressing the barriers girls and women face when accessing careers that have not been traditional choices for their gender.

We hope this booklet will be useful to those organisations and individuals looking to develop mentoring schemes in the future, or those who want to find out more about the different programmes that already exist.

The partners who have contributed to this booklet are:

JIVE Partners, GB

Deutsche Telekom, Germany

LIFE e.V., Germany

WomenIT, Finland



Transnational meeting
in Kajaani, Finland – September 2003



Transnational Mentoring Co-ordinators

A message from Marjo Matikainen-Kallström, Graduate Engineer & Member of the European Parliament 1996-2004 , Finland.

Dear European technology women



Segregation of the labour market is a wide-spread problem in Europe. A lot of special attention has been paid to it by the European Union over a long period of time. The EQUAL-community initiative programme of the European Social Fund - that finances your project – brings some relief for the dismantling of this segregation.

The member states of the European Union have to maintain the aim and objective of increasing equality between genders also in their future politics. Only persistent work and politics can secure the realisation of equality in EU co-operation.

Women have a lot to offer within the fields of technology and industry that are dominated by men. Women contribute a new form of creativity especially in the area of applying technology for they are often interested in people – the very users of the applications. In addition to this, women often want to ponder over what technology is being used and how the know-how of different fields can be combined in technology. This wider perspective can be justified by saying, for example, that women are often not interested in technology as such but rather they critically think about how technology could be utilised and for what it is needed. Women are also needed in the leading positions for they have, according to different studies, excellent qualifications for first and foremost leading and managing personnel.

The more active participation of women balances and completes the working environments in the fields of technology and industry that are dominated by men. The empowering of women so that they would work in the field of technology could also help to narrow the gap between men and women in terms of pay. This gap is a large-scale problem in Europe.

Mentoring and other measures of support aimed at women must also be developed in the future. It is not enough that women are tempted to study the fields in question. In addition to this, special solutions are needed within the working life in order for women to stay in the jobs within industry and technology.

I wish all the best to your projects which aim at motivating and encouraging girls and women to turn to the jobs in the fields of industry and technology. I know from my own experience that they have made an interesting career choice that will enrich their lives.

Marjo Matikainen-Kallström



Great Britain

JIVE (Joint Interventions) Partners, GB is an exciting partnership of ten organisations in England and Wales working together from May 2002 until May 2005, and is the lead partner of the transnational partnership.

JIVE provides models and strategies for breaking down barriers and tackling gender stereotyping in the engineering, construction and technology sectors, addressing current skill shortages and aiming to reduce the gender pay gap.

The aims of our Mentoring Programme

Through our mentoring programmes we aim to: provide motivation, increase confidence, provide role models, encourage networking and increase retention within both learning and employment, inspire women and girls to work and study in non-traditional fields, increase recruitment levels in both employment and education, tackle issues such as managing the transition into a non-traditional role, provide support through professional examinations and career breaks and help women to break through the “glass ceiling”.

Who is involved?

- schoolgirls interested in a career in science, engineering, construction and technology, or who wish to find out more about non-traditional careers.
- women students studying craft and technician level courses.
- women studying on degree courses in engineering, construction and technology.
- women who are working in engineering, construction or technology and have completed their education and training.

The JIVE Mentoring Programme has established a national network of women working and studying in the engineering, construction and technology industries, and within the engineering construction industry. The regular network meetings offer an opportunity for women to meet other women studying or working in a similar field to their own.

Our mentoring programme evolved from an original scheme started as the 'Let's TWIST' Project in March 2001, which included schoolgirls, undergraduates, further education students and alumni from The University of Bradford, West Yorkshire.

As JIVE Partner's mentoring experience has grown and with the gathering of formative evaluation material, our mentoring programmes have been further developed to meet the varying needs of the mentees. As a result, JIVE can now offer a range of mentoring programmes to women in non-traditional areas of study and work.

The JIVE approach is to invite women to mentor other women, as they can talk from direct experience about the benefits and difficulties of studying and working in these fields. In role model mentoring, we encourage a partnership approach with mentor and mentee working together and learning from one another. We find both parties benefit. The mentoring is entirely voluntary and is based on learning and encouraging individual responsibility towards the management of self-development.

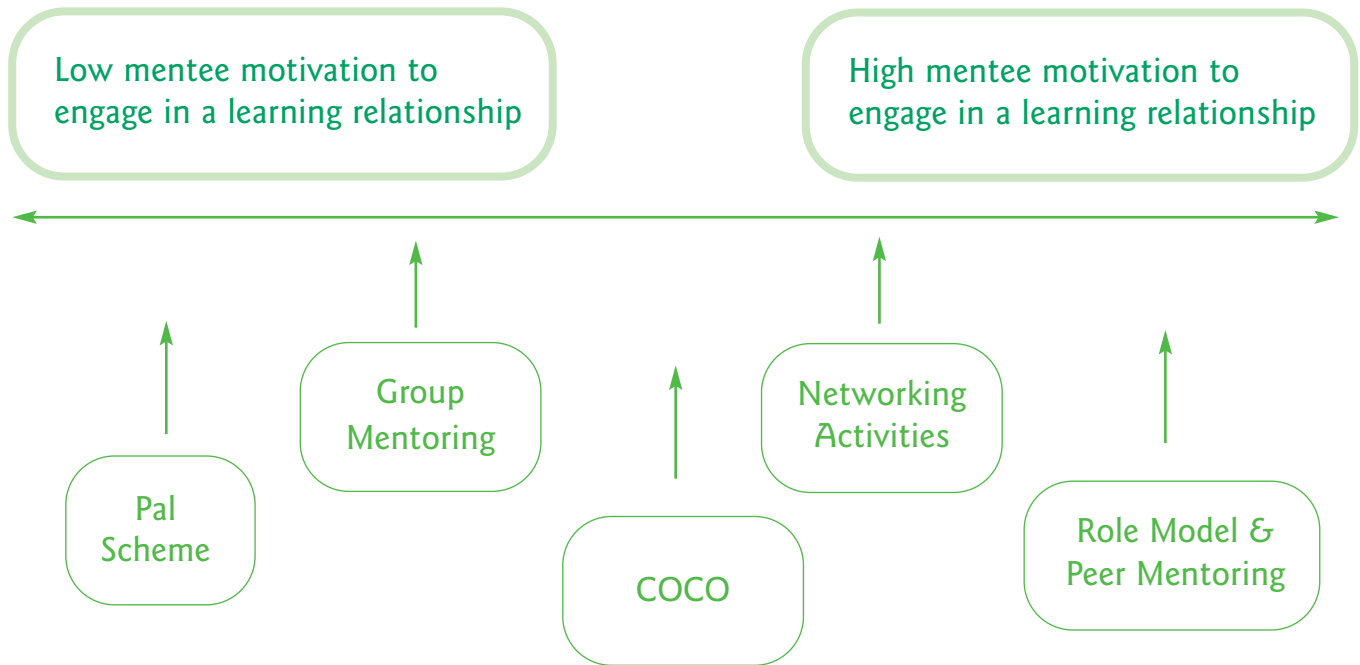
Not everyone makes a good mentee and not everyone uses a mentor effectively. This can be due to a personality issue or situational constraints. The more an individual believes in self-managed learning and being in control of their own life, the more progress they will make with a mentor. A person taking this approach is more likely to benefit from mentoring than someone who believes that their fate rests in the hands of others.

