DANDELION

Mentoring and coaching

Mentoring and coaching are used mainly for professional development and to encourage the transfer of knowledge from coach to the individual. Coaching and mentoring between EU-funded projects are highly beneficial ways to promote the success and growth of each project individually as well as together in the EU.

Skills that help to improve performance and gain reach can be taken away by project leaders so that they can more effectively develop and transfer knowledge. However, it is not simply for individual gain that sharing skills is important. Appropriate coaching and mentoring schemes create good working relationships between other project leaders and amongst those working on a project through improved communication that leads to more personal collaboration.

One excellent example of how to communicate through mentoring and coaching is through webinars. They are a great way to make audiences feel inspired and ready to act on what has been presented.

Why?

Webinars are services that allow real-time, multicast video conferencing or audio conferencing to occur when participants are coming from different, widely dispersed locations. They offer real-time connectivity and interaction between presenter, guests and audience.

Picking the right webinar format is important. As an example, DANDELION used a video studio setup hosted by a single presenter, with a Q&A section for audience members to get involved. However, other formats could be an interview Q&A-style with two speakers, or a panel discussion with numerous guests and a moderator, or even just an audio webinar with slides.

The benefit of DANDELION's webinar being video-based was that the audience was directly face-to-face with the presenter, who was shown to be the expert. Seeing the presenter makes a webinar seem more personal than many other forms of static or online communication. Audience participants also had the option to interact in real time by offering feedback live and asking questions. This immediate interaction and reaction is good for both the audience members, who get the information they want, and the experts, who get instant feedback on their work at the same time as becoming a more trusted source of information.

Webinars should be engaging, short, interesting and to the point, meaning presenters should avoid using overcomplicated explanations about their work. They are extremely convenient, too, as they can be shared with hundreds of people across the world, including experts, providing a sense of community that is vital for successful, long-lasting communication.

Webinars can help projects build a bigger audience and contact database as every webinar made attracts new delegates and each one registers their details. Guests can also serve as new contacts that can bring in new audiences, especially if they have their own followers.

Webinars can keep audiences engaged long after the end of live streaming if they are repeatedly posted and promoted online. This affords the webinar greater reach as it allows those who couldn't attend live to watch as well

How?

Webinars are an extremely cost-effective mentoring and coaching solution. Prices are low, with some DIY approaches completely free. In most cases, all you need is an internet connection.

Remember, when people are watching your webinar, they are at their desks in front of a computer so may be tempted to open other websites, check emails or continue with other work while you are speaking. To keep people engaged, use poll questions, slide decks, and images to enable your audience to regularly interact. Creative designs can also help to foster better engagement.

Webinars can include how-to videos that showcase training in various fields of study. This is essentially coaching that can be done online in real-time – and returned to later – that offers immediate feedback to improve learning. On-the-spot communications help audiences understand information quicker and allow them to bounce off other audience-members and learn from what others are asking