Project SILVER

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Management summary

The following report details the Doing Intergenerational Learning Program (DIGL) of the SILVER project by providing four programs of organisational interventions for intergenerational learning in the workplace. It is part of the EU-funded international SILVER project, and is the second in a series of project reports regarding DIGL.

This report was built on the knowledge of the earlier reports: 3.1.1. Researching the State of the Art of DIGL: synthesis, analysis and discussion; 2.1.1. Researching the State of the Art of StAP; 2.2.1. StAP-Design.

This handbook is developed to help managers, trainers and participants in organizations set up effective programs for learning among different generations in an organization. Intergenerational learning is the process of knowledge building, innovation and knowledge transfer that takes place through lifelong learning among the different generations found in an organisation.

This Designing for DIGL handbook provides answers to the following questions that managers, trainers or participants may ask themselves:

1. What type of Intergenerational Learning (IGL) program is suitable in my situation?
2. How do I design/manage/facilitate/participate in this program?
3. What are the tools for implementing the program?

The report is organized into four chapters.

Chapter 1 is the introduction to the four types of IGL programs an organisation may choose from. Chapter 2 describes this process of choosing the right program for doing IGL in your context. It summarizes what types of IGL programs are suitable for the three main IGL goals as identified in the StAP reports: knowledge retention, competence development and improved innovation. It also provides the DIGL Matrix that links problems/goals to IGL programs. This matrix (combined with other diagrams) is meant to help managers and facilitators to choose a type of program and the tools to realise their main IGL goals.

Chapter 3 provides an introduction to the Doing IGL toolkit in the appendix. It gives an overview of the documents in the toolkits per type of program (intergenerational mentoring, intergenerational teams, intergenerational trainings /workshops and intergenerational knowledge capturing).

The Doing IGL Toolkit can be found in the appendix and contains the tools that were developed for each type of program. It has the form of an Appendix in this report: for practical reasons the components of the toolkit are added as separate documents.

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1 Introduction

This handbook is developed to help managers, trainers and participants in organizations set up effective programs for learning among different generations in an organization. Intergenerational learning is the process of knowledge building, innovation and knowledge transfer that takes place through lifelong learning among the different generations found in an organisation. From the desk research we discovered three distinct categories of programs for intergenerational learning: intergenerational mentoring, intergenerational teams and intergenerational trainings or workshops. We categorize these according to the idea of one-to-one, or one-to-few (mentoring); group-based (teams) or one-to-many (workshops or trainings).

According to one of the most commonly used theories (Hansen, Nohria, & Tierney, 1999) personification, codification and a combination of the two are the basic strategies for knowledge management. In each of the three types of IGL programs the personalization aspect is dominant. Personalization means that knowledge is transferred via personal interaction and is consequently spread and saved by actors involved. However, IGL programs can be implemented specifically to result in codified knowledge, i.e. new handbooks or process descriptions. For example, when an expert knowledge worker is retiring there is often not much time left for knowledge retention. The only possibility is to capture his or her knowledge through codification. Therefore we have included intergenerational knowledge capturing as a fourth type of IGL program in this handbook.

This Designing for DIGL handbook provides answers to the following questions that managers, trainers or participants may ask themselves:

1. What type of IGL program is suitable in my situation?
2. How do I design/manage/facilitate/participate in this program?
3. What are the tools for implementing the program?

The structure of the report is as follows. Chapter 2 describes what types of IGL programs are suitable for the three main IGL goals as identified in the StAP reports: knowledge retention, competence development and improved innovation. It also provides the DIGL Matrix that links problems to IGL programs. This matrix (combined with other diagrams) is meant to help managers and facilitators to choose a type of program with including tools to realise their main IGL goals. Chapter 3 provides an introduction to the Doing IGL toolkit in the appendix. It gives an overview of the documents in the toolkits per type of program: intergenerational mentoring, intergenerational teams, intergenerational trainings/workshops and intergenerational knowledge capturing.

2. Choosing the right program for doing IGL

This chapter will take you step by step through the general design of your program for doing IGL. It starts with a short description of the types of IGL programs you can chose from. We link these types of programs to the three main IGL goals: knowledge retention, competence development and improved innovation and other requirements for the context of your program for doing IGL.

2.1. What types of IGL programs are there?

From the desk research we discovered three distinct categories of programs for intergenerational learning: intergenerational mentoring, intergenerational teams and intergenerational trainings or workshops. For reasons we explained in the introduction of this report we decided to include intergenerational knowledge capturing as a fourth type of IGL program in this handbook.

