



E.2	Standardised scoresheets for the evaluation and the awarding of the European Forest Fire Operators (EUFOs) after training course
MEFISTO	Mediterranean Forest Fire Fighting Training Standardization

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Standardised scoresheets for the evaluation and the awarding of the European Forest Fire Operators (EUFOs) after training course

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Executive summary

In deliverable D_E.1 of MEFISTO project, a harmonization of the training activities for the positions of responsibility available in all the participating countries has been carried out. This harmonization process allowed to define a set of standardised aims and minimum content of training activities, thus moving towards a common approach in terms of competences, skills and training activities at European level. Moreover, a common and new figure has been defined: the European Forest Fire Officer (EUFO). EUFO is a new figure who will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of transnational cooperation at EU level, being aware of the differences in forest fire organization in the different countries. In D_E.1 a specific training program for EUFO has been developed, and it will be tested in a special event organised in the framework of MEFISTO: the pilot training course for EUFO.

In this context, at the end of a training course, where an important operational figures is created, it is important to have an evaluation process able to give a feedback in terms of learning success. In this report the evaluation process structured in MEFISTO for operators attending the EUFO training course is described and reported. Concepts, structure and interpretation of results are explained to describe the importance and the efficiency of the evaluation protocol chosen.

1. Introduction

The training program for EUFO, obtained by a hard work of standardization and knowledge of training strategies existing in Europe, requires a final test at the end of the pilot training organised in the framework of MEFISTO project. Moreover, a final evaluation of trainees both during and at the end of a training course is fundamental in order to understand if the course has been well-implemented, and if trainees have effectively understood the main concepts, developing the planned skills. Focusing on EUFO training course, the main objective is to create a figure able to facilitate the exchange of resources between countries in case of need. In fact, during collaboration in forest fires, all the operators should understand clearly and easily the directives given by the Incident Commander, including the ones arrived as support from foreign countries. This is why the EUFO should well-know the fire fighting organization of other countries, being able to communicate in a common language, allowing an efficient and safe operation for all.

2. Concept behind the creation of MEFISTO Standardized scoresheets for EUFO evaluation (by Com. Franck-Emmanuel Dubois, ECASC)

Traditional time-based approaches to education have achieved different levels of success over the years, nevertheless it seems to be a less effective system when the goal is to train individuals to perform specific, job-related skills. Increased attention is being placed on competency-based education as a means for optimizing the preparation of professionals. Competency-based education (CBE) is a framework for designing and implementing education that focuses on the desired performance characteristics of professionals.

Training dispensed at the school of Valabre addresses professionals which possess for some already a significant experience. The courses did not bring an acceptable answer for these firefighters which returned at their home without real capital gain.

Competency-based education (CBE) provides a useful alternative to time-based models for preparing professionals and constructing educational programs. Although 'competence' has always been the implicit goal of more traditional educational frameworks, CBE makes this explicit by establishing observable and measurable performance metrics that learners must attain to be deemed competent.

The competency-based approach allows to share its own knowledge for the improvement of the knowledge of the group and thus to value all the actors of the training.

"Be able to act, succeed and progress which allows to realize adequately tasks, activities of professional or personal life, and which bases himself on organized group knowledges: knowledge and skills of diverse domains, strategies, perceptions, attitudes, etc."

The competency-based approach establishes a real interface between the world of the work and the world of training. Competency-based education necessitates a robust and multifaceted assessment system. Assessment and the judgements/evaluations that arise from it are both important at the level of trainee and trainers. CBE requires assessment processes that are criterion-based, developmental, work-based where possible, using assessment methods and tools that meet minimum requirements

for quality, through both quantitative and qualitative measures and methods in order to develop the awareness in making judgements about trainee progress.

For these reasons, the evaluation of the trainee candidates needs to be set at a higher level compared to traditional systems based on the judgement of the trainers or of a third person. CBE approach has highlighted the importance of self-assessment as an essential component of adult learning. In this optic, trainers and trainees should estimate together the reached level, in order to increase the awareness in the judgement process, highlighting strength and weakness of the training course.

3. What is the competency-based approach?

The competency-based approach is a philosophy of learning allowing every person to solve daily problems.