JIVE Mentoring Toolbox

JIVE has extended their mentoring programmes to encompass women's learning needs, and the diagram on page 10 shows the range of mentoring offered. Needs can range from an informal mentoring programme which offers women 'friendship' and support in their first few days in a new environment such as in a college, through to programmes where women are highly motivated to learn with the ongoing support of a role model mentor.



Mentoring Spectrum



Pal Scheme

- a short term supporting relationship where a woman who has knowledge of an environment is introduced to a new entrant, to show them around, take them for coffee, etc
- may meet once, or as many times as is needed by the new entrant
- minimal preparation training is required for the Pal

Group Mentoring

- generally aimed at further education students, craft and tradeswomen, and schoolgirls
- one or two mentors or a JIVE mentoring co-ordinator plan regular sessions, perhaps once a month, which may include inviting a role model guest speaker
- mentees can discuss issues and experiences with the whole group, with the mentor being present to facilitate the session, or to provide extra support

COCO (Coaching for Confidence)

- a less formal one-to-one coaching relationship for a woman who does not wish to form a formal, structured learning relationship with another woman
- the learner is assigned a woman role model and there is no need to set objectives. Minimal training is required, mainly to set out expectations of the relationship
- the COCO supporter is fully trained and is available to the learner only when she needs guidance or support through a particular issue

Networking Activities

- all participants in the JIVE Mentoring Programmes are invited to regular networking events
- events may consist of further mentoring skills training
- allows women to meet other women in similar areas of work or study, and to form informal networks amongst themselves

Role Model and Peer Mentoring

- both mentor and mentee attend the same training to give them a sound knowledge of what mentoring is, the skills required, and the benefits
- mentors and mentees are matched, and contracts are exchanged to clarify boundaries, expectations and objectives
- the mentee is responsible for her own learning and maintaining contact with her mentor
- relationships initially start up for one year, but may finish before this time if objectives are met
- contact should be maintained on a regular basis, either by meeting face-to-face, by email, by telephone or a mixture of these



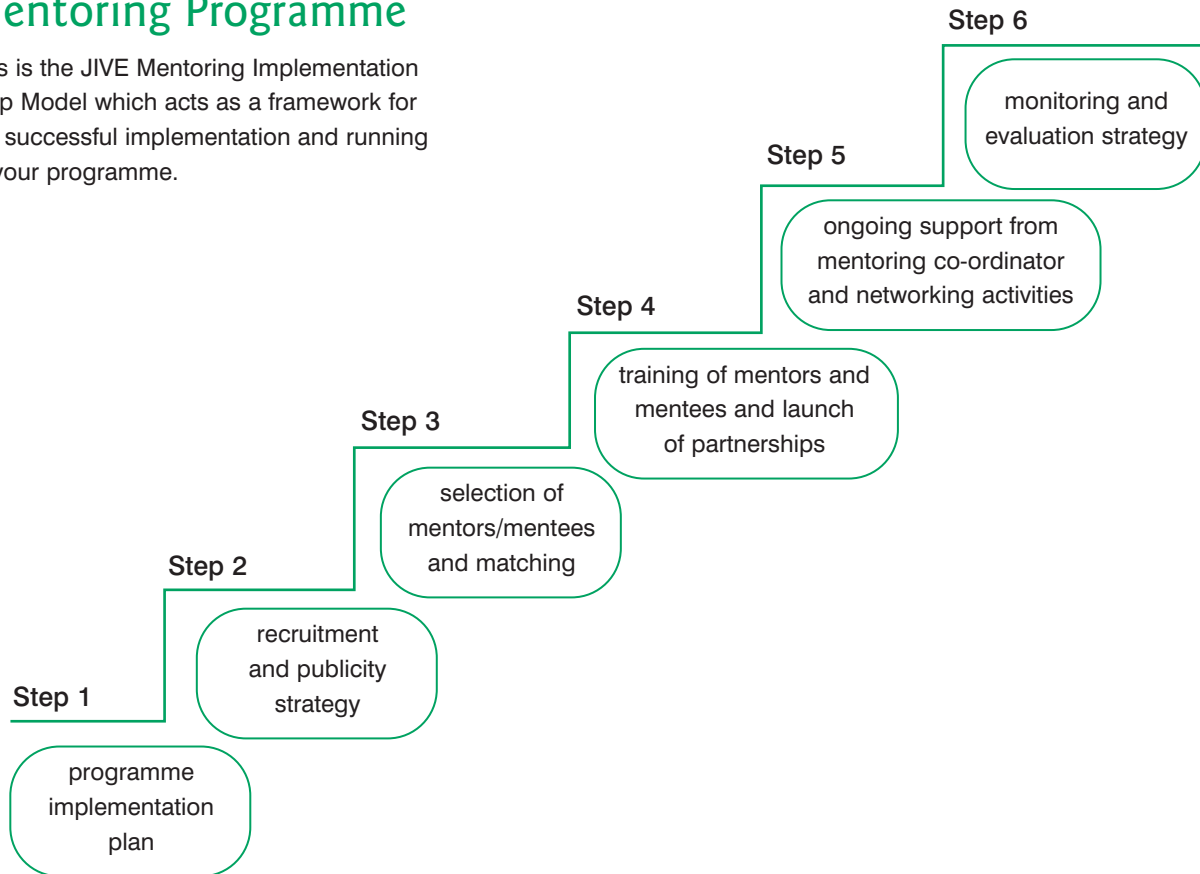
A JIVE Networking Event

Company In-House/ Association Programmes

- several mentoring programmes are being piloted for women in large organisations, or for members of women only professional associations
- some company programmes have internal mentoring co-ordinators trained by JIVE Partners, so that the mentoring programme can be maintained even after the end of the project thereby effectively mainstreaming our programme

How to implement a Mentoring Programme

This is the JIVE Mentoring Implementation Step Model which acts as a framework for the successful implementation and running of your programme.



The first stage in your process is to identify your need for a programme and who requires mentoring and why. **Never begin with finding your mentors - the mentee need is the rationale behind the start of any mentoring partnership.** Mentoring without a real and meaningful purpose will never be effective, and the relationship will not get off the starting blocks.

Step 1 – Programme Implementation Plan

You will need to create a clear plan with implementation targets and timescales for the first year of the programme which should include the following steps, ending with a final celebration and evaluation event.

