SOFT SKILLS
PLACEMENT & ASSESSMENT
PROTOCOL

Soft skills

Facilitating the vocational integration of
people with low levels of qualifications

Version : 4th August 2021

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PREAMBLE

This protocol aims at facilitating the placement and assessment linked to soft skills and developed in the framework of the Erasmus+ Soft skills project.

The Erasmus+ Soft skills project follows the approach of facilitating access to soft skills for people with low levels of qualification in order to accelerate their professional integration. Indeed, mastering a professional activity does not only require the implementation of technical skills specific to the job (hard skills), it also relies on the mobilization of soft skills. To do so, the partnership has developed a method as well as pedagogical tools for training in soft skills. For more information, do not hesitate to contact us (contact details p.39).

The placement and assessment protocol is an essential resource for trainers, technical supervisors, tutors and assessors as it provides the basis for assessing a trainee's Soft Skills level. It describes when and how assessments should be done, whether they are for placement or certification purposes. It also presents elements on the posture to be adopted by the trainers/ technical supervisors/ tutors/ assessors and on the assessment tools to be used.

Additional resources

Additional materials have been developed to facilitate the appropriation of the soft skills project by all trainers, technical supervisors, tutors and assessors and to allow them to train and assess soft skills independently.

- The **"European catalogue of soft skills references"** gives an overview of the soft skills approach the project followed: it contains the list of soft skills defined within the framework of the project, the levels of acquisition and their definitions as well as a description of the soft skills acquisition process and the placement and assessment linked to it;

- The **"training kit for the implementation of soft skills"** gives all the keys to prepare and implement the soft skills training in any organisation with any trainees. It describes the training method and program in detail and provides summary sheets of training courses by level. It also gives suggestions concerning the pedagogical tools to be used in each step of the training or the posture to adopt as a trainer.

- The **"tool cards to train soft skills"** presents a collection of more than 80 tools that can be used to train soft skills. The tools are based on the experience of the project partners (tools they have learned in their initial training or throughout their professional career, as well as tools developed and/or adapted more specifically for this project). These tools require few equipment and can be easily applied to different contexts. This training kit suggests their use.

- The **"facilitation techniques"** helps the trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/assessor to support their trainees in the consolidation phase in a work situation. It gathers ideas how to put soft skills into practice in the daily work, to act as role models and to advise their trainees.

- The "**training for trainers**" is a program and a training content for trainers, technical supervisors, tutors and assessors who wants learn how to use the project and the tools that result from it and to train in Soft Skills without problems.

- The **"soft skills checklist for trainers"** allows trainers, technical supervisors, tutors and assessors to verify their knowledge related to soft skills after a training of trainers but also to have a global view on the materials and tools necessary for the implementation of placements, trainings or soft skills assessments within their organization.

You will find all these materials in free access on our website: www.softskills-project.eu and on the paid application www.zerobarrier.eu

Zerobarrier
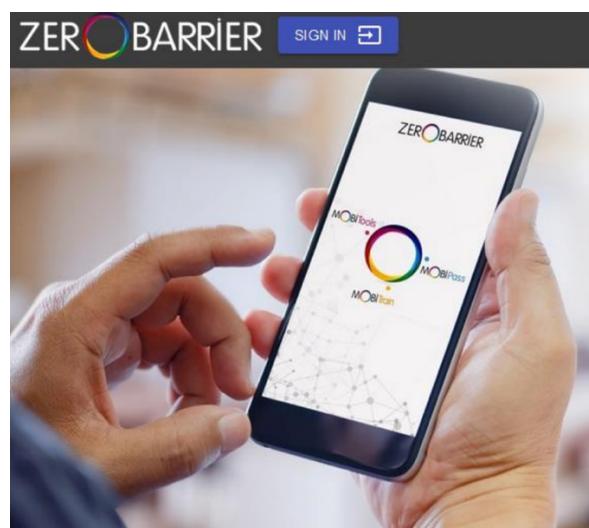
Zerobarrier is a global solution for training at work, capitalization of skills acquired and promotion of European job mobility developed by the organization Solivers with the help of the different partners they worked with during several European projects.

On this paid platform, users can easily search for the tools we developed during the soft skills project, keep a track of the training sessions, record the different results of the placement test or assessments and generate CV and skills portfolios. This platform

The platform is divided into 3 parts:

- **Mobitools**: on Mobitools, you can find the European catalogue of soft skills references, the training kit, the toolbox publication (as well as the individual tool cards), the facilitation techniques, the placement and assessment protocol, the 7 occupational standards that have been linked to soft skills, the wheels and the pictograms as well as the soft skills base.

- **Mobitrain**: on Mobitrain, it is possible to keep a track of all the training and consolidations followed by each trainee which is very useful when the soft skills acquisition process is not taking place in the same organization or if a trainee changes of organization.

- **Mobipass**: it is possible to find the occupational standards we linked to soft skills (…) as well as the Soft Skills occupational standard. At the same time, it is possible to record the results of placement and assessments and to automatically generate CVs and skill portfolios.
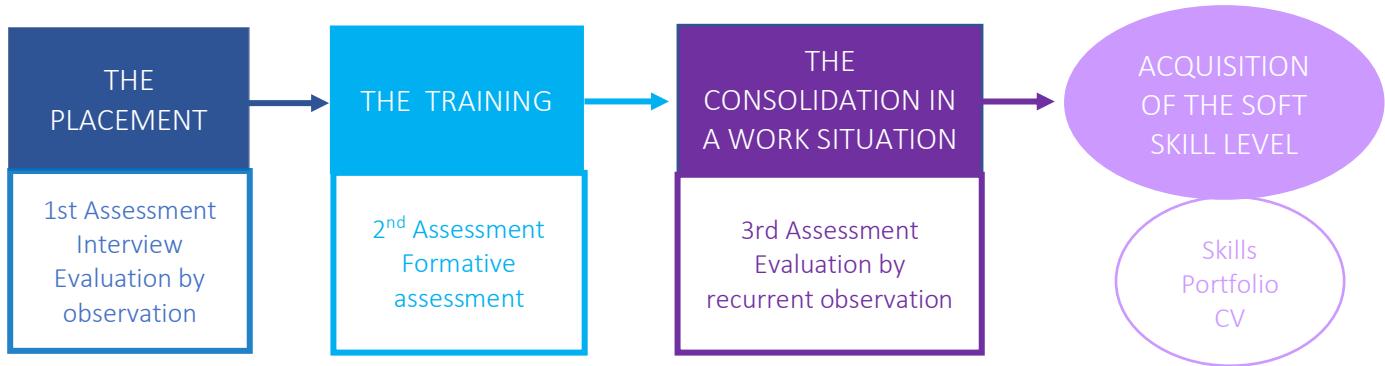
If you want to know more about the platform and sign in, contact Solivers: contact@zerobarrier.eu or visit directly the application www.zerobarrier.eu

1. The soft skills acquisition process

A. The process

The soft skills acquisition process is a process that involves 3 key steps. Assessment is an omnipresent element in this process. Indeed, it is carried out during the 3 key steps of the acquisition process and ensures its effectiveness and relevance.

THE PLACEMENT	THE TRAINING	THE CONSOLIDATION IN A WORK SITUATION	ACQUISITION OF THE SOFT SKILL LEVEL
1st Assessment Interview Evaluation by observation	2nd Assessment Formative assessment	3rd Assessment Evaluation by recurrent observation	Skills Portfolio CV

The placement is the first step in the acquisition process: it enables trainers/ technical supervisors/ tutors/ assessors to determine from the outset whether or not a trainee masters soft skills through an **interview** or an **observation** (depending on the context, the trainee, the organization etc. ..). It provides an objective view of the trainee's skills and helps to direct him/her towards the training course that best suits his/her needs or the needs of the organization he/she comes from. The placement test is therefore carried out upstream of a training programme with the aim of optimizing it.

The training is the second step of the acquisition process: it enables common foundations to be laid, theoretical contributions to be made while linking them to concrete life or work experiences. In this way, the trainee takes on new knowledge and makes it his own. During the training, the trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor ensures that everyone has a good understanding by using **formative assessment** tools and by rephrasing important information. The main objective of this assessment is to highlight the trainee's difficulties and to provide information on what has been learned or what needs to be improved during the training or during the consolidation in a work situation.
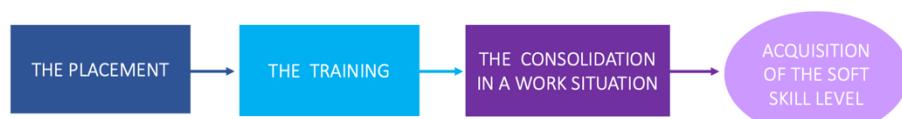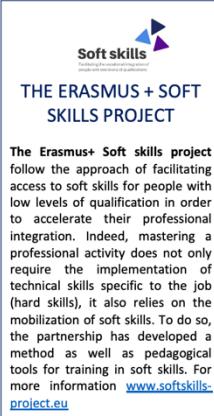
The consolidation in a work situation allows the practical application of the new knowledge acquired during the training. Theoretical input and the linking of life and work experiences are not enough to acquire soft skills. It is important to give the trainee time to take what he or she has seen in training and reinvest it in everyday life. It is therefore this stage that will be decisive in determining whether or not a certain level of soft skills has been acquired: it is only after a period of consolidation in a work situation and IN a work situation that the trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor will be able to assess the trainee and to attest or not if a soft skill level is acquired. For that we suggest to use the **evaluation by recurrent observation** and to observe at several times the trainee in work situations.