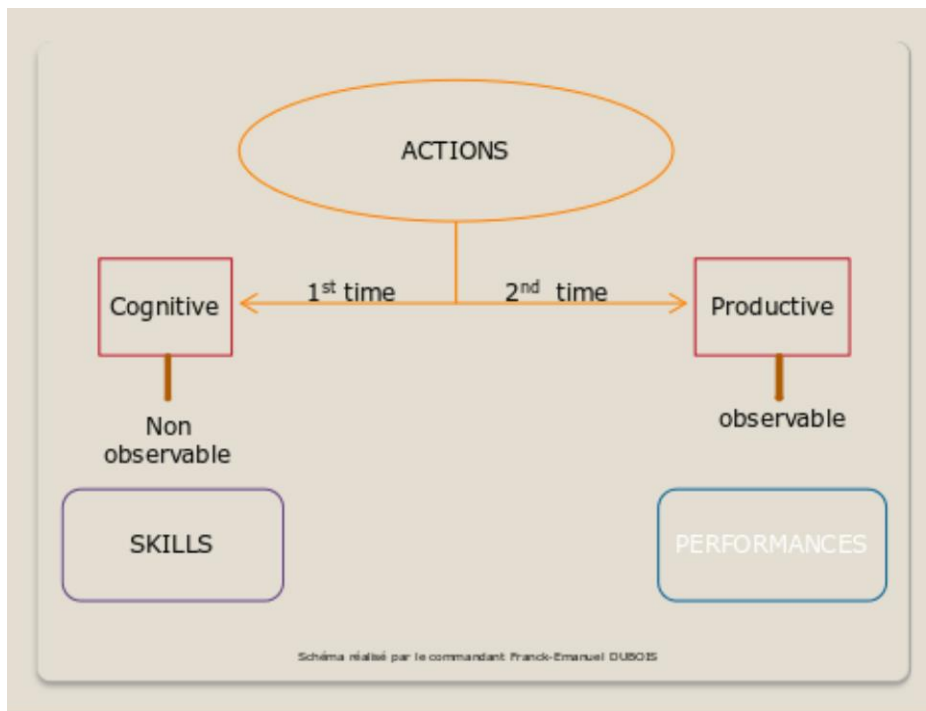


Figure 1: Competency-based education actions workflow scheme

The training is based on two different actions (Figure 1):

The action of training which is productive. We can observe it through the returns. The result of the training is the performance

The action of training which is cognitive. We cannot observe it, it is the skill. It will be returned in the framework of the management,...

The competency-based approach is based on the acquisition of the skill which will allow the good execution of the mission. This competence begins with the identification of useful knowledge (cognitive process - intellectual).

Any action is preceded by a reflection. This reflection, and what whatever is its duration, takes place in three stages:

OBSERVE: The person uses its senses to collect information

ANALYSE: The person formulate hypotheses by arguing from its observations, from its knowledge, its know-how, its professional and personal real-life experience.

DECIDE: The person chooses among the hypotheses and decides on an action.

The result of this reflection is called **the performance**.

4. Why will we use the competency-based approach?

The competency-based approach differs from the education (Figure 2) by its aim which is the exercise of a job efficiently in autonomy and its foundation which the job analysis.