Step 2 – Recruitment and Publicity Strategy

Recruitment and publicity can take many forms and is dependent on factors such as your target audience and budget.

Step 3 – Selection of Mentors/ Mentees and Matching

Mentees

It is useful to meet or to have a telephone interview with every prospective mentee prior to training to ensure they really have a desire to participate and learn, and will put the necessary time and effort into the relationship. They should also have a genuine need for mentoring. The information you gather will also help you with the matching process.

Mentors

At JIVE we support voluntary mentoring where mentor motivation drives participation in the partnership. Those mentors who really understand why they are putting themselves forward tend to be more committed than those who have not really reflected on why they have come forward. You should endeavour to meet with them or have a long telephone conversation to ascertain their motivation in getting involved.

Successful mentoring relationships result from establishing common ground on both personal and professional terms and a shared cultural background. Factors such as experiences, career interests, hobbies, future aspirations, logistical issues and likelihood of personal compatibility can be used to successfully match mentors and mentees.

Step 4 - Training and Launch of Mentoring Relationships

The JIVE philosophy is that **both** partners are crucial to the likely success of the relationship. Therefore, each mentor and mentee undertakes a five-hour training programme, which concentrates on what mentoring entails, what makes an effective mentor or mentee, understanding each other, the process of mentoring, boundaries and contracting.

After the training comes the launch event, which is a celebration to mark the beginning of the mentoring partnership. It involves the mentor and mentee having their first face-to-face meeting and they complete the Mentoring Contract Form to signify their commitment to their partnership and the programme.

The mentor and mentee are encouraged to make contact with each other every 3 weeks by email or telephone, except if they are meeting face-to-face, when a monthly meeting is acceptable. Some participants are able to utilize all communication methods to ensure regular and effective contact.

Step 5 – Ongoing Support from Mentoring Co-ordinators, and Networking Activities

Once the partnerships are set up and running, it is advisable that the mentoring co-ordinator makes contact with every mentor and mentee at least once every six weeks to ensure the relationship is working effectively.

Networking activities for the partnerships should be scheduled 2-3 times each year, particularly for those individuals who are e-mentoring. These networking events are also opportunities for mentors and mentees to be given further mentoring and developmental training.

Step 6 – Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy

JIVE Partners aim to create change for women in the engineering, construction and technology sectors and, by monitoring and evaluating the activities and outcomes, measure how much progress is being made towards these goals. This provides information on what is good and what, if anything, might need to change. For mentoring programmes lasting over 6 months, there is an interim questionnaire for both mentees and mentors. This shows how well a relationship is progressing and whether any changes need to be made. There is also a final questionnaire to obtain feedback after relationships have had a longer period of time to develop. Some mentees and mentors may be selected for case study interviews, carried out by the mentoring co-ordinators.

Summary

Since JIVE Partners started in May 2002, over 400 women and schoolgirls have been trained and matched nationally, across the whole mentoring spectrum offered.

Our programmes have been mainstreamed by training women in companies and associations to be mentoring co-ordinators so that they can carry on supervising women in mentoring with minimal support from JIVE. Good practice has been disseminated by attending and presenting at many workshops, conferences and seminars.

Evaluation has been carried out throughout the project, and at the end of the programme a full evaluation will be published. A copy can be obtained by contacting the UK Resource Centre for Women in SET, details of which are on the back cover.

What participants say:

“It’s great to have support from another woman in the industry who knows what it’s like to be out there working in construction”
(mentee)

“Very worthwhile. I came away very feeling very positive about the programme and look forward to starting the process”
(Feedback from a training event)

“This programme is brilliant and should be supported”
(mentor since March 2001 and still mentoring in 2004)

Case Study

Barbara Entwistle and Paula Bleanch have been in a mentoring relationship since February 2004. Paula is a Design Co-ordinator in Construction and has worked for one company since graduating.

“I like working at the front end of the construction industry, being based on site and seeing buildings being built. My role involves managing the designers and design information on projects, acting as a bridge between the consultants and the construction team. “

Paula Bleanch,
Mentee

At the outset of the mentoring relationship, I hoped to have someone to discuss problems with and give some perspective on work situations as another woman. I don't know any other women working in construction in the North East and I needed someone to talk to.

I originally had a woolly idea that I lacked confidence, but through the relationship Barbara has helped me to identify more accurately what the problem was and how to start to deal with it. It has also helped me to look at the boundaries that I have in my work life and because of that I decided to leave my current position, and I will be starting a new job soon.

It's great to have support from another woman in the industry who knows what it's like to be out there working in construction. It's not really something you can explain to friends and family. It's reassuring to know that someone can understand and is there to give you a hand.

Just being involved in the mentoring programme has been a positive for me. Meeting other women working in my field has given me a big boost.

On average, we are in touch once every two weeks, but sometimes less, and use e-mail and telephone. Telephone works well as we have both been really busy recently. We have met face-to-face as luckily Barbara came up to Newcastle with work. Now it's my turn to visit her in Manchester.”

Case Study



Barbara Entwistle,
Mentor

Barbara is the Area Manager for VELUX Roof Windows, an international company.

“I originally wanted to be a nurse, but other circumstances meant that I couldn’t fulfil this dream. I fell into the construction industry and have been in it for the last 15 years, starting with the building chemicals industry, then the lead manufacturing industry which gave me the opportunity to work on many listed building such as cathedrals, castles and stately homes.

Through my work at VELUX I visited Bolton Institute, which is now a university, and started studying with them. After graduating in building and construction, I was offered a place to study for a Masters Degree in Construction Management, and I am in the last year of a 3-year course, with only a 20000-word dissertation to be submitted. I will then apply to become a full member of the Chartered Institute of Building.

Paula and I have met but mainly communicate by email and telephone as we live quite a distance apart. We haven’t experienced any difficulties in our relationship, and I know that Paula feels that she is getting something from it. I do think my listening skills have improved since becoming a mentor, as I have to listen carefully to Paula in order to evaluate the problem before offering suitable advice which hopefully helps her to resolve the issue.

Time is precious to us all and our mentoring does not take up a great deal of time, but the benefits are very satisfying. I believe that giving someone some well-equipped advice can have profound results. Hopefully the relationship I have with Paula will be a long term one, and in turn she may become a mentor herself, offering advice on her experiences to another woman in the industry who needs it.

I joined this mentoring programme to ‘put something back’ as I don’t come across many women in the industry.”



Germany

Deutsche Telekom, Germany, aims to promote equality among its employees. Approximately one-third of the employees are women, but they are still under-represented in the upper management levels.

In November 1998, the pilot project “Mentoring for Women at Deutsche Telekom” was launched throughout Germany as part of the human resources and managerial staff development efforts. Initially the programme was for two years and launched with a group of ten female mentees, matched with male and female mentors.

