

## **WBL-PRO Professional Peer Network: The team talks with the professionals – Petra Stahlmann from Germany**

"My name is **Petra Stahlmann** and am the director of a private vocational school for wellness and cosmetics in Bavaria. We are offering courses, starting from one-day courses up to 11 months courses. These courses might be full-time or part-time.

It is mostly women who attend the courses. They might join us after their school graduation or at any time in their lives when they are in a process of transition (e.g. when (re-)entering the labour market after raising a family)."



**Please find below what she shared with our team:**

### **1. Please share with us what the main advantages of work-based learning are.**

The field of wellness and cosmetics includes a range of tasks and activities that is related to practical skills and working with clients. This is the reason why it is an advantage to train such activities in work-based learning.

Of course the theoretical knowledge of products, health risks and professional procedures is important. However, for the future success of a trainee it will be most relevant to have the practical skills and also the social skills in order to interact with clients in a friendly, polite and professional way.

### **2. Please share with us what the main challenges of work-based learning are.**

One of the main challenges with work-based learning is the first time trainees perform a treatment on a client. The trainee might be nervous and not very experienced with the practical skills. The clients on the other hand are expecting and paying for a professional performance.

### **3. Please describe any solutions to challenges and/or weaknesses related to work-based learning.**

In order to address this challenge, we are work with volunteers who know that they will be treated by trainees. This is more than doing just a simulation and the clients are informed and have agreed to this. Additionally, the performance is supervised and evaluated by an experienced trainer so that clients are assured that the activities are will be delivered in a professional way.

**4. Please share what the most important knowledge, skills and competences for the work-based learning professional are according to you. What kind of trainings are necessary to acquire them?**

The work-based learning professional should have the required professional knowledge, skills and competences in the field. Moreover, he/she has to have competences in order how to train (young) people. Both of these are related to professional competences.

However, in my opinion, the work-based learning professional should also have the personal abilities and social skills that are important in any job (e.g. politeness, social skills, intercultural skills, patience, correctness, reliability). Moreover, he/she should have the ability to transfer practical knowledge.

The trainings for professional trainers in companies (Ausbildung der Ausbilder) in Germany support the development of these competences."

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