In order to facilitate the appropriation of the soft skills acquisition process, we developed different tools and materials that are accessible on our website.

The document called **"Summary of the soft skills acquisition process"** is the best tool to have an overview of each step and of the materials needed for each step:

SUMMARY OF THE SOFT SKILLS ACQUISITION PROCESS

This sheet gives an overview of the 3 steps of the Soft Skills acquisition process as well as the tools that can be used at each step. It will help the trainer to keep in mind all the elements that will be useful and to look at the process in its entirety

Soft skills

THE ERASMUS + SOFT SKILLS PROJECT

The Erasmus+ Soft skills project follow the approach of facilitating access to soft skills for people with low levels of qualification in order to accelerate their professional integration. Indeed, mastering a professional activity does not only require the implementation of technical skills specific to the job (hard skills), it also relies on the mobilization of soft skills. To do so, the partnership has developed a method as well as pedagogical tools for training in soft skills. For more information www.softskills-project.eu

THE PLACEMENT → THE TRAINING → THE CONSOLIDATION IN A WORK SITUATION → ACQUISITION OF THE SOFT SKILL LEVEL

THE PLACEMENT

This first step enables to determine from the outset whether or not a trainee masters soft skill through an **interview** or an **observation.** It provides an objective view of the trainee's skills and helps to direct him/her towards the training course that best suits his/her needs or the needs of the organization he/she comes from.

Time indication
Preparation : as much time as needed
Placement: 30 minutes

Tools
Placement and Assessment protocol - Generic placement grid **or** Specific placement grid - Wheels

THE TRAINING

This step enables common foundations to be laid, theoretical contributions to be made while linking them to concrete life or work experiences. In this way, the trainee takes on new knowledge and makes it his own. During the training, the trainer ensures that everyone has a good understanding by using **formative assessment** tools and by rephrasing important information.

Time indications
Preparation : as much time as needed
Training : min. half a day

Tools
Training kit – Toolbox - Placement and Assessment protocol

THE CONSOLIDATION IN A WORK SITUATION

This last step allows the practical application of the new knowledge acquired during the training. The trainee has time to take what he or she has seen in training and reinvest it in everyday life/ in a work situation. It is only after a period of consolidation that we will be able to assess the trainee by **observing** him at **several times** in a fictive work situation and to attest or not if a soft skill level is acquired.

Time indications
Consolidation = between a week and a month,
Evaluation by observation = 30 minutes for each observation

Tools
Facilitation techniques -Placement and assessment protocol - Generic assessment grid **or** Specific assessment grid - Wheels

ACQUISITION OF THE SOFT SKILL LEVEL

ZEROBARRIER

Zerobarrier is a global solution for training at work, capitalization of skills acquired and promotion of European job mobility.
On this platform, users can easily search for the tools we developed during the soft skills project, keep a track of the training sessions, record the different results of the placement test or assessments and generate CV and skills portfolios.
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Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

HOW TO PROCEED?

UPSTREAM
1. Read the catalog to learn more about soft skills, their definitions and the soft skills acquisition process.
2. Select the learners you will support in the Soft Skills acquisition process and choose the Soft Skills you want to work on (no more than 3 at the same time)
ZEROBARRIER If it's the first time you're using Zerobarrier with your learner, create an account to your learner (Menu – Management – Manage the users – Add)

THE PLACEMENT → THE TRAINING → THE CONSOLIDATION IN A WORK SITUATION → ACQUISITION OF THE SOFT SKILL LEVEL

THE PLACEMENT

3. Plan a placement test (interview or placement by observation) with your learners related to the soft skills you want to work on (no more than 3 at the same time) & prepare your placement grid
Tools : placement and assessment protocol + generic placement grid
Time : Spend as much time as you need

4. Do the placement test with each learner
Tools : Your placement grid + Wheel
Time : 30 minutes for each placement

*ZEROBARRIER Add the results of the placement test on Zerobarrier (MOBIPASS – Soft skills – Initial placement – Choose a learner – Add a placement)
How to visualize the results? (MOBIPASS – Portfolio – Select your learner – select the tab "soft skills")*

THE TRAINING

5. Prepare the training session, don't forget to plan a formative evaluation during the training, to prepare all the materials you need as well as the attendance sheet and the satisfaction survey. Please note that you are only able to train one soft skills and one level at the same time.
Tools : Training kit + Toolbox + Placement and Assessment protocol + Attendance sheet + Satisfaction surveys
Time : Spend as much time as needed

6. Do the training session with your learner
Tools : Your training program, the satisfaction survey, the attendance sheet
Time : min. half a day

ZEROBARRIER Add the training session on Zerobarrier (MOBITRAIN – Soft skills training – ADD – fill in the information (indoor training), SAVE)

7. Generate a training certificate for each learner
Tool : Training certificate

THE CONSOLIDATION IN A WORK SITUATION

8. Allow the learner to apply what they have seen during the training on the field. Advise him/her if necessary.
Tool: Facilitation techniques
Time: Between a week and a month

ZEROBARRIER Add consolidation sessions in work situations (MOBITRAIN – Soft skills training – ADD – Fill in the information (Consolidation) – SAVE)

9. Once the learner is confident and seems to master the Soft Skills, you can begin to plan the assessment process and to prepare your assessment grid. (A soft skills level is acquired if it has been observed at least 3 times in 3 different contexts.)
Time: Plan 1 hours to prepare each evaluation.
Tools: placement and assessment protocol – Assessment grids

10. Do the assessments. (At least 3 observations)
Time: each observation should not last more than 30 minutes.
Tools: Your assessment grid

ZEROBARRIER After each observation, transcribe the results (MOBIPASS – Soft skills – Assessment – Add – Fill in the information – Select the soft skills – Edit the assessment – SAVE)

ACQUISITION OF THE SOFT SKILL LEVEL

11. Once the Soft Skills have been observed 3 times, you can accompany your learner in writing a CV that highlights the Soft Skills acquired.

ZEROBARRIER The application automatically generates a customizable CV, certificate and Soft Skills passport template (MOBIPASS – Portfolio – Select a trainee – Select the Tab "soft skills" – Generate the document you want/need)

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Please find this document on our website www.softskills-project.eu and on the application www.zerobarrier.eu

B. Different contexts, same goal

Depending on the context, the soft skills acquisition process can take place in several organisations and/or in connection or not with a previously identified job:

- **Number of organisations participating in the soft skills acquisition process**

A trainee can follow the Soft Skills acquisition process in one and the same organisation or change organisation between 2 key steps. It is therefore not necessarily the same trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor who will accompany the person through the placement, the training or the consolidation. Indeed, some structures are able to internalize all these steps while others will not have the necessary infrastructure or personnel. Whatever the situation, it is important to look at the entire process in order to understand it and apply it properly.

- **Job-related or not**

The assessments can be done in connection with a profession or not. Indeed, depending on the context, a trainee can follow a training in soft skills in order to improve his/her performance in the job he/she is exercising/has identified OR in order to improve his/her employability.

Job-related: When the assessment is done in relation to a job, it is important to identify which soft skills and what level of soft skill is expected for the job. This work was done as part of the Soft skills project for 7 job profiles:
- Cleaning operative (FR – EN)
- Welder Boilermaker (SP – EN)
- Green Area Maintenance operator (EN)
- Seller Restocker (FR – EN)
- Help Cooker (FR – EN)
- Viticulture operator (FR – EN)
- Biotechnology assistant (EN)

The whole method of linking a job to soft skills is described in the European catalogue of soft skills references. The job-related placements and assessments will therefore be precise and targeted and will allow to have a clear training plan linked to a professional project: it will allow to evaluate only the soft skills identified in the occupational standard and to compare the expected level with the real level of the trainee.

Not job-related: When the placement or the assessment is done without link to a job, it is a question of making an inventory / to have an overview of the soft skills to identify the gaps or the strong points of the trainee. This is done in a fairly simple way; by questioning the trainee's professional and extra-professional experiences, discoveries, and situations of commitment or by observing the soft skills the trainers/ technical supervisors/ tutors/ assessors are interested in, in a work situation.

C. Our placement and assessment assumptions

Soft skills are resources that are acquired and developed by people in different context (formative, professional or personal) throughout their lives. They are abilities that makes it possible to carry out properly a function or an activity and are often established in action. The interest of highlighting soft skills is their transferability: a person with attested soft skills will be able to use them in all possible jobs, as opposed to the technical skills specific to a job or field. That's why soft skills are THE referral resource to facilitate the life's professional changes and increases the employability of people.

6 assumptions have been developed in the frame of the project and guided the soft skills acquisition process and this placement and assessment protocol:

First assumption: Soft skills as well as technical skills **can be assessed and developed**

Second assumption: Soft skills training aims at **adaptive behavioural change**
- An individual learns, assimilates through interaction at the end of a long, complex and progressive process
- An individual needs to understand in order to be able to apply before analyzing and transmitting

Third assumption: As the soft skills acquisition process is progressive, it needs a **continuous assessment**: it is the repetition of its use in various situation AND over time that validates the acquisition of a skill. It is therefore necessary to **mix formative and summative** assessment.