Following the success of this pilot, they decided to concentrate on the one region, and Berlin successfully bid for EQUAL funding to offer a similar mentoring programme to their female employees, which started in February 2003. Included in this bid is the transnational partnership with Finland and the UK. Changes have been made including offering more training modules based on the mentees’ needs therefore allowing more flexibility for individuals. The duration of this programme was reduced to 14 months and the EQUAL Mentoring programme is outlined below in more detail.

Aims of the Berlin Deutsche Telekom EQUAL Mentoring Programme

- to recognise, make visible and utilise existing potential
- to improve communication between the sexes, generations and hierarchical levels
- to increase the number of female managers
- to boost the motivation of female employees
- to increase the pool of up-and-coming managers
- to provide opportunities for creating better informal networks
- to make better use of female potential in the future

There are many benefits to the mentees, mentors and the company including personal development, increasing self confidence, career planning, passing on knowledge and experiences, increased work efficiency, and better communication across hierarchical levels and within the organisation.

Recruitment

Mentoring is being used to help to break down traditional roles and stereotyping. The process involves the mentor, a respected and influential colleague, helping the mentee to draw up an individual development plan. The mentor may help the mentee with relevant contacts or experience. The mentor is an “adviser”, and he or she helps the mentee to develop herself wherever possible.



Members of the EQUAL Mentoring Programme

In most cases the mentor is older than the mentee and this gives both parties the opportunity to exchange personal views about different generations and responsibilities in an open-minded way.

The mentees are ambitious women with management potential. They might be from middle management, women who are just starting their professional careers or women who are about to take an important step forward, and who have been identified and put forward for the mentoring programme by their line manager.

Mentors are managers who are prepared to actively promote female managers. They are experienced, well-known and respected colleagues who will pass on their professional experience and the wealth of knowledge they have gathered during their careers. They might be male or female and are in higher management in Deutsche Telekom.

Deutsche Telekom EQUAL Mentoring Programme Data

Number of participants:	12 mentees and 12 mentors
Duration:	14 months of “active mentoring” plus 4 months training and monitoring, starting February 2003.
Events:	Launch event and end of programme event.
	Participants include mentees, mentors, the mentee’s line manager, project group and special guests.

The selection process of mentees and mentors

The Deutsche Telekom Equal Opportunities Department is responsible for the recruitment of mentors and mentees by placing an announcement on the Deutsche Telekom Intranet, with an application document attached. The mentee's line manager has to give written consent for them to participate in the programme and after pre-selection checks of the application documents, personal interviews are held with prospective mentees to ensure that they wish to be involved in mentoring. The mentors are then selected, but not interviewed other than to have a brief discussion to check their willingness to commit to the programme.

Matching

The mentee's application document asks them for their ideal mentor specification, i.e. whether a male/female mentor is preferred, which Telekom department they would like the mentor to work in, and any professional experience they have. Mentees also give information about their own interests and hobbies to see if any match with those of the mentors.

This information and the result of the interview, is the basis for the matching process. The mentee and mentor don't belong to the same Telekom department, so they are able to work off-line in a more relaxed atmosphere.

Training Modules

The eight modules and training topics may be changed following feedback from mentees and trainers to meet the mentee's needs, giving greater flexibility within the programme. These mentee training units are held in work time and external trainers deliver and supervise the sessions. The latter part of the session is to ensure the mentee's understanding of the modules, and these discussions (or supervisions as they are called within the programme) can be held in a group, or individually if the mentee wishes.

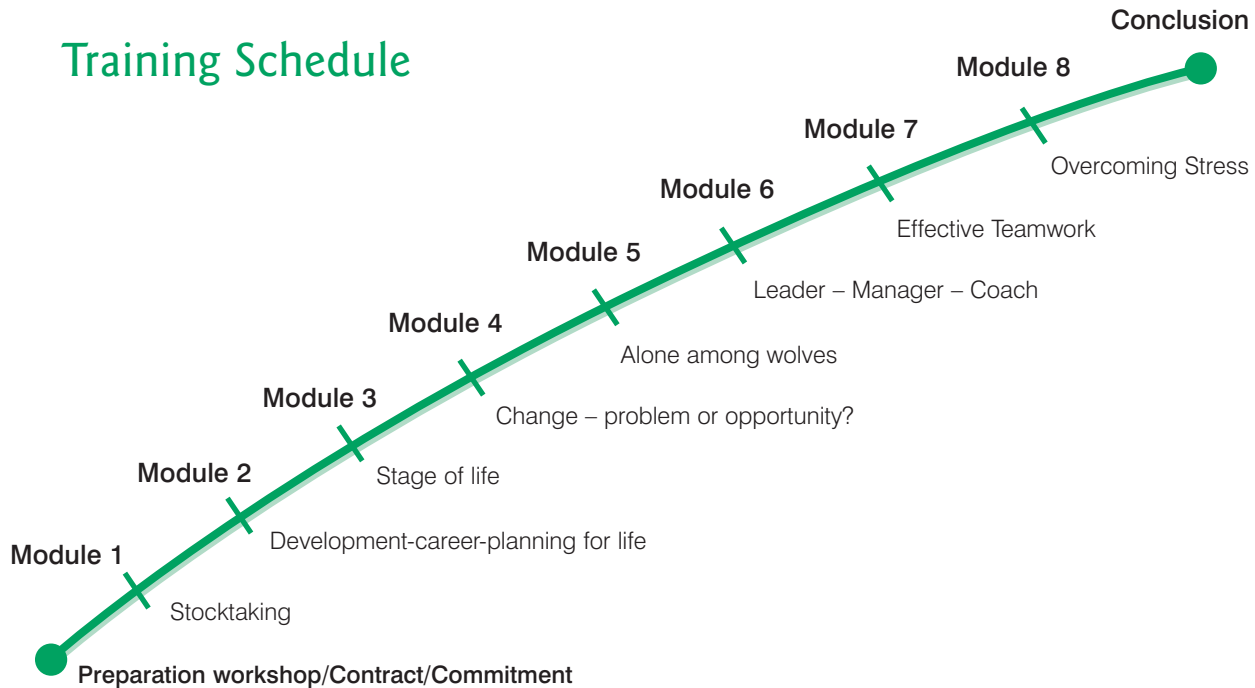
A 1-day preparation workshop is held for mentees and mentors which outlines the programme and EQUAL, the setting of goals, the structure of the programme, learning concepts, roles of the mentor and mentee, and expectations. Mentees and mentors meet for the first time to start their mentoring relationship after this workshop.

They are advised on the structure of their meetings, for example what might be covered as the relationship progresses. The aims of these meetings are the professional and personal promotion of the mentee by the mentor. The minimum amount of time spent on mentoring is 2 hours per month, and a formal working contract is agreed between the mentee and mentor covering where to meet, how much time is required, frequency of meetings, how to contact each other, and the meeting agenda.

Training units are offered on a number of areas including expectations and target definition, networking, effective teamwork (2 days), emotional intelligence a female strength?, career planning, overcoming stress, time management and dealing with conflict. The table on page 21 shows a typical training plan, over a 14-month period.