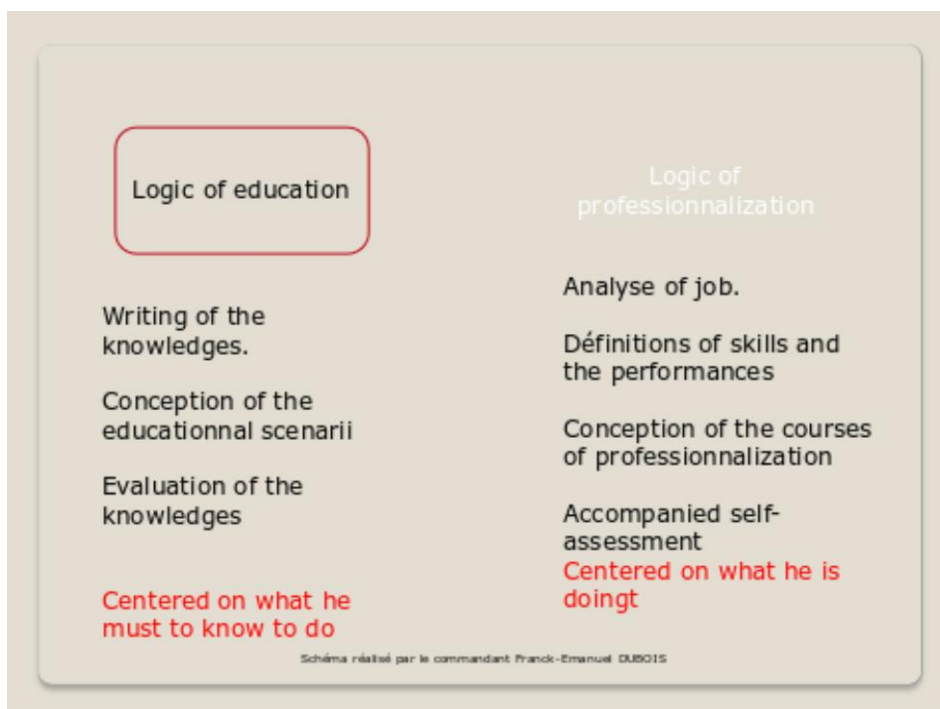


Figure 2: Comparison between education and professionalization.

- **Logic of education**
 - **Aim:** increase of the knowledge of the trainees
 - **Means:** disciplinary educational strategy based on the transmission of the knowledge (run, work in subgroup, demonstration, etc.).

Evaluation: statutory device conceived by the organization at the disposal of the teacher to check (control) the immediate acquisition of the knowledge (QMC (Questions Multiple Choices, etc.).

- **Trainer:** knowledge bringer.

- **Issues:** preservation of the knowledge as the main object of the professional success.
Association of the knowledge and the operating efficiency.

- **Logic of professionalization**

- **Aim:** exercise a job
- **Means:** Strategy based on the job analysis by the put into action of the individual resources of the learners.
- **Evaluation:** competence necessary for the exercise of the job to regulate or not its actions.
- **Trainer:** guide, analyse the facts of the other (coach).
- **General advantages:** development of the professional autonomy of the people; increase of the self-confidence.

Specific advantages:

- ✓ Increase the efficiency of every person;
- ✓ Increase the collective efficiency;
- ✓ Put the people in the centre of the system of professionalization;
- ✓ Train every person to all the missions of (operational and functional);
- ✓ Reduce the differences of representation between what the people believed to do and what they are really doing;
- ✓ Allow the people to learn only the knowledges dedicated to the missions
- ✓ Value the people
- ✓ Open up the statutory trainings

5. Rules of evaluation process and structure of created scoresheets

The evaluation process to be applied does not consider a classical final test to evaluate each candidate. In competency-based approach, evaluation is a competence every person needs to reach in order to manage its actions. To help the learner to understand (include) the success or not of its action, the trainer builds a moment of communication, during which, he drives the trainee in the understanding of the reasons of his action.

In fact, the evaluation is a process made during the entire training course, and it is self made by each trainee. At the beginning of the course a “Personal Notebook of Professionalization” is given to each trainee, who will have to compile it during the course, giving it back to organizers at the end of the activities. The Personal Notebook (see the ANNEX) is structured in tables, each one representing the main speeches faced during the lessons. The main topics are reported and several questions are prepared. The self-assessment is integrated into the notebook of individual follow-up throughout the training. The candidate has just to self-evaluate itself, defining the level of acquisition reached during the course on each topic reported in the table. Moreover, there are dedicated areas for observation and a plan of actions defined by the trainee itself, to improve the level of knowledge in case results have been not satisfactory.

This evaluation is not the self-satisfaction, the aim is to build the awareness needed to answer the following question:

Am I capable to correctly fulfil my future mission?

This is not an exercise, the life of my team can be at risk!

6. Evaluation process and interpretation of results

Through the self- assessment process, each trainee should be able to define the competency level reached for all of the topics reported in the personal notebook, comparing his evaluation both with the others candidates and trainers. The self-diagnosis point will increase the awareness level of the trainee driving him to the drafting of an action plan in order to design the right strategy to fulfil competency lacks, for example by attending again parts of the training course or asking for in-deep focused analysis of particular topics or checking the training materials.

The assessment grid is kept by the trainee and a copy will be archived by the training organization in order to guarantee transparency and traceability of the training.

7. ANNEX I – Scoresheet (attached .pdf)