2.1.1. Intergenerational mentoring (IGM)

When we talk about 'Intergenerational mentoring' we typically mean an older worker mentoring a younger worker from a different generation. This type of mentoring, called 'Classical mentoring', is particularly useful for the younger workers' learning and professional development. 'Reverse mentoring' is when a younger person mentors an older person and thus is still a facet of intergenerational mentoring. This can help to increase the older workers' employability, for example by becoming up to date with new technologies in the workplace. 'Reciprocal mentoring' is where people from different generations mentor each other. This can be used for learning and developing new and different skills or methods associated with the job using the different experience and knowledge of the employees involved. Reciprocal mentoring can be very useful to innovate complex products and processes in a dynamic environment.

2.1.2. Intergenerational teams (IGT)

Intergenerational teams (IGT's) are sometimes referred to as mixed-age teams. Based on an age structure analysis of the organisation, IGT's are made up of different generations, explicitly created in order to draw on a diverse pallet of specific knowledge, skills and experience. They can be found throughout the entire organisation or on a smaller scale, for example for a specific project or situation.

2.1.3. Intergenerational trainings and workshops (IGTW)

Trainings and workshops are fairly common practices in organisations, so what is it that makes them 'intergenerational'? The explicit purpose or goal is to improve learning of all generations and between generations. Informal learning is relatively unstructured and relies on the activity of the workplace to stimulate learning whereas workshops and/or training modules are highly structured and have activities prearranged based on a specific curriculum or learning goal for a group of people. An example of a typical training situation comes from the tertiary education sector in Greece where induction seminars are facilitated by older teachers who teach younger ones about teaching and marking student papers. A more atypical example comes from the health-care sector. In this case, veteran nurses take part in workshops that lead to insights about growth and development, or what the case refers to as 'job sculpting', of which mentoring is an important part. What is interesting in this example is that the desired outcomes of the program is more linked to the older worker than the younger one. However, because different generations are involved we classify it under IGL.

2.1.4. Intergenerational knowledge capturing (IGKC)

Intergenerational knowledge capturing is the process of codifying knowledge of a particular expert on a particular topic or field in such a way that it can be transferred to somebody else without help of the expert. It can be used by managers or knowledge workers when knowledge needs to be retained, for example when an expert leaves the organization when he or she retires. In most cases the knowledge is documented in a handbook or good practice description that is stored on a website

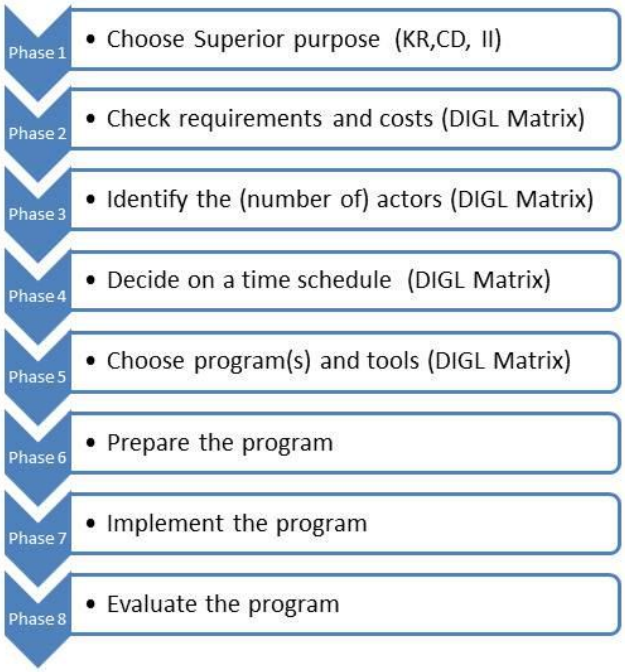
or in a database. In government agencies it is common practice to include this in a transfer file that is used to transfer important knowledge and information from one civil servant to another.

2.2. Choosing and creating your own doing IGL Program

The following paragraphs will lead you step by step through the choices you have to make to design a Doing IGL Program that fits your goals and context.

2.2.1. Phases of the Doing IGL design

Figure 1 shows the eight phases of the Doing IGL design.



Phase 1 Choose superior purpose (knowledge retention (KR), competence development (CD), improved innovation (II): see 2.2.2., 2.2.3., 2.2.4.