Fourth assumption: The soft skill assessment has to be done in a **real situation or professional context.**

Fifth assumption: When setting up a professional situation, the number of soft skills to be assessed should be **limited to a maximum of 3**. Indeed, the learner must not be lost and destabilized

Sixth assumption: Soft skills can be mobilized and developed in **work and life situations.**

D. The role of facilitator

During an assessment, the trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor must behave as a facilitator. To do so, he or she must:

Create a climate of trust
HOW? Do not focus on failures and consider that errors are formative and allows progress; Remind the trainee that only one person will follow the assessment; Use positive feedback; Take the time to reassure and accompany the trainee

Listen and show empathy
HOW? Explain that the important thing is not to validate everything but to try; Enhance achievements and progress rather than shortcomings and mistakes; Listen to the trainee; Know how to stay in the background

Check that the instructions and the teaching scenario are understood
HOW? Make explicit, reformulate, accompany the reformulation, explain in several ways, simplify, illustrate, give examples

Consider adjustments to the times within the framework initially planned
HOW? Adapt to the person's difficulties in assessing Soft Skills and not peripheral skills (e.g. illiterate person, person with a disability, etc.); Take into account the differences of the trainees and understand that learning and assessment can be stressful and destabilizing for some people. Individualize the assessment process by taking into account the person's placement

Consider evaluation as a holistic process and take into account the effects of stress
HOW? Tell the trainee at the outset how long the assessment is expected to take; Take into account that soft skills may be revealed at the end of the assessment process; Be tolerant of errors, hesitations, and stress-related gaps; Focus on the approach, strategy, process and not on results.

Question oneself
HOW? Reflect on and question one's practice; Become aware of the subjective nature of an assessment and try to minimize it
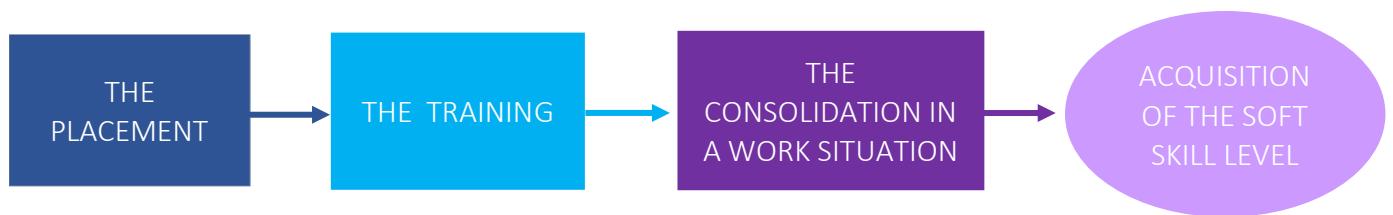
Adopt an ethical and non-judgmental attitude
HOW? Base assessment on objective and fair observations among trainees; Do not let your emotions interfere with the assessment.

2. The placement and assessment method

A. Assessment methods for the placement

The first key step of the soft skills acquisition process is the placement. The placement test allows each trainee's level of Soft Skills to be assessed and training needs to be identified. It allows to discuss to which level a trainee wants to get. This step is not mandatory but highly recommended as it allows the trainee and the trainer to approach soft skills together for the first time and to become familiar with one or other soft skill.

| THE PLACEMENT | → | THE TRAINING | → | THE CONSOLIDATION IN A WORK SITUATION | → | ACQUISITION OF THE SOFT SKILL LEVEL |

The placement and assessment protocol propose 2 placement methods adapted to the different contexts we may encounter:
- An **evaluation by observation** adapted to the structures that practice on-the-job training and which have the opportunity to observe the trainee on the field;
- An **interview** when the trainee can only be interviewed.

Observation is an effective way to assess a level of soft skills by collecting useful information and evidence on the working place/ in a work situation. Observation is the act of seeing, of careful considering, measuring and noting in order to certify or not the mastery of a level of soft skills. Please note that a skill is not visible, only its results are observable.
The principle of an evaluation by observation is to observe the trainee in a work situation to see whether or not the person shows soft skills…

CONTEXT
When a trainee can be observed in a real context / When the organization is able to observe in a real situation

TOOLS
- Generic or specific placement grids (this includes the observable behaviours)
- Wheels OR Zerobarrier to record and visualize the results of the placement

WHEN IS A SOFT SKILLS LEVEL ACQUIRED?
When one observable behaviour related to the level of a soft skill has been observed at least one time in a real situation or a professional context.

HOW TO KEEP A RECORD OF THE ASSESSMENT?
- At the end of the placement test, the trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor can print the wheels and place the trainee on them. With that he/she can visualize which level he/she has and which he/she should reach.
- The placement can be recorded directly on the application Zerobarrier. It generates automatically a wheel where the trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor and the trainee can visualize the level of the trainee.

HOW TO PROCEED?
This evaluation method is done in 3 main steps: preparation, assessment and feedback.

TIME INDICATION
The preparation stage should not be underestimated as it requires a lot of investment on the side of the trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor. It is also the one that ensures that the other 2 steps will be carried out in an optimal way. The time used for the assessment should not last longer than 30 minutes as well as the time used for the feedback.

1/ Specify what should be evaluated and prepare the placement grid

Prepare a placement based on specific objectives, activities and results. It is therefore necessary to clearly describe what is to be evaluated and to define the objective of the placement test: to do so, one starts by clearly defining the soft skill(s) to be evaluated (no more than 3 at the same time).

Depending on the soft skills to be assessed, prepare the placement grid (delete the lines concerning the other soft skills) and read it in detail in order to master it at the time of the assessment.

2/ Determine the placement context and prepare the assessment scenario

Above all, think about the context of the placement as well as the necessary resources (temporality, means and materials to be used, logistics). Then choose and organize concrete tasks where the soft skills to be assessed are mobilized. These tasks have to look as much as possible like real work situations. The preparation of the placement grid will help you to think about a scenario.

CRITERIA FOR CHOOSING A SCRIPT IDEA

- Its potential richness (can it generate many different and relevant tasks?).
- Its flexibility (does it allow for the collection of the necessary information?)
- Its interest (does it have a playful aspect, does it present a challenge, a problem to be solved)?
- Its coherence (are its different stages linked by a solid thread?).
- Its ease of implementation (Does the chosen location meet the requirements of the situation)?

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- The situation takes into account the technical skills previously acquired by the trainee. Keep in mind that if the soft skills are implemented in a full professional context, the assessment should ONLY focus on the soft skill(s).
- Trainees must solve real or reconstructed problem-situations that they may encounter in their professional or personal life.
- A simple practice does not always allow the trainee to demonstrate his level of mastery and understanding of soft skills. It must therefore be accompanied by a questioning process.
- Verify that the scenario mobilizes the observable behaviours in a clear way.

3/ Prepare the questioning

Elaborate the questions that will help to identify and determine the acquisition of a level of soft skills. Indeed, the questioning allows to structure the evaluation and to collect clues proving the mastery of soft skills.

TIPS FOR PREPARING QUESTIONS

- Pay attention to the understanding of the question: are the question(s) easy to understand? The vocabulary used and the wording are simple and leave no room for ambiguity.
- Specify the questions: Does the learner identify what you are asking? Do not leave room for interpretation and be clear.
- Ask a single question (not multiple questions within a single question).
- Ask relevant questions that allow the candidate to demonstrate mastery of the soft skill and allow the assessor to identify observable behaviours.

4/ Prepare the placement exercise instructions

Prepare formal instructions that will allow the placement exercise to be carried out. It is necessary to ensure that the instructions reflect the context, the materials, the objectives and the time given to complete the work and to pay attention to the wording and vocabulary used.

INSTRUCTIONS NEED TO:

- Be clear, adapted, complete and concise
- Name the objective(s)
- Guide the trainee by drawing his/her attention to the important points and by giving him/her elements of context that will make him/her feel secure.
- Indicate the procedure with the different steps of the assessment (1. observation; 2. questioning).
- Corresponds to observable behaviours to enable you to identify the presence or absence of these behaviours.

5/ Inform the trainee

Explain to the trainee when, how and why he will be assessed and give him clear instructions.

SECOND STEP: ASSESSMENT

1/ Implementation of the work situation and reminder of the instructions

You set up a work situation that corresponds to the assessment scenario he has developed. He clearly formulates the instructions and communicates them to the trainee. He makes sure that the instructions are understood and does not hesitate to rephrase them if necessary.

2/ Work situation

The trainee works/ does his tasks while you observe him. You must refer to the observable behaviours because a trainee who mimics an attitude/task without understanding its reason/meaning may not be able to adapt the observed skill to another situation. You record what you observe in your placement grid: you keep evidence of what you've observed.

3/ Discussion

You question the trainee about the meaning of the behaviour he/she has chosen to adopt. To do so, you should favor open-ended questions and can base your questions on the questions you've prepared. The objective is to ensure that the trainee has understood the usefulness and necessity of soft skills in his/her work situation.

4/ Validation of soft skills level

THIRD STEP: FEEDBACK

1/ Discussion

The trainee and you exchange your point of view about the results of the placement test

2/ Synthesis

The trainee and you prepare together an individualized training program.

SECOND METHOD: THE INTERVIEW

In order to detect and make a trainee aware of the mastery of a soft skill, questioning him about his everyday life, his interests etc. … can bring out interesting things. In fact, soft skills can be mobilized not only in work situations but also in life situations.

CONTEXT
When a trainee can only be interviewed.

