



Theater-based training for supporting innovations in enterprises (THENOVA)

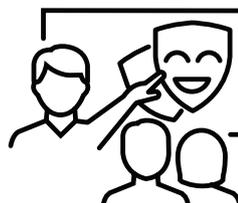
THENOVA stands for the Erasmus+ project **Theater-based training for supporting innovations in enterprises**, which started on the 1st of November 2020. THENOVA partnership is composed of passionate teachers, experienced company trainers and professional artists from Austria, Germany, Greece and Poland who seek to integrate performative and theater-based methods in company training to boost innovation potential of Europe's small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

THENOVA intellectual outputs:



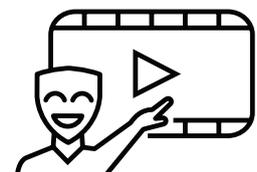
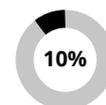
IO1:

Theater-based training program for SMEs trainers (completed)



IO2:

Theater-based training sessions for SMEs staff (in progress)



IO3:

Video-based Open Educational Resources on theater-based training in SMEs (in progress)

Theater-based training courses for SME staff – pilot implementation

Starting from May 2022, trained THENOVA trainers have been delivering their pilot theater-based training courses to employees from different companies in their countries. These courses cover relevant topics of transversal nature for SMEs staff that represent current challenges for most companies regardless their profile and operation sector. Just to name a few:

- Change and Diversity Management,
- Communication and Emotional Intelligence,
- Striking presentations by using body language,
- Escalation and de-escalation,
- Giving and Receiving Feedback,
- Exercising influence,
- Generation Gap Inclusion.



In total, 25 training courses are going to be (re)designed by THENOVA facilitators and delivered to company employees using performative and theater-based techniques. A few of them were already implemented. The highlights from those courses will be presented in this Newsletter.

THENOVA dry runs – trials in a safe environment

Before our trainers began with their pilot courses, they tried new theater-based methods with randomly selected participants. We wanted to make sure that the delivery of the training courses to real trainees will be of outstanding quality.

During the dry runs, THENOVA facilitators practiced a few theater-based techniques for various educational purposes and multiple topics. It was a learning experience and fun as well since trainers' efforts were recorded and underwent peer evaluation performed by professional actors from Rhenania network. As a result, THENOVA trainers got good grasp of the theater-based techniques and felt well-prepared for their future mission.

This is what our trainers shared with us after the dry runs:

"Theater-based exercises enhance everyone's creativity, including that of trainers"

"Give your participants enough time to get into the "mood" of the exercise to fully grasp it"

"Never underestimate the potential of any of the exercises"

THENOVA trainers' 1st hand experience

Training „VOICE AND POWER TO CONVINC“

On May 23, 2022, the first pilot theater-based training entitled “Voice and Power to Convince” took place at the Fachhochschule des Mittelstands (FHM) in Bielefeld (Germany). FHM trainer Christoph Brake explored with nine participants from six German enterprises (and some of them traveled about two hours to attend the 4-hours event!) the wide range of their own voice that only a few have consciously used before. Together they made unusual exercises on breathing, intonation and articulation as well as on the emotionality of the voice, which were enriched with some medical and physical facts and figures about the voice formation. Here some exciting feedback from our attendees:



“It was great to play emotions”

“Professional coach and cool atmosphere!”

“Just the right proportion between interaction and theory”

Training “GIVING AND RECEIVING FEEDBACK”

On May 25, 2022, the workshop “Giving and Receiving Feedback” was conducted by PAIZ Consulting trainer Artur Mazurek in Bydgoszcz, Poland. This training was a refreshing experience for 12 managers from the automotive sector. They actively participated in the 4-hour workshop that represented a mix of theater-based exercises and role plays. The workshop attendees were practicing giving effective, helpful and motivating feedback to employees as well as to their peers using life-based scenarios.

At the beginning participants seemed a bit reluctant to participate in the role play, especially since some of them were going to be recorded and discussed in front of the whole group. After several minutes, all pressure was gone from the group and the participants were engaged in all the exercises, which turned out to represent the greatest value of the workshop.

In particular, the King exercise turned out to be very helpful in realizing how one’s intentions are understood; whether the message one gives with one’s body language

is congruent with what one wants to say; reading the body language of the interlocutor and reacting to it to lead the conversation as well as practicing reaching out to another person’s needs.



Training “STRIKING PRESENTATIONS BY USING BODY LANGUAGE”

On June 29, 2022, another THENOVA trainer from the Fachhochschule des Mittelstands (FHM) Beate Brechmann gave the next theater-based workshop entitled Striking Presentations by Using Body Language. 27 registrations were received, but unfortunately only nine places were available. We were very happy about this high demand and felt sorry for not being able to accommodate everybody.

During the 4-hour training, our participants exercised different postures, facial expressions and eye contact when meeting a discussion partner as well as got practical answers to the eternal question: Where to put my hands while making a presentation?

We were overwhelmed about a very positive feedback of our trainees who wished more of such type of training as well as voted for the integration of performative techniques to all types of company training.



Training “PROBLEM SOLUTION”

On July 5, 2022, THENOVA facilitator Helga Moser from the Institute of Social Work at Fachhochschule JOANNEUM (Graz, Austria) explored the potentials of theater-based techniques for the daily work life of 15 participants in the scope of the workshop “Problem solution”.

The 4-hour workshop started with exercises to warm up, which also had lots of potential to explore dynamics within oneself and in groups. In the improvisation exercises, the participants practiced being more spontaneous and exploring verbal and non-verbal means of communication in different situations. Time was also dedicated to reflecting and discussing the transfer of the learnt to the job.

The feedback of the participants who demonstrated their active engagement and creativity, was very positive, and some asked for a follow-up workshop soon.



July 14 – 15, 2022: Transnational Partner Meeting in Piraeus

Greece is well known as the birthplace of theatre – THE-NOVA project meeting there is a must! That’s why we immediately followed the invitation of our partner IDEC located in Piraeus to conduct our next transnational partner meeting in sunny Greece.

As always, the partners were ready to work hard in a very informal and enjoyable atmosphere that accompanied all the meetings in this project. The discussions were dedicated to the exchange of experiences obtained by THENOVA trainers from the implementation of the first theater-based training sessions: what went particularly well? How to keep trainees’ attention during the entire training? How to intervene in case of losing the group dynamics? This discussion was valuable for THE-NOVA partners who did not implement their training sessions yet.

On the personal side, the surroundings, the atmosphere of the seaside as well as the sunset dinner made our meeting unforgettable!



Finally, we talked about the effective strategies to design the next output, which was video-based Open Educational Resources. Partners shared their ideas about the storyboards for the videos, which are expected to be

delivered by September 2022. To awake partners’ creativity, Gregor and Signe from Rhenania network made a performance in front of camera helping understand the magic power of body language.

What is coming next?

Once we are all back from the holidays, the active work on the Video-based open educational resources will be starting. Inspiring storyboards, emotional implementation and technical know-how are the key success factors.

In addition, partners will complete their pilot theater-based training courses and document their experiences with the aim to share them with other trainers and facilitators outside the partnership. Learn more about our developments from the next Newsletter!



Program:

Erasmus+ , Key action 2: Strategic Partnerships for vocational education and training

Project lifetime:

November 1, 2020 – April 30, 2023

Project coordinator:

Fachhochschule des Mittelstands (FHM)



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