Mentors are also supervised by the trainers throughout the mentoring process to ensure that the relationship runs smoothly. Networking is encouraged throughout the duration of the programme and the mentees may decide to extend these networks e.g. by attending social events with other managers of Deutsche Telekom.

Training Schedule



Project Team

Members of the Deutsche Telekom Mentoring Steering Group:

Project Manager
 Co-ordinator
 Trainer
 Scientific Evaluator
 Sponsor/Patron

Regular meetings are held in Berlin to provide a report and update on the programme. Mentees and mentors can always contact members of the project team. Co-ordinators meet the mentee's line manager several times during the mentoring relationship to discuss her personal development.



Marlis Brunk, mentee, and Ilona Matthei, mentor

Case study

Marlis Brunk is a mentee in the Deutsche Telekom mentoring programme. She works in the Innovative Internet Products and Projects Department as the Vice Head of Department, and has just become a Group Leader. She sees the mentoring programme as a personal and professional development opportunity.

“Through the mentoring programme I meet many different women from different divisions, who are all doing different jobs in various areas within Deutsche Telekom. One to one relationships are quite unusual, and it provides a safe working environment for personal development in my professional field, allowing me time for deep reflection and discussion.

In my recent new role I really appreciated the opportunity to discuss leadership and personnel management with an experienced woman, and Ilona gave me some very valuable tips and ideas. She shared with me how she might deal with certain situations or gave different solutions to a problem. Whilst we are working in different areas of Deutsche Telekom, with different jobs, we both work with people and our ambitions are to be good, successful managers.

I don't want to become a 'new' person, I want to be individual and develop my own strong points. The work with my mentor and through the meetings with other mentees, supports me toward this aim.”

Her mentor Ilona Matthei, is Head of Department in the Mobile Division in Berlin, and they have found living in the same area to be very useful for arranging face-to-face meetings every two months. They also communicate by telephone and email. Meeting agendas are planned in advance allowing both to prepare beforehand but with the flexibility of allowing for other urgent questions to be raised if needed. Both appreciate the fact that they do not work in the same department allowing for a more relaxed mentoring atmosphere.

Ilona's view of the relationship is “I compare our relationship with a tandem: Marlis sits at the front and decides where to go, and I'm at the back to give support. This programme isn't an automatic guarantee for her to be promoted to the next level, but the networking and the fact that through her involvement in the programme she is showing that she wishes to develop, will help her career.”

Evaluation

Throughout the duration of the programme, a group of scientific evaluators check the participant's impressions of the programme through several interviews, including the views of the trainer. The following areas are evaluated:

- Personal goals
- Expectations
- Motivation
- Personal development
- Relationship work
- Quality of training units and supervision
- Networking
- General conditions

The evaluation is presented at project group meetings.

Daniella Fricke-Stangenberg, T-Mobile

“Netwek(en); für mich persönlich hat es im Rahmen von EQUAL einen besonderen Stellenwert eingenommen. Lernen von anderen, von der Unterschiedlichkeit der Mentee-Persönlichkeiten zu profitieren, durch die Position meiner Mentorin neue Sichtweisen aufgezeigt zu bekommen und von ihr und ihren Erfahrungen zu lernen.”

“Networks and Networking are highly regarded within the EQUAL Project. What does it mean to me? To learn from each other by meeting new people and learning from their experiences and I learn a lot from my female mentor. She shows me new ways of doing something, or a different perspective through her position in the company and her experience.”

Berlin EQUAL Cross-Mentoring

Another mentoring programme funded by EQUAL involves other Berlin companies, such as banks and insurance companies, governmental organisations and NGO's, with Deutsche Telekom being the lead partner. The cross mentoring concept is to learn from other companies, with mentors and mentees working in different companies to each other. The aim is to exploit the women's full potential, to encourage dialogue between different generations and levels of seniority, to familiarise oneself with other corporate cultures, and to facilitate comparisons between companies.

Breaking the Barriers

Participants are seen as the “ambassadors” of a company. Absolute confidence and discretion is required during the programme, and for the following two years it is not permitted to apply for a job in the “partner” company.

The programme was launched with 15 pairs in July 2004 and will run until June 2005.

End of programme

Effective relationships may continue even after the official mentoring programme has finished. It is the decision of the participants whether to continue to work together or not.

The mentee network will continue to exist if the mentees wish it to. As they will be prospective senior managers, it is possible that they will participate as mentors in future programmes. The project group keeps in contact with mentees and mentors through networking.

Kathi Miercke, T-COM

“Durch das Mentoring-Programm wurde ich angeregt, mir konkrete Gedanken über mich zu machen, z.B. wo stehe ich und wo will ich hin/ Weiterführend habe ich Anregungen erhalten, wie ich mein Ziel erreichen kann.”

“The mentoring programme encouraged me to clarify where I am now, where I want to go and how I will get there.”

Petra Lansky, T-Systems

“Während des Mentoring-Programms habe ich mehr über mein Fremdbild gelernt und bin in den Präsentationen und Selbstdarstellungen sicherer geworden.”

“What I learnt during the mentoring programme was more the question how do other people see me? In presentations at work I am much more self-confident now, and also in my over all presentation of myself.”



LIFE e.V., Berlin, Germany,

is an education provider for female students and school leavers, and for adult women. LIFE gives support and encouragement for training and employment in non-traditional job areas in science, engineering, technology and skilled crafts through a wide range of activities: taster courses for schoolgirls, vocational guidance to promote non-traditional careers, training in skilled crafts such as electrical installation, use of sustainable energy, courses to improve self marketing, and project management.

In the EQUAL-development partnership of “Gender mainstreaming in the information society”, LIFE e.V. is piloting one project to improve girl’s and women’s access to non-traditional areas of training and employment, covering many activities and target groups. Our Take TWO Mentoring is one of these activities.

Background and aims of the Take TWO Mentoring Programme

This programme is designed for young women who are already working in a non-traditional career, and who are enrolled on a 3½ year vocational training scheme (see explanation of the German dual system below). They often risk dropping out, partly due to the barriers of being a female in a male dominated area.

Barriers, such as the gender stereotyped attitudes and patterns of behaviour of colleagues, teachers and trainers, and sometimes self-stereotyping (devaluing their own achievements), prevent the young women from reaching their true potential and the full range of their competences.

These apprentices, who are in the minority in the training and learning environment, are supported through our Take TWO mentoring programme, which is the only mentoring scheme for this target group and specific area of focus in Germany (although there are many other mentoring programmes for women in management positions and female university students).

The German Dual System of Vocational Training is an option taken by the majority of secondary education school leavers. This system is a combination of work-based training within a company, plus part-time attendance at a vocational school one day a week. There are approximately 400 state-recognised occupations and the dual system is highly regarded throughout Germany.

The companies involved invest in their future workforce of skilled workers by fulfilling certain requirements, such as equipment, the training programme offered, and the technical and teaching skills of the trainers, in order to be accepted as a provider in the dual system.