Phase 2 Check requirements and costs in the DIGL Matrix: see 2.2.5.

Phase 3 Identify the (number of) actors in your program and check which program fits: see 2.2.5.

Phase 4 Think of the time schedule for your program: short term or long term and check which program fits: see 2.2.5.

Phase 5 Choose the main accent(s) and/or tools in your program: IGM, IGT, IGTW, IGKC

Phase 6 Preparation Phase (see: Training Pack and tools per program in Appendix)

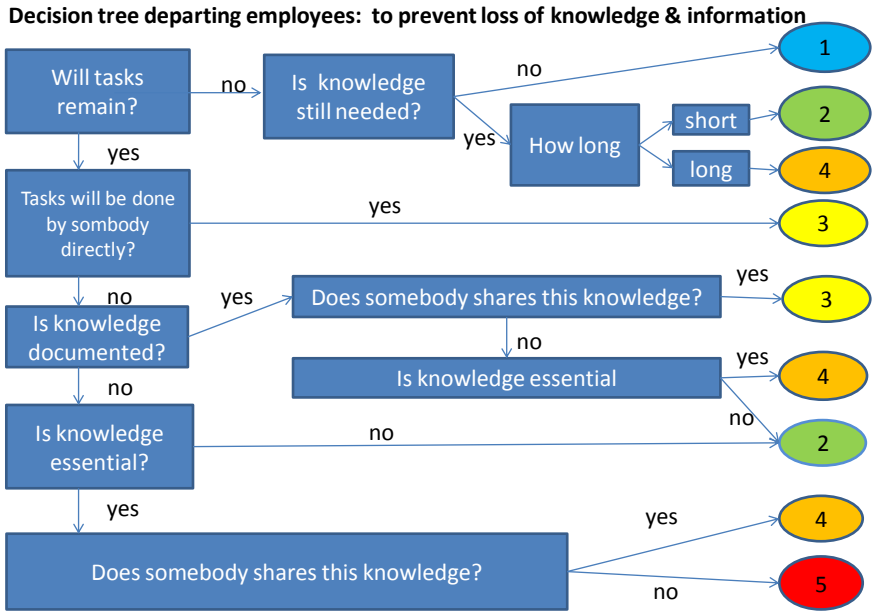
Phase 7 Implementation of the program (see: Training Pack and tools per program in Appendix)

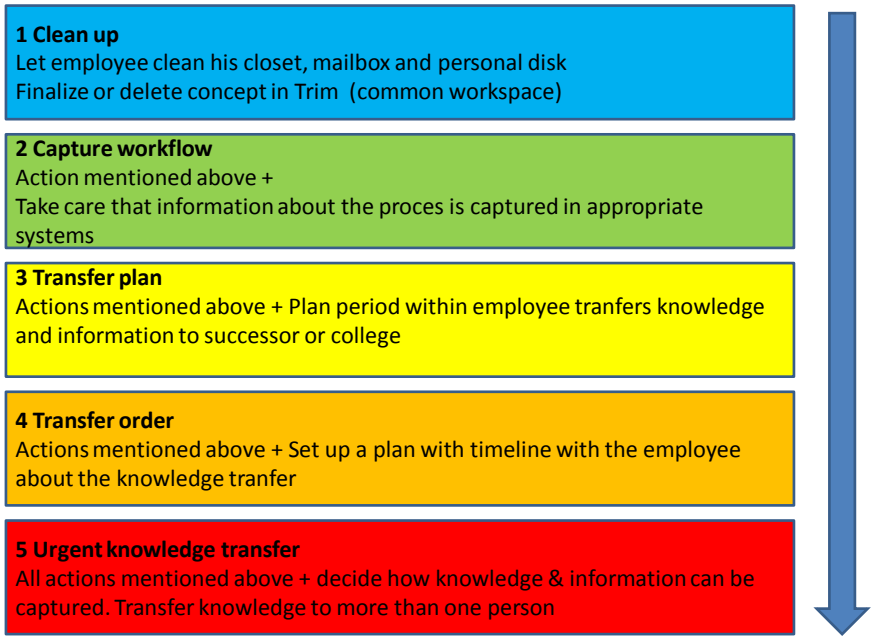
Phase 8 Evaluation of the program (see: Evaluation Form tools in Appendix)

The first choice to make is ”what is the main purpose of the IGL program? Is it knowledge retention, competence development, improved innovation?”