TOOLS
- Generic placement grid (this includes observable behaviours and example of life situations)
- Wheels OR Zerobarrier to record and visualize the results of the placement

WHEN IS A SOFT SKILLS LEVEL ACQUIRED?
When a soft skills level has been demonstrated, it can be considered as acquired. Demonstrated means that the trainee developed some arguments about the mastery of the skills: he could give examples, explain, provide some experiences etc. …

HOW TO KEEP A RECORD OF THE ASSESSMENT?
- At the end of the placement test, you can print the wheels and place your trainee on them. With that they can visualize which level they have and which they should reach.
- The placement can be recorded directly on the platform Zerobarrier. It generates automatically a wheel where the level of the trainee are sums up and can be visualized.

HOW TO PROCEED?
As with the first placement method, the interview method involves 3 steps: preparation, assessment and feedback. The trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor should not underestimate the preparation phase, which will ensure that the other two stages run smoothly.

TIME INDICATION
The preparation stage should not be underestimated as it requires a lot of investment on the side of the trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor. It is also the one that ensures that the other 2 steps will be carried out in an optimal way. The time used for the interview should not last longer than 30 minutes as well as the time used for the feedback.

FIRST STEP: PREPARATION

1/ Specify what should be evaluated
Prepare a placement based on specific objectives, activities and results. It is therefore necessary to clearly describe what is to be assessed and to define the objective of the placement: to do so, one starts by clearly defining the soft skill(s) to be evaluated (no more than 3 at the same time).

2/ Print the corresponding placement grid and analyze it

Depending on the soft skills to be assessed, prepare the placement grid (delete the lines concerning the other soft skills) and read it in detail in order to master it at the time of the interview.

3/ Prepare global questions

Prepare the questions that will help to identify and determine the acquisition of a level of soft skills. Indeed, questioning is the key to gather clues and allow the trainee to show whether or not he has mastered a level of soft skills. The trainee must be encouraged to express himself and not only focus on work situations but also on his personal experiences.

<div style="text-align:center">TIPS FOR PREPARING QUESTIONS</div>

> - Pay attention to the understanding of the question: Is the question(s) easy to understand? The vocabulary used and the wording are simple and leave no room for ambiguity.
> - Specify the questions: Does the learner identify what you are asking? Do not leave room for interpretation and be clear.
> - Ask a single question (not multiple questions within a single question).
> - Ask relevant questions that allow the candidate to demonstrate mastery of the soft skill and allow the assessor to identify observable behaviours.
> - Draw inspiration from the life situations suggested in the positioning grids.

4/ Inform the trainee

Explain to the trainee when, how and why he will be assessed.

<div style="text-align:center">SECOND STEP: ASSESSMENT</div>

1/ Remind the instructions

You formulate the instructions and communicate them to the trainee. You make sure that the instructions are understood and does not hesitate to rephrase them if necessary. The trainee must understand why he or she is there and the purpose of the interview. You must also make the trainee confident to ensure that he/she is in a good position for the placement test.

2/ Interview

You ask the trainee about his/her mastery of this or that soft skill. To do so, you will prefer open-ended questions and may base them on the questions you've prepared. The objective is to ensure that the trainee has understood the usefulness and necessity of the soft skills and that he/she knows how to apply them at work or in everyday life.

3/ Validation of a soft skills level

At the end of this interview, you should be able to place the trainee on a level of soft skills.

<div style="text-align:center">THIRD STEP: FEEDBACK</div>

1/ Discussion
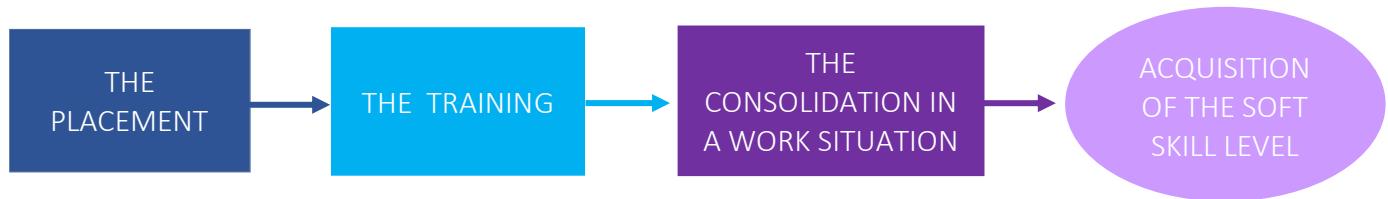
You and the trainee exchange you point of view about the assessments results

2/ Synthesis

You and the trainee prepare together an individualized training program.

B. Assessment method during the training

The second key step of the soft skills acquisition process is the training. The training allows trainees to obtain theoretical input on soft skills by making them actors of the training. Their knowledge is mobilized as well as their personal and professional experiences. The trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor acts as a facilitator and guides the trainees throughout the session.

THE PLACEMENT	→	THE TRAINING	→	THE CONSOLIDATION IN A WORK SITUATION	→	ACQUISITION OF THE SOFT SKILL LEVEL

In order to ensure that the trainees have understood and retained what they have seen in the training and that they will be able to apply it, the trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor is asked to conduct a **formative assessment** during the training.

METHOD: THE FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Formative evaluation is done during a training session and encourages progress while providing information on what has been learned or what needs to be improved. It reports on trainees' progress and allows them to understand the nature of their mistakes and difficulties encountered. It does not therefore aim to say whether a soft skill has been acquired or not and does not associate points, marks or percentages.

To do so, the trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor can ask the trainee to:
- Summarize the essential elements retained from a workshop,
- Answer true/false or multiple-choice questions,
- Explain to colleagues what they have learned/retained from the content presented
- Create a concept map/mind map of the important concepts seen during the workshop
- Answer a questionnaire after having carried out an activity to question the meaning.
- Analyze his professional practices to encourage qualitative feedback on the work done

WHEN?

As part of the soft skills training described in the training kit, formative assessment was directly included in the training program and is a step (or two) of each training. It can be found as follows:
- Training Level 1 "remember and understand"
  → Step 1 "Welcome and Involvement of the participants" + Step 8 "Consolidation of new knowledge"
  → Step 7 "Formative evaluation"
- Training level 2 "Apply"
  → Step 8 "Consolidation of soft skills" (& Step 1 "Welcome and Involvement of the participants")
- Training level 3 "Analyse and evaluate"
  → Step 8 "Shared analysis of soft skills" (& Step 1 "Welcome and interactions of the participants")
- Training level 4 "Create"
  → Step 8 "Improve your practice" (& Step 1 "Welcome and cooperation of the participants")

PLEASE NOTE

For the training to **Level 1,** the choice has been made to use the formative assessment twice. Thus, both types of tools are used: a "Before-After" tool in steps 1 and 7 AND a tool in the last step that allows a visual summary of what was seen throughout the training session.

For the other levels, the formative assessment is mobilized only once and always takes place at the last step of training (step 8). The trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor obviously has the choice to use the type of tool he wants or to take the time to use both tools if he/she thinks its relevant ("Before - After" tool and/or "Synthesis" tool).

TOOLS

Tools adapted to each level are proposed in the training kit and are the subject of descriptive sheets in the toolbox.

Thus 2 types of tools are generally proposed:
- A "Synthesis" tool that is only used at the last step of the training and that allows to summarize what has been seen throughout the session. It allows the trainer to be sure that the level has been understood by the trainee
- A "Before - After" tool that must be used both in the first AND last step of training and that allows to take stock of what the trainee knew before the training and what he/she learned during the training session. It allows the trainer and the trainee to see the progression of the learning.

WHEN IS A SOFT SKILLS ACQUIRED?

The goal of this assessment is not to attest the acquisition of a soft skills (no points, marks or percentages) but to clarify points and to advise trainees on how they can ameliorate.

HOW TO KEEP A RECORD OF THE ASSESSMENT?

At the end of the training, the trainee receives a training certificate where the goals of the training and the program of the training figures. 4 training certificates linked to the 4 level of soft skills acquisition have been developed and can be downloaded directly on our website www.softskills-project.eu or on the application www.zerobarrier.eu

An advice: ask the trainee to left the training with a record of it: for that they can take notes during the training and take with them the results of the different activities they've done.

HOW TO PROCEED?

This evaluation method is done in 2 main steps: preparation & assessment.

TIME INDICATION

The time devoted to this evaluation method depends on the tools you've chosen: generally, it should not last more than 45 minutes.

1/ Specify what should be evaluated

As a reminder, the objective of the formative assessment is to make an inventory of the knowledge/difficulties that the trainee encounters in order to put him/her in a margin of progression. It is therefore mainly a question of taking stock of the points addressed during the training.

2/ Prepare the assessment

Select an assessment tool based on the training kit and toolbox. Read the instructions carefully and prepare the necessary materials. Pay attention to the type of tool chosen: a "Synthesis" tool mobilized at the last step AND/OR a "Before - After" tool mobilized at the beginning and at the end.

3/ Prepare the instructions for the formative assessment exercise

Prepare clear instructions that you can give to trainees during the training during the assessment exercise of the training.

THE INSTRUCTIONS MUST:

- Be clear, adapted, complete and concise
- Name the objective(s)
- Guide the candidate by drawing the learner's attention to the important points and by giving him/her elements of context that will make him/her feel secure.
- Indicate the procedure with the different steps of the assessment (1. observation; 2. questioning).
- Corresponds to observable behaviours to enable the assessor to identify the presence or absence of these behaviours.

SECOND STEP: ASSESSMENT

1/ Implement the activity and explain the instructions

Prepare the materials needed to perform the exercise and clearly explain the instructions to the trainee. The objectives of the exercise must be clear to the trainee: it is not about getting a grade.