Approach

We chose a role model approach, based on a contract showing the commitment of the mentee and the mentor to work and learn together. Our mentoring is designed as cross mentoring with a trainee from one company being matched with a woman from another company employed in a professional field similar or identical to the mentee's apprenticeship. In one case the most suitable match was within the same company.



Mentors, mentees and LIFE co-ordinators of the Take TWO Mentoring Programme in Berlin

Objectives

The overall aim of the Take TWO mentoring scheme is to raise the numbers of women in technical jobs. The specific aim of our project is to help and encourage young women who have chosen a non-traditional vocational training course, to stay with their choice and to continue with a career in a technical field of work.

This includes supporting the female trainees;

- to develop a professional identity as a female technician
- to become aware of their strengths and potential, and to use these fully in their work environment
- to cope with some of the difficulties (and appreciate some of the benefits) they may encounter throughout their non-traditional career
- to reflect on their experience and learn from it
- to network with other young women and trainees in a similar situation

We also want to encourage the mentors to build networks and improve their management skills in personal or staff development.

Recruitment and Matching

The recruitment of mentors involved an intensive two-month search in Berlin for suitably qualified women in crafts, IT and technical professions, also having at least one year's professional experience. They had to be willing to commit to three meetings (a kick-off, midterm, and final meeting) and to get in contact with their mentee at least every six weeks or so throughout the mentoring relationship. As there are so few women in these areas it was difficult to identify them. Once their commitment had been gained they were interviewed in depth either by telephone or in person, and they were also asked to complete a questionnaire.

The matching was based on a written questionnaire giving information on the vocational field, when they were trained, aspirations, job experience (what and how long), their motivation to take part in the programme, and their hobbies. The second important source of information was two separate information events (about 3 hours each) for potential mentors and mentees. Our observations and impressions concerning patterns of behaviour and communication during these two evenings, together with the questionnaires and photographs, formed a solid basis for the matching. This was done by three people. The most important criteria were similar vocational background, specific career interests of the mentee, and personality of both the mentee and the mentor.

Duration and size

The programme started in June 2004 and is going to last until February 2005. If the programme is successful, we will look at starting a second tranche in Spring 2005. At the moment there are 10 pairs involved. The mentors and mentees come from small and medium sized enterprises as well as from large companies such as DaimlerChrysler, Deutsche Telekom and Rolls Royce. The training and job areas include the ICT sector, industrial metal and electrical work, and skilled crafts such as joinery.

Additional benefits of the programme

In addition to the one-to-one meetings with mentees and mentors, we are providing some extra benefits. For mentees, we offer a workshop to design a common website on the mentoring programme, a workshop on how to solve conflicts, and meetings in a café to support networking.

The informal networking events for the mentors in a café are highly appreciated, and additional training in listening skills, giving feedback, etc, is offered if required. A co-ordinator will monitor the 8-month programme, and a mid-term meeting for mentees and mentors will be arranged for evaluation and exchange. Further evaluation will be undertaken in their final meeting by completion of a questionnaire by both mentors and mentees, and all feedback throughout the programme will be collected and assessed.

Some of the issues faced

1. recruitment of mentors: since there are so few women in technical and crafts jobs, the recruitment of mentors took up a great deal of time and effort, especially in bigger companies where contacts were made through the intervention of the work council or the person responsible for equal opportunities.

2. recruitment of mentees: our Take TWO mentoring is part of a bigger project which supports vocational trainees in many different ways (e.g. workshops to become a “Technology Ambassador” in schools). This made access to the mentees much easier. Nevertheless we faced some unexpected difficulties. Female trainees of some bigger companies could not easily be motivated, either because they do not have enough time for any additional activity or because their trainers believe they solve any problems arising internally. Therefore, some trainers who were asked for support to find a mentee were quite reluctant to agree to our mentoring, maybe feeling “devalued”. The trainers sometimes also fear that the trainees might give away some critical features about their training to another company via the mentors.

3. training: we decided not to organise the training in advance. We were afraid of losing the mentors before they have even got the chance to begin. Instead we gave all participants an introduction to the roles of mentors and mentees, and the benefits as well as the pitfalls in a mentoring relationship. Instead of emphasising the necessity of training before acting as a mentor, we encouraged the mentors to rely on the value of their own experience as a woman in a male dominated career and to pass on their knowledge and learning to the mentees. However, it may be helpful in the future to offer some modules about listening and questioning skills, giving feedback and other useful skills.

For the mentees the right attitude towards the mentoring seems to be the crucial point: self-responsibility, to be active and ambitious, to take the initiative.

One idea is to integrate small learning modules into the agenda of information evenings to be organised for both groups.

Evaluation

The evaluation will deliver practice-oriented knowledge about the strengths and weaknesses of our programme. Some key questions will be:

- Is one-to-one mentoring a suitable approach for young trainees (mentees) and also for young “skilled workers” (mentors)?
- Is the programme an effective tool for companies to prevent female trainees from dropping out?
- Does it help to make the trainees feel more comfortable in their professions (strengthen their identity as a technician)?
- What are the benefits for the mentees and the mentors?

Factors affecting the programme/ lessons learnt:

- Mentors: all the mentors we recruited want to support younger women because they themselves wished they had a mentor sometimes! This shows that being a woman in a technical job is not easy – nevertheless some younger women will not allow themselves to think like that, they are often very tough!
- Mentees: it is quite a challenge to motivate them for mentoring and show them how they can benefit. You have to overcome prejudices such as “I don’t need a babysitter”, “I can do everything on my own” “I am strong enough” It is also very important to make sure that the mentees are not forced to participate. The programme must be voluntary and the mentees should have an idea why they are taking part.
- Companies who are already used to the culture of mentoring and/or are committed to equal opportunities in general are much easier to “get on board”. (e.g. Deutsche Telekom).

Case Study

Stefanie Hruza, 20 years old, metal worker in her third year of training in Berlin, Germany.



Barbara Blume and Steffi Hruza

“I have been a mentee in the Take TWO mentoring programme with LIFE e.V. for only a few months, and at first I didn’t think I would like it very much. However, I have found it very interesting to meet other mentors and mentees and find out how their relationships are working. I am very pleased about the way in which my own relationship is developing, and we talk about things in our private life as well as work. My mentor give me hints and tips on the vocational training and work life from her own experiences, and she is very good.”

Barbara Blume, 40 years old, Design Engineer at Rolls Royce’s Jet Engine Plant, Dahlewitz near Berlin, Germany.

“In my personal opinion you don’t just need mentoring to become a manager, you need it for all roles. Questions such as; what opportunities are there for me with my current education? who can I speak to about possible routes in my career? is there someone I can speak to who has experienced similar situations? are all questions you expect from a mentee. However, when they have chosen a non-traditional, male dominated area more typical questions might be; how should I deal with prejudices from my colleagues, family or friends? how do I manage a career and a family?”