2.2.2. Phase 1: main purpose is knowledge retention

If your main purpose is knowledge retention, then this decision tree from DNB (de Nederlandse Bank) together with its list of activities is a very useful tool for choosing your program.





At the same time this tool provides a good insight in the usability of the four types of doing IGL programs you can chose from:

If the action needed is Capture workflow you chose Intergenerational Knowledge Capturing (IGKC).

If the action needed is a Transfer plan you can chose Intergenerational mentoring (IGM), Intergenerational Teams (IGT) and/or Intergenerational trainings and workshops (IGTW).

Which of these types of programs you chose and in which order (Transfer order) will depend on the context of your organisation: sector, culture, number of actors, the available time and budget, etc. The DIGL Matrix, Table 1 helps you making a more detailed choice based on these aspects.

2.2.3. Phase 1: main purpose is competence development

If your main purpose is competence development the DIGL Matrix gives you four options:

Classic or Reverse Mentoring is a good choice if competence development is needed for one or few employees, if there is enough time for a mentoring program and other requirements are fulfilled. For more details on the choices within the Intergenerational mentoring (IGM) program please find the Training Package IGM in the appendix.

Intergenerational Teams and more specific IGT tools 2, 3 and 4 are a good choice if competence development is needed one or more groups of employees. Teams already in place or to be explicitly created for this purpose. For more details on the choices within the Intergenerational Teams (IGT) program please find the Training Package IGT and tool descriptions in the appendix.

Intergenerational Trainings and Workshops and more specific IGTW tool 3 is a good choice if competence development is needed for a group of employees, not necessarily working as a team. A workshop 'Expert as teacher' is a good start for younger employees. This workshop may be followed upon by a mentoring program or forms of consultancy or coaching by experts. For more details on

the choices within the Intergenerational Trainings and Workshops (IGTW) program please find the Training Package IGTW and tool description in the appendix.

Intergenerational Knowledge Capturing is a good choice if competence development is needed for a novice. The novice interviews an expert and learns to capture knowledge of the expert. For more details on the choices within the Intergenerational Knowledge Capturing (IGKC) program please find the Training Package IGKC and tool descriptions in the appendix.

2.2.4. Phase 1: main purpose is improved innovation

If your main purpose is improved innovation the DIGL Matrix gives you three options:

Reverse or Reciprocal Mentoring is a good choice if improved innovation is needed in a setting with one or few employees, if there is enough time for a mentoring program and other requirements are fulfilled. For more details on the choices within the Intergenerational mentoring (IGM) program please find the Training Package IGM and tool descriptions in the appendix.

Intergenerational Teams and more specific IGT tools 2 and 5 are a good choice if improved innovation is needed for a group of employees, not necessarily working as a team. For more details on the choices within the Intergenerational Teams (IGT) program please find the Training Package IGT and tool descriptions in the appendix.

Intergenerational Trainings and Workshops and more specific IGTW tools 1, 4, 5 are a good choice if improved innovation is needed a group of employees, not necessarily working as a team. For more details on the choices within the Intergenerational Trainings and Workshops (IGTW) program please find the Training Package IGTW and tool descriptions in the appendix.

2.2.5. Phases 2- 5: DIGL Matrix

The DIGL Matrix, Table 1 on the following pages will help you choosing and designing your own doing IGL program.

Main goal / Program	Intergenerational mentoring	Intergenerational teams	Intergenerational workshops & trainings	Intergenerational knowledge capturing
Knowledge retention	Classic mentoring IGM tools 1-5	IGT tool 3: On-the-job learning in IG teams	IGTW tool 2: Re-energising experienced workers workshop	IGKC tools 1, 2, 3.
• Is a solution for this problem because of…	Mentoring sets out to capture the informal learning, knowledge, experience, networks and skills of an expert, especially in the case of tacit knowledge.	Knowledge or skills of experts is transferred and important knowledge is captured by working in intergenerational teams. Mixed age teams can also improve productivity and lower employee turnover.	Explicit career development options help experienced workers to find a better fit and help younger colleagues to learn.	The knowledge is codified and documented in a good-practice report.
•				
• Requires…	• Understanding of the importance of mentoring. • Choosing the appropriate mentors and mentees. Systematic and sound preparation. • Management support.	Successful implementation requires a supportive organizational leadership structure and a learning culture. The organization needs to provide sufficient time and space to start a timely transfer (when expert will be leaving the organization)	Design and introduction of program Procedure of nomination Examples of growth experiences from colleagues.	The knowledge is related to a particular, well defined task that can clearly be demarcated A 'modeller' is available that can use the procedure
• Costs about…	Depends on the intensity of the program. Long term	Depends on the scope of the implementation and the tool selected, starting at 2 hours for a workshop to improve the effectiveness of existing intergenerational teams.	Depends on scope of the implementation. Short term: • 3 day program + 3 days (facilitator) • Preparation time (2-3 facilitators): 3 days per facilitator • Option: annual program	2 x 1,5 hours from the expert Approximately 8 hours from the modeller
• Number of participants	One-on-one/few	One-on-group	One-on-many	One-on-one •
• Setting	Formal and informal	Formal and informal	Formal	• Formal