2/ Formative assessment exercise
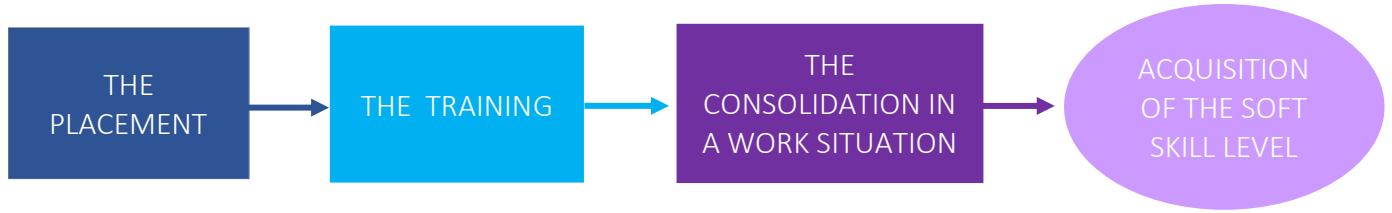
The instructions will depend on the exercise chosen. Depending on the exercise you've chosen, you will be more or less invested but you must always accompany the trainees and make sure they are on the right track.

3/ Discussion and feedback

You and the trainee discuss the results of the activity and takes the opportunity to clarify any points that may not be clear.

C. Assessment method after the consolidation in a work situation

The last key step in the soft skills acquisition process is the consolidation step in a work situation. After a classroom training, trainees have time to apply what they have learned and to be supported in this phase before being assessed.

THE PLACEMENT	→	THE TRAINING	→	THE CONSOLIDATION IN A WORK SITUATION	→	ACQUISITION OF THE SOFT SKILL LEVEL

After a consolidation phase in a work situation estimated at **1 month**, it is time for the trainee to be evaluated in order to verify and certify that he or she has mastered the level of soft skills for which he or she has been trained. For this purpose, the **recurrent evaluation by observation** is the most appropriate.

METHOD: THE RECURRENT EVALUATION BY OBSERVATION

Indeed, as we stated above for placement: « Observation is an effective way to assess a level of soft skills by collecting useful information and evidence of working place/ in a work situation. Observation is the act of seeing, of careful considering, measuring and noting in order to certify or not the mastery of a level of soft skills. Please note that a skill is not visible, only its results are observable. » However, unlike placement, a single observation will not be sufficient to certify a trainee's level of soft skills. It is the repetition of its application in various situations that will validate its acquisition.

TOOL
- Generic or specific assessment grids (this includes the observable behaviours)
- Wheels OR Zerobarrier to record and visualize the results of the placement

WHEN IS A SOFT SKILLS LEVEL ACQUIRED?
A level of soft skills is considered as mastered when at least one related observable behaviour has been observed 3 times by the trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor in different contexts.

HOW TO KEEP A RECORD OF THE ASSESSMENT?
It's this assessment that makes it possible to say whether or not a level of soft skills has been acquired. Thus, it is important to allow the trainee to put forward these newly acquired skills. The best way to highlight them is to show them on a CV or in a skills portfolio. If you work with Zerobarrier, these documents are automatically generated when you enter and save the different results of your observations in the App. It is also possible to visualize the results on Wheels. If you don't work with Zerobarrier, use the Wheels and print them to record the results of the assessments (you can also display the results of the placement to allow comparisons) and help your trainee to create a new CV that shows his/hers acquired soft skills.

HOW TO PROCEED?
This evaluation method is done in 3 main steps: preparation, assessment and feedback. The preparation step should not be underestimated as it requires a lot of investment on the side of the trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor. It is also the one that ensures that the other 2 steps will be carried out in an optimal way.

TIME INDICATIONS
The preparation stage should not be underestimated as it requires a lot of investment on the side of the trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor. It is also the one that ensures that the other 2 steps will be carried out in an optimal way. The time used for each observation should not last longer than 30 minutes as well as the time used for the feedback.

1/ Specify what should be evaluated and prepare the assessment grid

Prepare an evaluation based on specific objectives, activities and results. It is therefore necessary to clearly describe what is to be evaluated and to define the objective of the evaluation by recurrent observation: to do so, one starts by clearly defining the soft skill(s) to be evaluated (no more than 3 at the same time). Depending on the soft skills to be assesses, prepare the assessment grid (delete the lines concerning the other soft skills) and read it in detail in order to master it at the time of the discussion.

2/ Determine the evaluation context and prepare the assessment scenario

Above all, think about the context of the evaluation as well as the necessary resources (temporality, means and materials to be used, logistics). Then choose and organize concrete tasks where the soft skills to be assessed are mobilized. These tasks have to look as much as possible like real work situations. Please read previously the observable behaviours linked to the soft skills you want to assess: it will help you to think about a scenario. Note that you can use the same scenario for different trainees.

CRITERIA FOR CHOOSING A SCRIPT IDEA

- Its potential richness (can it generate many different and relevant tasks?).   - Its flexibility (does it allow for the collection of the necessary information?)   - Its interest (does it have a playful aspect, does it present a challenge, a problem to be solved)?   - Its coherence (are its different stages linked by a solid thread?).   - Its ease of implementation (is the material to be found or produced accessible?). Does the chosen location meet the requirements of the situation)?

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- The situation takes into account the technical skills previously acquired by the trainee. Keep in mind that if the soft skills are implemented in a full professional context, the assessment should ONLY focus on the soft skill(s).   - Trainees must solve real or reconstructed problem-situations that they may encounter in their professional or personal life.   - A simple practice does not always allow the candidate to demonstrate his level of mastery and understanding of soft skills. It must therefore be accompanied by a questioning process.   - Verify that the scenario mobilizes the observable behaviours in a clear way.

3/ Prepare the questioning

Elaborate the questions that will help to identify and determine the acquisition of a level of soft skills. Indeed, the questioning allows to structure the evaluation and to collect clues proving the mastery of soft skills.

HOW SHOULD YOU PROCEED?

- Pay attention to the understanding of the question: are the question(s) easy to understand? The vocabulary used and the wording are simple and leave no room for ambiguity.   - Specify the questions: Does the learner identify what you are asking? Do not leave room for interpretation and be clear.   - Ask a single question (not multiple questions within a single question).   - Ask relevant questions that allow the candidate to demonstrate mastery of the soft skill and allow the assessor to identify observable behaviours.

4/ Prepare the evaluation instructions

Prepare formal instructions that will allow the placement exercise to be carried out. It is necessary to ensure that the instructions reflect the context, the materials, the objectives and the time given to complete the work and to pay attention to the wording and vocabulary used.

THE INSTRUCTIONS MUST

- Be clear, adapted, complete and concise
- Name the objective(s)
- Guide the candidate by drawing the learner's attention to the important points and by giving him/her elements of context that will make him/her feel secure.
- Indicate the procedure with the different steps of the assessment (1. observation; 2. questioning).
- Corresponds to observable behaviours to enable the assessor to identify the presence or absence of these behaviours.

5/ Inform the trainee

Explain to the trainee when, how and why he will be assessed and give him clear instructions.

SECOND STEP: ASSESSMENT

1/ Implementation of the work situation and reminder of the instructions

You set up a work situation that corresponds to the assessment scenario you've developed. You clearly formulate the instructions and communicates them to the trainee. You make sure that the instructions are understood and do not hesitate to rephrase them if necessary.

2/ Work situation

The trainee works/ does his tasks while you observe him. You must refer to the observable behaviours because a trainee who mimics an attitude/task without understanding its reason/meaning may not be able to adapt the observed skill to another situation. You record what you observed in the assessment grid: you keep evidence of what you've observed.

3/ Discussion

You question the trainee about the meaning of the behaviour he/she has chosen to adopt. To do so, the you favor open-ended questions and can base your questions on the questions you've prepared. The objective is to ensure that the learner has understood the usefulness and necessity of soft skills in his/her work situation.

4/ Validation of the first observation

THIRD STEP: FEEDBACK

1/ Discussion

You and the trainee exchange your point of view on the results of the evaluation

2/ Synthesis

You and the trainee discuss the follow-up of the assessment and plan the next evaluation session

3. The placement and assessment tools

A. The observable behaviours

Observable behaviours are key tools for the evaluation by observation. They are actions performed by a trainee that can be observed and measured. Measurable because they can be defined and described: the trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor can spot the behaviour when it occurs including when the behaviour begins, ends and how often it occurs. Observable because it is what we see or hear (descriptive behaviour).

