

THE LABS RESULTS IN:

CATALONIA, ES

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LABORATORIO DE COOPERACION EMPRESARIAL - SECTOR TIC - “TKS”

	N. SESSIONS	N. PARTICIPANTS	AIMS	ACHIEVEMENTS
Labs for 2 nd tier facilitators	1	12 (managers of regional and local development agencies: CAN CALDERON, CIREM PIMEC, training centres: ASCAMM consultancy firms)	To introduce AL tools and methods To present the facilitator's role	Successfull <i>evangelization</i> on AL-based facilitation for dinamization of co-operation processes High degree of satisfaction among participants Real impact on everyday work in the more mature participating structures: COPCA: redefinition of the way in which they manage and moderate Business Communities ASCAMM: application of methodologies to project's preparation and management EADA/CIREM [+ D-O-T]: jointly process to merge AL with own <i>investigation-action</i> methodology CAN CALDERON: attempt to apply AL principles to their entrepreneurial community at Viladecans
Labs for SMEs	6	5 (group of small IT companies specialized in Open Source development)	To define a start-up strategy around the question: <i>what goes first? To acquire one project together or to create a new company?</i>	to generate confidence, credibility and engagement among participants; to initiate de-construction of pre-concepts; to agree a series of to-does (co-responsibility) to clarify different aspects related to the projected new company or brand to identify an alternative start-up strategy to the two possible ones pre-defined before initiating the Lab

TOOLS AND METHODS	LABS FOR 2ND TIER FACILITATORS	LABS FOR SMES
Main tools used	Warming-up / Ice-breaking methods Moderation as a role The five satisfactions (stakholder analysis) Customer / Supplier needs analysis and planning Chairing vs. Moderating To-do form Visualisation helps to understand and remember SWOT analysis Cause effect diagrams Force field analysis Countdown planning <i>2 additional tools selected to meet participants' interests</i>	The five satisfactions (stakholder analysis) Customer / Supplier needs analysis and planning Brainstorming + Mindmapping To-do form SWOT Analysis Countdown planning Tasks/Skills Matrix ... and improvisation !!

Overall evaluation on Labs for 2ns tier facilitators:

- Moderation: being the participants potential facilitators already animating networks, communities or partnerships, it was relatively easy to moderate the group (the unique conflictive participant was progressively neutralized) and lead it through the programmed learning path
- Technical aspects: HWF experience make them irreproachable
- Tools and messages: a wide menu of messages and tools was transmitted to participants, allowing them to try “hands-on” the methodology; a pair of additional tools were added “on-the-fly” in order to match participant’s interests
- Learnshop: participants were fully satisfied in their expectations; we could verify that some of them have started to produce changes in their working environments as a consequence of internalizing AL principles

Narration

The first day the negative attitude of one participant made me worry about; fortunately, the group did not give any support to him and he accepted the rules of the game.

A learnshop for colleagues willing to learn is quite different (and more grateful) than for entrepreneurs that thought to be wasting their precious time

We realised that having bought the largest kit was unnecessary!!

Personal feedback

This learnshop was a fully satisfying experience

Overall evaluation on the Labs for SMEs

- Moderation: the characteristics of the participants (entrepreneurs more oriented to action than to reflection, habituated to assume risks and take decisions alone) made the facilitation difficult; however we managed to lead the process in a constructive way, facilitating the collaboration and conducting the debate to common agreements.
- Technical aspects: unclear writing, low use of cards and inadequate use of surfaces for visualization at the beginning were improved and corrected during the following lab’s sessions
- Tools and messages: they were selected and applied accordingly to work’s need, even if the characteristics of the participants sometimes prevented us to truly apply the AL methodologies

Narration

We managed to generate a real goal-oriented learning-by-doing process, the result of which was a new step given in the collaboration process initiated by these companies

Each time at the beginning of the lab we had to negotiate the agenda that we had previously defined and circulated because of the little time they have devoted to analyse it in advance and because of the real inputs (work's news between sessions) they were bringing each time

We had to learn to accept and deal with some negative characteristics of some of the participants: unpunctuality, self-centered thinking, etc

Personal feedback

The Lab had a non linear and unexpected evolution (each session there was a surprise) but satisfying results, as we managed to fully adapt to their working requirements, we had the opportunity to analyze together hypothetic and real situations, and they finally found (as a result of this learning process close linked to the evolution of their work) a third alternative to their original dichotomy thinking.

Lessons learned and recommendations

- On the application of these methodologies you must find your own balance between offering an appropriate framework for learning, well prepared in advance, clearly structured and respected during the activity, and the flexibility needed to attract participants and made them involve and engage.
- This flexibility should not be interpreted as improvisation; all the contrary, you are the one fixing the framework and proposing the rules (the agenda, etc) that you have carefully planned in advance
- The first lesson a facilitator should learn is to be objective enough to be able to mediate between the participants and himself!!
- Thinking on two levels (the evident and the latent) helps you to accept changing details without forgetting your final objective for the experience