



The municipality of Piteå, Sweden

Learning a profession and working language simultaneously in an internship

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How does it work?

Before the internship

A head-hunter from the municipality's labour-market unit matches an unemployed person to an internship at a workplace – in this case, elderly care. The head-hunter has a contact person with the unemployment services, the social-service department, a school where Swedish is taught, and other contacts through which he finds unemployed people.

The head-hunter then meets people and interviews them about their life – for example, work-life experience, family, interests (both work and leisure), how long they have been living in Sweden, which languages they speak, and education. From this mapping, the head-hunter matches the person to a suitable workplace. After this, the head-hunter makes a study visit to the workplace and meets the manager and mentor, and he decides on a start date for the internship if the person is still interested and if the workplace managers think it will work. They also decide on some practical things, such as work hours, the schedule, the confidentiality agreement, any studies in Swedish during the internship, and financial support.

During the internship

When a start date is set, the trainee starts the internship. The trainee follows the schedule of the mentor. In the elderly care setting, that also means work in the evenings and on weekends. If the trainee needs to study Swedish in Swedish for Immigrants, these hours are planned in the work schedule.

During the internship, which in this project lasts six months, the mentor uses the tool of work tasks that is described in the section 'Structured introduction and evaluation of work skills'. Once the internship has started, the mentor and trainee also meet the language-support function personnel to plan for the language method. The mentor and the trainee follow the approach described in the section 'The language support method'. Then those responsible for the language-support function conduct follow-up on the method every other week. The work tasks that are taught by the mentors are evaluated as the language development is, but that is done by a labour-market consultant about three times during the internship.

When about one month of the internship is left, a plan for completion is made. A plan is prepared for what the trainee should do after the internship is done, alongside the final evaluations of skills learned during the internship. The trainee also gets a certificate of all the skills (s)he has learnt.