→ Not Job-related (generic): 3 generic observable behaviours have been developed for each level of each soft skills (240 observables behaviours) and can be used for not job-related placement and assessment: placement and assessment grids based on them have been developed. The generic observable behaviours are to be found in the **european catalogue of soft skills references** & in the **soft skills base** and are included in the generic placement and assessment grids. You can download these documents on www.softskills-project.eu or on the application www.zerobarrier.eu

Here an example that you can find in the european catalogue of soft skills references:

GROWTH MINDSET CATEGORY			
LEARNING TO LEARN — Ability and desire to continuously acquire and update knowledge and competences.			
Level of soft skill acquisition – following Bloom's taxonomy			
Remember and understand	**Apply**	**Analyse and evaluate**	**Create**
He/She expresses his/her willingness to update his/her skills and to take advantage of his/her failures.	He/She actively participates in a training process and training activities, asks questions and performs training tasks.	He/She identifies and expresses situations of failure or success that have helped him/her to progress.	He/She multiplies the channels of information and learning opportunities for the same competence (self-learning), involves other persons in a learning process.
Observable behaviours			
- He/She expresses curiosity and his/her desire to learn - He/She speaks about his/her missteps, mistakes or failures - He/She identifies his/her behaviours that need to be improved	- He/She participates in a learning process and related activities - He/She asks questions to support his/her learning process - He/She does tasks necessary to gain practice	- He/She identifies specific failures and successes and what he/she has learned from them - He/She sums up his/her learning journey or process - He/She evaluates his/her learning journey or process	- He/She searches for learning opportunities (information, course, practice…) on his/her own - He/She describes the next steps in his/her journey or learning process. - He/She exchanges with others to improve his/her learning experience

→ Job-related (specific): specific observable behaviours linked to 7 job profiles we worked on have been developed and can be used if the placement or assessment is done related to the job of the trainee. These specific behaviours are directly included in the **occupational standards** and in **specific placement and assessment grids** and are accessible on our website www.softskills-projetct.eu or on the application www.zerobarrier.eu

The 7 job profiles we worked on are:
- Cleaning operative (FR – EN)
- Welder Boilermaker (SP – EN)
- Green Area Maintenance operator (EN)
- Seller Restocker (FR – EN)
- Help Cooker (FR – EN)
- Viticulture operator (FR – EN)
- Biotechnology assistant (EN)

Here an example of the first lines of the occupational standard "cleaning operative" that has been linked to soft skills.

Consolidation of several professional activities which are	Observable and measurable professional actions dealing with the Unit	Set of skills necessary to the implementation and the achievement of an activity	Outcome of the assimilation of the information through learning (principles, theory, practices that are related to the job)
ULO: Units of Learning Outcomes	**Main activities**	**Skills / Competences** 'be able to'	**Knowledges** 'necessary knowledge to apply'
	U1.A1. Preparation of the tools	U1.A1.C1. S/he's able to select and to use cleaning tools according to the work environment and the type of service requested	U1.A1.C1.S1. S/he knows the features of different cleaning tools
			U1.A1.C1.S2. S/he knows the characteristics of surfaces to be cleaned
	U1.A2. Preparation of cleaning products	U1.A2.C1.S/he's able to identify products' features through labelling and to adapt them to the type of surface to be cleaned	U1.A2.C1.S1. S/he know pictograms, pH, types of surfaces
		U1.A2.C2. S/he's able to prepare the equipment, tools and products according to the intervention	U1.A2.C2.S1. S/he knows the cleaning protocols and what s/he needs in order to apply them
		U1.A2.C3. S/he's able to dose the right quantity of cleaning products according to their characteristics and in order to avoid waste	U1.A2.C3.S1. S/he can identify the dosage information according to products labels
UAA1 Preparing the working area (according to the cleaning tasks specified, reducing potential hazards and respecting the environment)	U1.A3. Preparing the technical and safety equipment	U1.A3.C1. L1 S/he's able to wear the right equipment. L2 S/he's able to identify the right protection s/he needs to wear, according to the intervention. S/he's able to apply safety standards linked to the use of PPE according to the different working conditions and working protocols	U1.A3.C1.S1. S/he knows the basics of environemental risks and the different types of PPE
		U1.A3.C2. S/he's able to take and set the right danger signs in the work spaces in order to reduce potential hazards.	U1.A3.C2.S1. S/he knows the different types of danger signs, colour codes and pictograms
		U1.A3.C3. S/he's able to check and to anticipate the supply of cleaning products and the degree of equipment's obsolescence	U1.A3.C3.S1. S/he knows the quantities of products required for intervention

ULO1		**Sens of organisation**	**Autonomy**	**Respect of the rules**	**Ability to anticipate**
Soft skills	Definitions	Level 2 He/she uses an organizational system that allows him/her to process tasks in a coherent order	Level 2 He/she applies the process and tasks that allow the work to be performed.	Level 2 He/she behaves according to the existing rules.	Level 2 He/she considers the next steps of his/her mission based on projections (reflecting on potential risks and benefits before acting)
	Observable behaviours	He/she is able to prepare his equipment according to the task to be performed. He/she properly selected and prepared the cleaning tools. He/she properly selected and prepared the cleaning products.	He/she chooses relevant equipment. He/she chooses the products to be used according to the type of surface. He/she prepares its own the equipment he needs.	He/she selects personal protective equipment and use it properly according to the task to be performed. He/she puts signs in place when the situation requires it (sample wet ground)	He/she notifies the team leader of equipment needs early enough. He/she warns of future product orders depending on the stocks.

A generic placement grid has been developed and will help the trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor to do a **not job-related placement**. This grid can be used for the placement method by observation but also for the interview and is composed of all soft skills level definitions linked to observable behaviours and life situations.

- For the interview: the purpose of this grid is to give the trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor support in asking questions that will allow them to identify whether or not the trainee has mastered this or that level of soft skills. The examples of life situations will allow the trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor to question the trainee on the mobilization of soft skills in everyday situations that go beyond work situations. The observable behaviours give them an indication on how soft skills should manifest in the field, in a work situation. By combining observable behaviours and life situations, it is possible for him/her to optimize the questions he/she asks.

- For the placement by observation: the purpose of this grid is to provide the trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor with indicators that will help them to know what to look for in a work situation and to define when a soft skills level is acquired. The observables behaviours are the indicators that the trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor has to focus on during the observation. The examples of life situations are thought for the interview method BUT they can help the trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor during the discussion step.

How to use the grid?
- Adapt the grid to the placement you are going to carry out: delete all the lines and columns that do not concern the soft skills you are going to assess (remember that it is only possible to assess 3 soft skills at a time)
- Add the name of the learner who is going to be assessed, the name of the assessor and the name of the soft skills that will be assessed (3 maximum)
- Add the date of the placement and add the chosen method of placement
- Print out your placement grid and make sure it fits on an A3 page.
- Depending on the method chosen (observation or interview), add the behaviours observed in the work situation in the comment box OR the elements that make you say that the person has mastered the level of soft skills.
- The discussion with your learner will enable you to say whether or not the skill has been observed. If it is acquired, tick "Acquired".
- Do not hesitate to clean up the grid on an EXCEL document or on the Zerobarrier application to better visualize the placement results.

How to define whether a level of soft skills is acquired?
- For the placement by observation: if at least one observable behaviour has been observed. Note that the assessor cannot assess more than 3 soft skills in one observation!
- For the interview: if the trainee has demonstrated mastery. Demonstrated means that the trainee has developed some arguments about the mastery of the skills: he /she could give examples, explain, provide some experiences etc. ...

Please find an example of the generic placement grid for the soft skills "Learning to learn" & "Autonomy"

Category	Soft skill	Definition	Level of soft skills acquisition	Related life situations to help the placement	Observable behaviours	PLACEMENT TEST Acquired	Not acquired	Comments
Growth mindset — Being able to question yourself and to progress	Learning to learn — Learning from your own successes and failures	Ability and desire to continuously acquire and update knowledge and competences	**Remember and understand** He/She expresses his/her willingness to update his/her skills and to take advantage of his/her failures.	Any learning context: school, training, music or sport practice, etc.	- He/She expresses curiosity and his/her desire to learn - He/She speaks about his/her missteps, mistakes or failures - He/She identifies his/her behaviours that need to be improved			
			Apply He/She actively participates in a training process and training activities, asks questions and performs training tasks.		- He/She participates in a learning process and related activities - He/She asks questions to support his/her learning process - He/She does tasks necessary to gain practice			
			Analyse and evaluate He/She identifies and expresses situations of failure or success that have helped him/her to progress.		- He/She identifies specific failures and successes and what he/she has learned from them - He/She sums up his/her learning journey or process - He/She evaluates his/her learning journey or process			
			Create He/She multiplies the channels of information and learning opportunities for the same competence (self-learning), involves other persons in a learning process.		- He/She searches for learning opportunities (information, course, practice...) on his/her own - He/She describes the next steps in his/her journey or learning process. - He/She exchanges with others to improve his/her learning experience			
	Autonomy — Doing tasks without any help from other people	Ability to be independent, think by yourself, make decisions and undertake actions by yourself, within the framework and limits set by the work position	**Remember and understand** He/She remembers and understands the work environment and his/her position.	Any situation in which actions have to be taken to reach a certain goal, work or task.	- He/She describes the task(s) he/she is responsible for in a given work situation - He/She understands that he/she has to ask for permission/guidance for certain actions in some work situations - He/She identifies the roles of other people involved in his/her work environment			
			Apply He/She applies the process and tasks that allow the work to be performed autonomously.		- He/She applies standard procedures to perform tasks without additional guidance from start to end - He/She is aware of his/her field of intervention set within the framework of his/her work - He/She asks for support only if he/she cannot cope with a situation on his/her own			
			Analyse and evaluate He/She analyses new or unknown situations, transfers and uses his/her skills and knowledge.		- He/She analyses his/her scope of action, and when he/she needs to involve others - He/She links new or unknown situations with well-know processes or procedures - He/She asks for support in new or unknown situations only when he/she realises that he/she cannot cope with the situation alone			
			Create He/She proposes new processes for him/her and the group.		- He/She makes decisions when the need arises to facilitate the work. - He/She decides on his/her own to try new or unusual solutions/approaches to reach a goal - He/She takes responsibility for his/her actions/decisions without blaming others in case of difficulties			

You can download this grid on www.softskills-project.eu or on the paid application www.zerobarrier.eu.

