Training lifelong learning staff

Guidelines on training people to write documents
that are easy to read and understand

Produced in the framework of the project
Pathways to adult education for people with intellectual disabilities

Partners of the project
"Pathways to adult education
for people with intellectual disabilities"
wrote another 3 brochures:

To download them: www.life-long-learning.eu

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Introduction

This brochure gives advice to training teachers
on how to write documents which are easy to read and understand.
Easy to read and understand documents are important
for people with intellectual disabilities and many other people.
This is why all teachers need to know how to write them.

We have made this brochure itself easy to read and understand.
We did this because some trainers of the teachers
should be persons with intellectual disabilities themselves.
People with intellectual disabilities know best what is good for them.
So they would be very good trainers for teachers.
But they need this brochure in easy-to-read format.

We have made this brochure as part of a project
that took place in Europe.

People from 8 European countries met several times
to write this brochure.

The project which brought these people together was called
"Pathways to adult education
for people with intellectual disabilities".

Adult education is also called lifelong learning.
Lifelong learning programmes are courses
where adults can learn new things.

At the moment, lifelong learning programmes are often hard
for people with intellectual disabilities to take part in.

The aim of this project is to make lifelong learning programmes easier
for people with intellectual disabilities to take part in.

What this brochure is about

It is important for teachers to prepare documents and presentations
that are accessible for students.

It is even more important when the students are adults,
because these adults may have very different abilities.
For example, some may speak different languages.
Or some may have done quite a lot of studying before, while others have not.

Sometimes, some of these adults may have an intellectual disability.
Then it is even more difficult for teachers
because they might not know how to present information
to people with intellectual disabilities.

This material was written to train teachers
on how to write easy-to-read documents.
This is important for people with intellectual disabilities,
but it is also important for all other students.

Setting up the framework

The trainers should be:
o experienced professionals
   who have worked before on easy-to-read documents.
o **and** people with intellectual disabilities.

Participants should be
teaching staff of lifelong learning programmes.

This training should take 1 or 2 days.
It can be good to plan further training after a while.
This would allow everyone to meet again
and to discuss how they are doing
with the writing of easy-to-read documents.

1. **Welcome**

2. **Introduction to the programme and general information**

   It is important for the participants to know
   o what they will do during the day,
   o when there will be lunch or coffee breaks,
   o if they will split into smaller groups at some points.

   > Tips:
   > 1. It is good if the programme is visible during the day
   >   so people can look at it whenever they want.
   > 2. Always try to stick to your schedule.
   >   For example, do not run a session longer than foreseen
   >   and then make the coffee break shorter!

   It is also important for the participants to know
   o where lunch and coffee breaks will take place,
   o where the toilets are
   o where the fire exits are in case of emergency.

3. **Who we are – who you are**

   Tell the participants about your background, your experiences.
   It is good for them to understand why you are the trainers
   and not somebody else.

   Also find out who the participants are.
   Why are they there?
   What do they hope to get out of this training?
   What is their background?
   What do they already know about easy-to-read?

   > Tips:
   > 1. Name tags are always very useful.
   > 2. You may want to do a quick game here already
   >   so participants remember each others names.

4. **What is intellectual disability**

   Explain what intellectual disability is.
   It is important that participants understand
   who they will be writing accessible material for.

**5. Why lifelong learning programmes are so important
for people with intellectual disabilities**

For people with intellectual disabilities, lifelong learning is not only about
learning new skills or vocational training.
It is about being included in society.
It is about being able to represent oneself
and to take more control of one's daily life and future.
This is why adult education is especially important
for this group of disabled adult learners.
But adult education is also important for these people
because they might need to practice their skills
more often than other people.

**6. Making lifelong learning programmes accessible:
producing easy-to-read information**

a. General background of easy to read information

Explain to your participants our fight over many years
to get accessible information.
Explain that many associations are working
on easy-to-read documents.
Explain the importance of self-advocacy associations in this regard.