I am really happy being a mentor in the Take TWO mentoring programme, and with my mentee as we get on well together and she listens to my advice, and considers and discusses it freely and openly. She also has a lot of interesting stories to tell. Even in the short time we have known each other I trust her decisions, and she honestly gives feedback on what she thinks is good and bad in our relationship, and that of others.”



Finland

WomenIT, Oulu University, Finland is a development, training and research project co-ordinated by the Kajaani and Oulu Universities, and funded by EQUAL. The project was launched at the end of 2001 and is to end in Spring 2005.

The aims of WomenIT

The aims are to promote desegregation in working life, and to move away from male and female dominated careers. WomenIT (Women in Industry and Technology) operate in early childhood education, schools, secondary level colleges, polytechnics, universities, companies and labour market organisations.

WomenIT run courses, study clubs, research and development activities, and mentoring to inspire girls and women to work in technology, and to encourage them to advance their careers.

“Jotta teknologia ei syrjäytyisi naisista”

Technology: don't leave women on the sidelines!

“Mentoroinnilla on monet kasvot – Sinunkin?”

(Mentoring has many faces – Yours also?)

Recruitment and target group

The mentoring programme included working women, school students from upper secondary schools, undergraduates, and the use of role model interviews published on the website.

The working women participating in the adult mentoring started later, and were from any sector and usually from a managerial position, or had more work experience than their mentee. They were mainly recruited through the use of women's association distribution lists.

The school students were mentored by university undergraduates from the faculty of technology, and were recruited by the local school teachers and lecturers. They later participated in peer mentoring.

Other effective recruitment methods included personal contacts of project personnel and newspaper advertising.

Duration and size of programme

Local school girls were mentored by university graduates from the faculty of technology. 20 school girl mentees were matched with 9 mentors and these relationships ran from October 2002 to November 2003.

Six adult mentoring pairs participated in mentoring relationships for 8 months, from January to September 2003.

Net mentoring in the form of role model interviews published on the web will continue until the end of the project in 2005, with over 20 women showcased so far.

Training and results

Consultant Tuulikki Juusela of Womco Oy (www.womco.fi) was chosen as an external trainer for the adult mentoring programme. Ms Juusela has several years' experience of mentoring in different work areas. The WomenIT adult mentoring programme was purposely made relaxed and informal with little need for administration. They were invited to a starting day and final celebration day eight months later. A few other informal events were included such as lunch time meetings and going to the theatre together. The six pairs were asked to meet monthly between these events.

An outcome of this pilot programme was that it could have been more formalised and with more group meetings, and this feedback will be used in future mentoring programmes. Of the six pairs some were more successful than others with everyone sharing the concern about finding time to mentor together.

In the peer mentoring, the pairs were introduced to each other under the guidance of Aila Kupiainen, a teacher at the Suomussalmi High School 6th Form. Most of the mentors were her ex-students, now studying technology, and the mentees were current students of the Suomussalmi 6th Form.

The training day included an introduction from WomenIT at the University of Oulu. In addition to this introduction day, the year-long programme included one to one meetings between the matched pairs, communication by e-mail, excursions to companies, studying the net mentors' stories and, as an end of programme meeting, a trip to Stockholm was arranged (see case study). Although not all the mentees became interested in technology, they all learnt a lot about it throughout the year including being involved in technological tasks and exercises.

Issues and challenges

Whilst there is general interest in mentoring in Finland, especially in universities and polytechnics, it is not so well known in the work place. Some organisations, especially state institutions, have yet to find ways of funding mentoring, but new mentoring programmes have been launched for women in non-traditional areas as a result of the WomenIT Project.

“Kun on elänyt, pitää myös jakaa”

**(Once I have experienced, I have to share it –
from a mentor to a mentee)**

Case study



Mentor Taimi Kinnunen guiding her mentee Mirka Tyni in the building of a solar panel powered car

The Technology Girls of WomenIT, in Stockholm

The final meeting of the peer-mentoring programme was an excursion to Stockholm, the capital of Sweden, made in November 2003. The trip, by bus and boat, took the participants to the Science Centre's TomTit Experiment, the Museum of Technology, the Museum of Natural History, and to the industrial high school sponsored by Scania car manufacturers in Södertälje, in which there are very few women. WomenIT paid for the whole trip.

It was a very interesting trip with the mentees asking a lot of questions. "I have found that some of my mentees have a certain aptitude and interest in studying technology and science." says Katri Kynkäänniemi, a technology student herself, who is in her third year of studying process technology at Oulu University.

The net mentors are female engineers who are interviewed by WomenIT and change every month. They talk about their work and life and it is an excellent way for other women to learn what is involved in being a female engineer. Katri Kynkäänniemi, mentor, says "I have images of successful women in technology in my mind, and this has given me renewed motivation to do well."

Aila Kupiainen, who ran this mentoring programme, tells us that it has been fairly difficult to motivate girls to study technology; attitudes are fairly deeply rooted by the time the girls reach the 6th Form. Through the WomenIT mentoring programme it has been possible to present female role models working within the field of technology through mentoring and by other means. Motivating girls into technology is very challenging.

Kupiainen led the WomenIT project in the Suomussalmi High School 6th Form, and this consisted of four courses:

- **Electronics** – the students built programmable devices for legologo sets.
- **Getting Acquainted with Industry and Research** – the mentoring programme was part of this course.
- **Technology in Practice** – included servicing a car, welding and building, and was done in conjunction with a local vocational school.
- **Information Technology.**

In total more than 20 girls participated in these courses which is a remarkable achievement as there are only 60 students in this age group. The mentoring part has been the most popular, as the girls have been able to visit companies not only in Kainuu, but also in Oulu and Stockholm. These courses could not have been run from the school resources, but we have been able to do this through the assistance of EQUAL.



The Technology girls at the Scania car factory

Conclusion

Whether you are currently running a mentoring programme or planning a new one, we hope that you have found this booklet interesting and useful.

Our transnational partnership has highlighted to us that mentoring can be of value in a wide range of situations and organisations, but that the mentee needs are always of paramount importance in any programme. It is important to be flexible in your approach to your mentoring programme and to appreciate that there can be no 'one-size-fits-all' approach. Therefore, you need to carefully assess the programme's objectives, and then design it around these to meet the needs of both the individuals and organisations involved.

We have seen that mentoring can be the developmental type as used by JIVE, LIFE e.V. and WomenIT, where mentees volunteer to be mentored and develop themselves in a relationship, usually with someone outside their workplace and always off-line. In comparison Deutsche Telekom uses sponsorship mentoring where mentees are backed by their manager who helps them to 'climb' the career ladder through networking and signposting.

This transnational partnership has been of significant value to all participating projects and has shown how different approaches can be used to identify and achieve good practice, and overcome issues and barriers.