Seven specific placement grids have been developed and helps the trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor to do a **job-related placement**.
With this grid he/she will be able to assess the level of soft skills of a trainee at the beginning of an acquisition process by using the method of observation or the interview. These grids are based on occupational standards we worked on: Cleaning operative (FR – EN), Welder Boilermaker (SP – EN), Green Area Maintenance operator (EN), Seller Restocker (FR – EN), Help Cooker (FR – EN), Viticulture operator (FR – EN), Biotechnology assistant (EN)

How to use the grid?
- Adapt the placement grid to your placement: delete all the lines and columns that do not concern the soft skills you are going to assess (remember that it is only possible to assess 3 soft skills at a time)
- Add the name of the trainee who is going to be assessed, the name of the assessor and the name of the soft skills that will be assessed (3 maximum)
- Add the date of the placement and add some information about the method used.
- Print your placement grid and make sure it fits on an A3 page.
- Depending on the method chosen (observation or interview), add the behaviours observed in the work situation in the comment box OR the elements that make you say that the person has mastered the level of soft skills.
- The discussion with your learner will enable you to say whether or not the skill has been observed. If it is acquired, tick "Acquired".
- Do not hesitate to clean up the grid on an EXCEL document or on the Zerobarrier application to better visualize the placement results.

How to define if a level of soft skills is acquired?
- For the placement by observation: a level of soft skill is acquired if at least one observable behaviour has been observed. Note that the assessor cannot assess more than 3 soft skills in one observation! During the observation, the assessor evaluates only the soft skills: the Units of Learning Outcomes are there to give elements on the context in which the trainee is to be evaluated. As some soft skill levels appear in more than one ULO, the assessor is free to observe the soft skill level chosen in relation to the ULO he/she wishes.
- For the interview: A soft skill level is considered acquired if the learner has demonstrated mastery. Demonstrated means that the trainee has developed some arguments about the mastery of the skills: he could give examples, explain, provide some experiences etc. ... During the interview, the assessor evaluates only the soft skills : the Unit of Learning Outcomes are there to give elements about the questions that the trainer can ask.

On the following page, you will find an example of the specific placement grid for job cleaning operative

ULO: Units of learning outcomes and linked main activities

Soft skills linked

ULO1. Preparing the working area
(according to the cleaning tasks specified, reducing potential hazards and respecting the environment)

Linked main activities
U1.A1. Preparation of the tools
U1.A2. Preparation of the cleaning products
U1.A3. Preparing the technical and safety equipment

	Sens of organisation	Acquired	Autonomy	Acquired	Respect of the rules	Acquired	Ability to anticipate	Acquired
Definition	Level 2 — He/she uses an organizational system that allows him/her to process tasks in a coherent order	x	Level 2 — He/she applies the process and tasks that allow the work to be performed.		Level 2 — He/she behaves according to the existing rules.		Level 2 — He/she considers the next steps of his/her mission based on projections (reflecting on potential risks and benefits before acting)	
Observable behaviours	He/She is able to prepare his equipment according to the tasks to be performed; He/She properly selected and prepared the cleaning tools; He/She properly selected and prepared the cleaning products		He/she chooses relevant equipment; He/she chooses the products to be used according to the type of surface; He/she prepares a loon his own the equipment he needs		He/She selects personal protective equipment and uses it properly according to the task to be performed; He/She puts signage in place when the situation requires it (example: wet ground)		He/She notifies the team leader of equipment needs early enough; He/She warns of future product orders depending on the stocks	
Observed behaviours in a work situation First time	Date: 25/01/2021 · Place: Tms Office · Acquired: Yes		Date: · Place: · Acquired:		Date: · Place: · Acquired:		Date: · Place: · Acquired:	

Evaluation of soft skills linked to the units of learning outcome
ULO1. Preparing the working area

Observed behaviours: She prepared her cleaning trolley with all the products and materials needed to clean the offices

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ULO2. Cleaning furniture
(desks, closets, tables, doors, etc. taking care about electronic appliances)

Linked main activities
U2.A1. Cleaning flat surfaces, furniture and furniture items
U2.A2. Desinfection of contact areas
U2.A3. Chronological order of maintenance of an office

	Respect of the rules	Acquired	Efficiency	Acquired	Sense of organisation	Acquired	Autonomy	Acquired
Definition	Level 2 — He/she behaves according to the existing rules.		Level 2 — He/she is able to achieve the objectives and meet the deadlines requested		Level 2 — He/she uses an organizational system that allows him/her to process tasks in a coherent order		Level 2 — He/she applies the process and tasks that allow the work to be performed.	
Observable behaviours	He/She applies appropriate cleaning protocols related to the maintenance of an office; He/She refers to the conditions of use of the products according to the type of surface to be cleaned		He/She provide a service of high quality and delivers it on time		He/She respected the chronological order of office cleaning		He/She does his work without supervision	
Observed behaviours in a work situation First time	Date: · Place: · Acquired:		Date: · Place: · Acquired:		Date: · Place: · Acquired:		Date: · Place: · Acquired:	

Evaluation of soft skills linked to the units of learning outcome
ULO2. Cleaning furniture

You can download the different grids on www.softskills-project.eu or generate them automatically on the paid application www.zerobarrier.eu.

D. The generic assessment grid

A generic **assessment grid** has been developed and helps the trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor to assess soft skills level at the end of an acquisition process by using the evaluation by recurrent observation method without link with a precise job. As the placement grid, it uses the observable behaviours as indicators to attest if a soft skills level is acquired or not.

How to use the grid?
- Adapt the assessment grid to your assessment: delete the lines that are not concerning the soft skills you want to assess (remember that you should only assess 3 soft skills at a time)
- Add the name of the trainee, of the assessor and the soft skills you plan to assess (not more than 3)
- Add the date of the assessment and give some information about the context of the observation. As you will observe your trainee at several time in different contexts, don't forget to update/add the date and describe the context of each assessment.
- Print your assessment grid and make sure that everything appears on a A3 page
- When you are observing your trainee add comments in the field "behaviours observed in a work situation" to help you to define if the soft skills level is acquired or not: precise the date of the comments (see example)
- Please note that sometimes, during an observation, you won't be able to observe the behaviours you wanted to (do not forget to add a comment about it)
- Discuss the results of the assessment with the trainee: if a soft skills level is demonstrated, add a date in the field "observed on the".
- It is only after having added 3 dates that you can consider that a soft skills level is acquired: then you can add "Yes" in the column "ACQUIRED"
- Use the same grid for all the observations linked to the same soft skills: it will help you to see the progress of the trainee and to define if a soft skill is acquired.
- Do not hesitate to enter the data on an excel file or to use the App Zerobarrier to visualize properly the assessment results.

How to define whether a level of soft skills has been acquired?
As explained in the placement and assessment protocol, a level of soft skill is acquired if at least one observable behaviour has been observed on three occasions (in three different contexts and at three different times). If after 3 observations, the assessor has not been able to observe the acquisition of the soft skill level, he/she is invited to continue the observation sessions until the soft skill level is validated. During the observation, the assessor can assess up to 3 soft skills at the same time

On the following page you will find an example of the evaluation grid for the soft skills "Learning to learn" & "Autonomy"

Category	Soft skill	Definition	Level of soft skills acquisition	ACQUIRED	Observable behaviours	Assessment			
						Observed on the	Observed on the	Observed on the	Behaviours observed in a work situation
Growth mindset — Being able to question yourself and to progress	**Learning to learn** — Learning from your own successes and failures	Ability and desire to continuously acquire and update knowledge and competences	**Remember and understand** He/She expresses his/her willingness to update his/her skills and to take advantage of his/her failures.	YES	- He/She expresses curiosity and his/her desire to learn - He/She speaks about his/her missteps, mistakes or failures - He/She identifies his/her behaviours that need to be improved	03/02/2021	04/02/2021	11/02/2021	03/02/2021 : The trainee identified when he made a mistake and asked me a "How can I do better?" 04/02/2021 : After the evaluation, the trainee wanted to discuss with me why he made a mistakes and explained me that he hadn't understand the instrcutions. 07/02/2021 : The trainee wasn't motivated at all today and didn't showed any observable behaviours 11/02/2021 : The trainee asked me if it was possible to do harder things
			Apply He/She actively participates in a training process and training activities, asks questions and performs training tasks.		- He/She participates in a learning process and related activities - He/She asks questions to support his/her learning process - He/She does tasks necessary to gain practice				
			Analyse and evaluate He/She identifies and expresses situations of failure or success that have helped him/her to progress.		- He/She identifies specific failures and successes and what he/she has learned from them - He/She sums up his/her learning journey or process - He/She evaluates his/her learning journey or process				
			Create He/She multiplies the channels of information and learning opportunities for the same competence (self-learning), involves other persons in a learning process.		- He/She searches for learning opportunities (information, course, practice...) on his/her own - He/She describes the next steps in his/her journey or learning process. - He/She exchanges with others to improve his/her learning experience				
	Autonomy — Doing tasks without any help from other people	Ability to be independent, think by yourself, make decisions and undertake actions by yourself, within the framework and limits set by the work position	**Remember and understand** He/She remembers and understands the work environment and his/her position.		- He/She describes the task(s) he/she is responsible for in a given work situation - He/She understands that he/she has to ask for permission/guidance for certain actions in some work situations - He/She identifies the roles of other people involved in his/her work environment				
			Apply He/She applies the process and tasks that allow the work to be performed autonomously.		- He/She applies standard procedures to perform tasks without additional guidance from start to end - He/She is aware of his/her field of intervention set within the framework of his/her work - He/She asks for support only if he/she cannot cope with a situation on his/her own				
			Analyse and evaluate He/She analyses new or unknown situations, transfers and uses his/her skills and knowledge.		- He/She analyses his/her scope of action, and when he/she needs to involve others - He/She links new or unknown situations with well-know processes or procedures - He/She asks for support in new or unknown situations only when he/she realises that he/she cannot cope with the situation alone				
			Create He/She proposes new processes for him/her and the group.		- He/she makes decisions when the need arises to facilitate the work. - He/She decides on his/her own to try new or unusual solutions/approaches to reach a goal - He/She takes responsibility for his/her actions/decisions without blaming others in case of difficulties				

You can download this grid on www.softskills-project.eu or on the paid application www.zerobarrier.eu.