**b. Why it is important for people with intellectual disabilities
to have easy to read and understand information
in today's society**

Explain why it is important
o By giving real life examples of how easy-to-read is useful
o By re-explaining the special needs of people with intellectual
  disabilities and therefore the importance of developing special
  material
o By pointing out that this is written in the laws.
  Check if it is in one of your national law.
  If not, in any case, refer to article 9 and article 24 of
  the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People.
o By showing that "it is good for all and harms nobody"

They need to understand that accessible information is a right.
They need to know many people are fighting for this around Europe.

> Tip: you need good information to achieve something.
> To show this to participants, put them back to back in pairs
> and ask one of them to describe a simple drawing
> while the other one has to sketch it on a piece of paper.

c. What do we mean by "easy-to-read information"?

Here you could show some examples of easy-to-read texts.
You could also show some examples of not easy-to-read texts.
Then ask the participants what makes a text
easier to read and understand than the other.

> Tip: it is good
> if they can take these examples back home,
> in order to remember
> what an easy-to-read text should "look like".

d. How to make information easy to read and understand

Here you will need to present here the document
"European standards for making information
easy to read and understand".
Depending on the length of your seminar, you should present in more
or less detail some of the major criteria of this document

**e. How to check that
information produced is easy to read and to understand**

You should tell them about the checklist available on the internet.

You should refer to the document
"How to involve people with intellectual disabilities
in the writing of easy-to-read texts".

You should also speak here about the importance of proofreading
by people with intellectual disabilities.
You should give them some names and contacts
of people or organisations who can do this work for them.

7. Practical exercises

If you have time, you should ask the participants to give it a try.

For example, here is a fun exercise:
Ask people to explain "how to make a cup of coffee"
as simply as possible.
Compare their explanations.

Another good exercise can be
to work on material they are used to working with.
Lifelong learning staff could for example
present one of their favourite subjects
in easy to read and understand language.

8. **How to use easy-to-read in your everyday practice**

   Usually, lifelong learning staff are experienced teachers
   who have a lot of material already.

   It will be important to see what will change in their everyday practice
   after they have attended your seminar.

   Regarding old material they have already,
   discuss the possibility of translating it bit by bit into easy-to-read.
   Help them to find the most important information
   in cooperation with trained people with disabilities.

   Regarding new material they will develop in the future,
   promote the production of easy-to-read material directly!

9. **How to make your presentations accessible**

   Here you should present the document called
   "Teaching can be easy – Recommendations for lifelong learning staff
   to make their courses accessible".

10. **Specific criteria for making e-information easy to read and understand**

    One of the things to show them here is the importance of using audio and video tools.

11. **Resources**

    It will be helpful for the future work of your participants
    if you give them the names and contacts of organisations
    which will be able to help them.

    You should also provide them with some technical aid.
    For example
    o computer programmes to write easy-to-read texts,
    o image databases,
    o websites with symbols and pictures
       which are free or which you have to pay for.

12. **Evaluation**

    It is important for a trainer to know
    what the trainees thought about the training.

    This will help you to make it even better next time.

The leading organisation of the project was Inclusion Europe.
9 other partners were also involved:

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Inclusion Europe

The European association
of people with intellectual disabilities and their families.

Inclusion Europe is a non-profit organisation.
We campaign for the rights and interests of people with
intellectual disabilities and their families.
Our members are national organisations from 36 countries.

People with intellectual disabilities are citizens of their country.
They have an equal right to be included in society,
whatever the level of their disability.
They want rights, not favours.
People with intellectual disabilities have many gifts and abilities.
They also have special needs.
They need a choice of services to support their needs.

Inclusion Europe focuses on three main policy areas:
• Human Rights for people with intellectual disabilities
• Inclusion in society
• Non-discrimination

Inclusion Europe co-ordinates activities in many European countries,
including projects, conferences, working groups and exchange meetings.
It responds to European political proposals
and provides information about the needs of people with intellectual disabilities.
Inclusion Europe advises the European Commission
and members of the European Parliament on disability issues.

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