Please contact the partners of the project for more information and to share your own ideas and practice to challenge the barriers faced by girls and women across Europe.

Key Words And Meanings

Gender sensitivity – what are we really talking about?

This is a short guide to the meaning of some of the terms used when we discuss occupational segregation

Equal Opportunities

There is no single definition of the term "equal opportunities". "**Equal opportunities**" means the prevention, elimination or regulation of discrimination between persons on grounds of sex or marital status, on racial grounds, or on grounds of disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or of other personal attributes, including beliefs or opinions, such as religious beliefs or political opinions. More broadly, the term relates to fair and equal access to all services, employment, and information for all people, and an equal chance for all to fulfil their potential.

In the context of training, education and career choices, "equal opportunities" can be taken to mean:

- Equal provision of services for all people, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation and disability;
- Awareness of the difficulties that some groups can face and ensuring that any obstacles to them are removed;
- Awareness of personal prejudices and stereotypical views and avoidance of labels related to these;
- Recognition of the equal worth of each person.

Gender Equality

Gender equality means that the different behaviours, aspirations and needs of women and men are equally valued. In addition to this, equality means the equal distribution of labour both in the private sphere of home and family and in the public sector which consists of the labour market and political decision making.

Sex

Sex is thought to consist of biological features that are connected to procreation. Sex separates human beings into men and women.

Gender

Gender refers to masculine/feminine or a gender role that is lived and culturally produced. It is also used to refer to those social differences and relations between men and women that are culturally learned, that change with time and differ both within cultures and between them.

Sex / Gender Roles

The concept of sex roles refers to expected behaviour. Sex roles are constructed in the institutions and structures of society and they are primarily not characteristics of an individual.

Gender Stereotypes

Gender stereotypes are simplifications or, in other words, stereotyped or old-fashioned beliefs about what men and women in general are like. Gender stereotyping emphasises the likeness/similarities of women as well as the likeness/similarities of men and diminishes the differences between individuals of both genders.

Gender Sensitivity

Gender sensitivity refers to taking into consideration the central meaning of a gender perspective. In practice, it is used to refer to the ability to recognise the dissimilarity and differences of men and women in, for example, ways of communicating and in relation to financial and political power and justice. It means the ability to listen and observe the dissimilarity of men and women in different situations.

Gender Blindness and Gender Neutrality

The opposite of gender sensitivity is gender blindness in which the differences between genders are neither recognised nor acknowledged. In gender neutral actions, the differences between genders are admitted but their meaningfulness is denied. The norm of both approaches is the male. Gender neutrality is typical, for example, in Scandinavian culture in which an illusion about an already realised and complete gender equality prevails.

The Segregation of Labour Markets according to Gender

The segregation of labour markets according to gender means the concentration of men and women into different and different-level tasks and professions. The position of men and women in the working life is universally different. Women are over-represented on the lower levels of the working life whereas men are, correspondingly, over-represented in the leading positions.

Positive Action

The term positive action refers to a variety of measures designed to counteract the effects of past discrimination and to help eliminate sex stereotyping. Positive action encouragement may include directing recruitment towards areas where women are under represented, publishing advertisements for vacancies which specifically encourage applications from women, or from women and from black and ethnic minority applicants, or providing taster days for women.

Thanks to Marjo Riitta Tervonen, WomenIT & Natalie Sappleton, EOC

References and Resources

Great Britain

Watts, A. G. (2001) Career Education for Young People; Rationale and Provision in the UK and Other European Countries, in International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance, Vol. 1: 209-222.

www.eoc.org.uk The Equal Opportunities Commission is the leading agency working to eliminate sex discrimination in 21st Century Britain.

www.shu.ac.uk/schools/sed/witbe Women into the Built Environment is a project aimed at promoting more women into the built environment, hosted at Sheffield Hallam University, UK

www.setwomenresource.org.uk the UK Resource Centre for Women in SET is funded by the UK Government to promote best practice in the recruitment, retention and progression of women in SET and the built environment.

http://letstwist.bradfordcollege.ac.uk a Bradford College based initiative that aims to encourage, motivate, inspire women and girls to choose engineering, construction or technology as a career.

www.careerseurope.co.uk Is the UK national resource for European Careers information. The project found on the site called Gendernet (www.gendernet.at) is the European Network for Assessment, Validation and Dissemination of Gender Mainstreaming Strategy in Vocational Guidance and Qualification.

Finland

www.womenit.info Women in Industry and Technology, Finland is a development, training and research project co-ordinated by the University of Oulu / Kajaani University Consortium.

Germany

www.life-online.de Life e.V., Germany is an education provider for female students and school leavers, and for adult women.

www.fczb.de FCZB is the Women's Computer Centre in Berlin.

France

www.feminin-technique.com Feminin Technique is an association promoting equal chances in training and technical jobs for men and women.

JIVE Partners, GB



JIVE Partners is a national partnership of organisations, which aims to break down gender segregation in the science, engineering, construction and technology sectors by developing and piloting new approaches, which tackle the barriers preventing women from pursuing careers in these sectors. The JIVE (Joint Interventions) Partners are part funded by the European Social Fund under the EQUAL Community Initiative Programme.

UK Resource Centre for Women in SET 0044 1274 436485
setwomenresource@bradfordcollege.ac.uk www.setwomenresource.org.uk

Deutsche Telekom



As one of the biggest telecommunications providers in Europe, Deutsche Telekom employs approx. 248,000 workers (end of 2003). Around a third of them work in subsidiaries and shareholdings outside Germany. Deutsche Telekom AG is represented in 65 countries around the globe. The Group is committed to the principles of sustainability and uses economic, as well as social and ecological criteria as the basis for its actions.

Equal opportunities and diversity are important aims for Deutsche Telekom and a permanent part of its corporate culture. The mentoring programme specifically appeals to up-and-coming female managers and aims to increase their number at higher levels. It offers mentees and mentors the chance to build up new networks.

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LIFE e.V.



LIFE e.V., Germany is an education provider for female students and school leavers, and for adult women. LIFE gives support and encouragement for training and employment in non-traditional job-areas in science, engineering, technology and skilled crafts through a wide range of activities: taster courses for schoolgirls, vocational guidance to promote non-traditional careers, training in skilled crafts such as electrical installation, use of sustainable energy, courses to improve self marketing, and project management.

Martina Kretschmann Barbara Schöler-Macher 0049 30 308798 15 www.life-online.de

WomenIT, Finland



WomenIT - Women in Industry and Technology, Finland, is a development, training and research project co-ordinated by the University of Oulu/Kajaani University Consortium, and funded by EQUAL. The operational remit of WomenIT includes early childhood education, schools, secondary level colleges, polytechnics, universities, companies and labour market organisations. In these organisations over 40 different study clubs, courses, training and research or development activities are offered to help to inspire girls and women to work in the technology industries, and to encourage them to advance in their careers. The project was launched at the end of 2001 and is to end in Spring 2005.

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