E. The specific assessment grids

Seven specific assessment grids have been developed and helps the trainer/ technical supervisor/ tutor/ assessor to assess the level of soft skills of a trainee at the end of an acquisition process by using the method of assessment by recurrent observation in relation to specific job profiles : Cleaning operative (FR – EN), Welder Boilermaker (SP – EN), Green Area Maintenance operator (EN), Seller Restocker (FR – EN), Help Cooker (FR – EN), Viticulture operator (FR – EN), Biotechnology assistant (EN)

How to use the grid?
- Adapt the assessment grid to your assessment: delete all the lines and columns that do not concern the soft skills you are going to assess (remember that it is only possible to assess 3 soft skills at a time)
- Add the name of the trainee who is going to be assessed, the name of the assessor and the name of the soft skills that will be assessed (3 maximum)
- Add the date of the assessment and add some information about the context of the assessment (in relation to which ULO? which assessment scenario?). As you will be observing your trainee several times in several contexts, do not forget to fill in this information for each assessment.
- Print your assessment grid and make sure it fits on an A3 page.
- When you observe your learner, indicate the date and place and add comments in the field "behaviours observed in work situations" while trying to define whether the level of soft skills was observed or not. The discussion with your learner will allow you to clarify certain behaviours observed and to say whether or not the skill was observed.
- If 3 observations are not enough to demonstrate the acquisition of a soft skill, continue your observations and do not hesitate to add lines to this assessment grid.
- You can certify that a level of soft skills has been mastered if you have observed it three times in three different contexts: at that point you can tick the box "acquired" next to the soft skill.
- Using the same grid for each observation related to the same soft skills will allow you to monitor the learner's progress but above all to certify the acquisition of the soft skills level more easily.
- Do not hesitate to clean up the grid on an EXCEL document or on the Zerobarrier application to better visualize the results of the assessments.

How to define if a level of soft skills is acquired?
As indicated below, a level of soft skills is acquired if at least one observable behaviour has been observed on three occasions (in three different contexts and at three different times). If after 3 observations, the assessor has not been able to observe the mastery of the soft skill, he/she is invited to continue the observation sessions until the soft skill level is validated. During the observation, the assessor evaluates only the soft skills: the Units of Learning Outcomes are there to give elements on the context in which the trainee is to be evaluated.
As some soft skill levels appear in more than one ULO, the assessor is free to observe the soft skill level chosen in relation to the ULO he/she wishes for the first observation and then change for the second etc... If the soft skill level has been observed at 3 times, and each time in relation to another ULO or not, the level is considered as acquired.

Here an example of the of the evaluation grid in relation to the job of cleaning operative

| ULO:Units of learning outcomes and linked main activities		Soft skills linked							
		Sens of organisation	Acquired	Autonomy	Acquired	Respect of the rules	Acquired	Ability to anticipate	Acquired
ULO1. Preparing the working area (according to the cleaning tasks specified, reducing potential hazards and respecting the environment)	**Definition**	Level 2 — He/she uses an organizational system that allows him/her to process tasks in a coherent order		Level 2 — He/she applies the process and tasks that allow the work to be performed.		Level 2 — He/she behaves according to the existing rules.		Level 2 — He/she considers the next steps of his/her mission based on projections (reflecting on potential risks and benefits before acting)	
Linked main activities U1.A1. Preparation of the tools U1.A2. Preparation of the cleaning products U1.A3.Preparing the technical and safety equipment	**Observable behaviours**	He/She is able to prepare his equipment according to the tasks to be performed / He/She properly selected and prepared the cleaning tools / He/She properly selected and prepared the cleaning products		He/she chooses relevant equipment / He/she chooses the products to be used according to the type of surface / He/she prepares aloon his own the equipment he needs		He/She selects personal protective equipment and uses it properly according to the task to be performed / He/She puts signage in place when the situation requires it (example: wet ground)		He/She notifies the team leader of equipment needs early enough / He/She warns of future product orders depending on the stocks	
	Observed behaviours in a work situation First time	Date: / Place: / Acquired:		Date: / Place: / Acquired:		Date: / Place: / Acquired:		Date: / Place: / Acquired:	
Evaluation of soft skills linked to the units of learning outcome **ULO1. Preparing the working area**	Observed behaviours in a work situation Second time	Date: / Place: / Acquired:		Date: / Place: / Acquired:		Date: / Place: / Acquired:		Date: / Place: / Acquired:	
	Observed behaviours in a work situation Third time	Date: / Place: / Acquired:		Date: / Place: / Acquired:		Date: / Place: / Acquired:		Date: / Place: / Acquired:	

You can download the different grids on www.softskills-project.eu or generate them automatically on the paid application www.zerobarrier.eu.
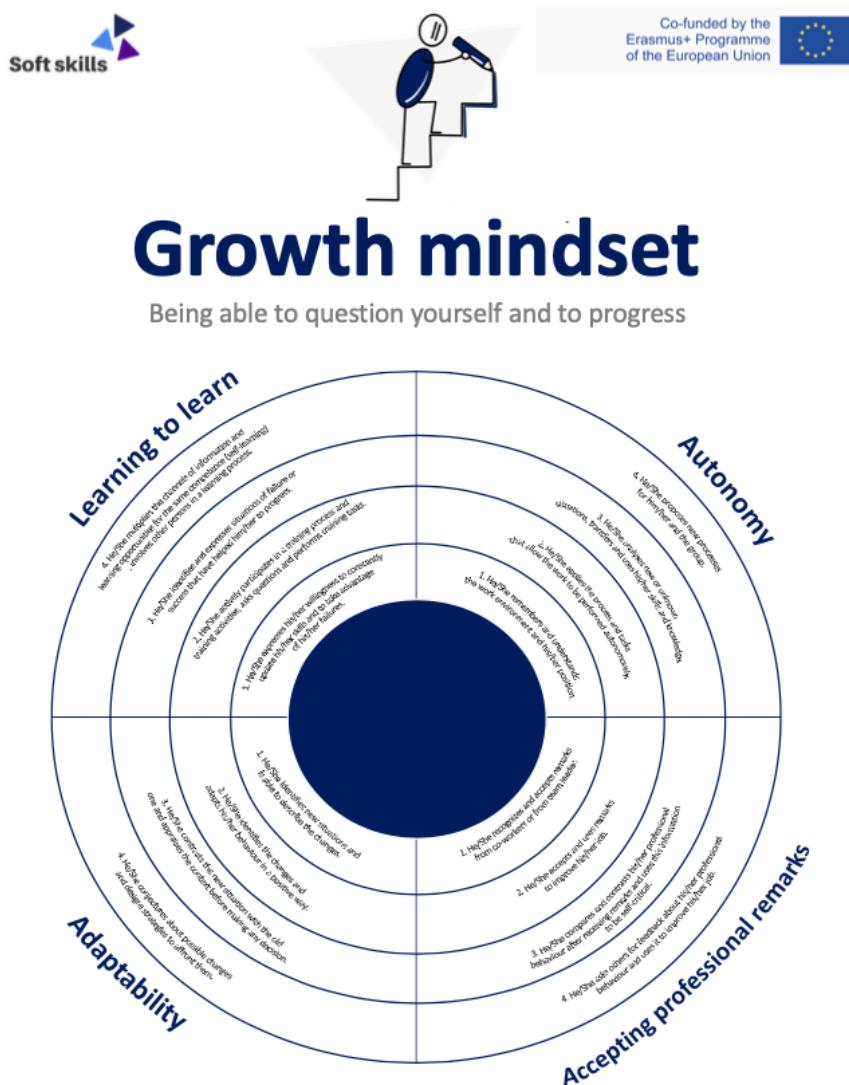
F. The wheels

To visualize the acquisition of soft skills, we can rely on the wheels that we will use throughout the soft skills acquisition process. Indeed, these wheels allow us to visualize the level of the trainee at the time of the placement and then his/her level at the end of the Soft Skills acquisition process. Within the framework of a placement and an assessment in relation to an identified job profile, it is also possible to identify the expectations in relation to the situation.

5 wheels were produced as part of the project: one per soft skills category.
The 4 Soft Skills per category and the definitions of each level of Soft Skills (level 1 inside the wheel and level 4 outside, for the sake of progression) are included.

Here an example of the wheel for the Growth mindset category

You can download the wheels on www.softskills-project.eu or on the paid application www.zerobarrier.eu.

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