Main goal / Program	Intergenerational mentoring	Intergenerational teams	Intergenerational workshops & trainings	Intergenerational knowledge capturing
Competence development	Classic or reverse mentoring, IGM tools 1-5	IGT tool 2, 3, 4	IGTW Tool 3: Expert as Teacher Workshop	IGKC tools 1, 2, 3.
• Is a solution for this problem because of…	Mentoring sets out to capture the informal learning, knowledge, experience, networks and skills of an expert, making it an effective way to learn, especially in the case of tacit knowledge.	Intergenerational teams are a vehicle for improved problem solving, the exchange of knowledge or skills and (new) skill development. They can also improve intergenerational relations and foster inclusion of younger or older employees, which in turn can result into improved employee retention, lower employee turnover and increased productivity.	A workshop by an expert is a good start for younger workers; younger workers can consult this expert after the workshop	The novice is forced to thoroughly interview the expert and write down the results in such a way that the skill can be understood and performed by somebody else.
• Requires…	See: Knowledge Retention In the case of reverse mentoring special attention for recruitment and training of mentors as well as the attitude of the mentees is desired as well as special attention for the composing phase of the mentorship.	Management commitment to establishing mixed age teams and active monitoring of age structure of team are essential when working with intergenerational teams. Sufficient time and space need to be provided to implement the selected changes and/or tools.	One expert teacher	• The knowledge is related to a particular, well defined task that can clearly be demarcated • A novice is available as 'modeller'
• Costs about…	Depends on the intensity of the program.	Costs depend on the scope of the implementation and the tool selected, starting at 2 hours for a workshop to improve the effectiveness of existing intergenerational teams.	Workshop: 1-2 hours Preparation: 1.5 hours	• 2 x 1,5 hours from the expert • Approximately 8 hours from the novice
• Number of participants	One-on-one/few	One-on-group	One-on-many	One-on-one
• Setting	Formal and informal	Formal and informal	Formal	Formal

Main goal Program	Intergenerational mentoring	Intergenerational teams	Intergenerational workshops & trainings	Intergenerational knowledge capturing
Improved innovation	Reverse or Reciprocal mentoring, IGM tools 1-5	IGT tool 2, 5	IGTW tools 1, 4, 5	n/a
• Is a solution for this problem because of…	Older and younger work together and share their knowledge, experience and skills, while they even learn from each other to together create new solutions and products	Intergenerational teams are a positive stimulation for sustainable innovation and increased problem solving . They improve intergenerational relations (social capital) through increased cooperation (versus competition) and improve productivity.	Collaborating, brainstorming and visualising in relation to (future) needs helps older and younger workers to see improvements.	
• Requires…	• See: Knowledge Retention. • Special attention for the construction phase of the mentorship	• 5 – 8 participants, with as many generations represented as possible. • Trainer to facilitate the brainstorming exercise.	Depends on the program.	
• Costs about…	Depends on the intensity of the program.	1 - 2 hours for a workshop 1.5 hours of preparation by facilitator	• Tool 1: 4 hours + 3 hours preparation • Tool 4, 5: 3 hours + 2 hours preparation	
• Number of participants	One-on-one/few	One-on-group	One-on-many	
• Setting	Formal and informal	Formal and informal	Formal	

Table 1. DIGL MATRIX: Linking problems to IGL programs

3. Doing IGL

Actually organising IGL is done using the different tools in the toolkit, available at www.intergenerationallearning.eu.

Basically there are 4 types of tools;

- One for organising intergenerational teams
- One for organising intergenerational mentoring
- One for organising intergenerational knowledge capturing
- One for organising intergenerational workshops and trainings

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