

A Very Subjective Mode of Coach's Professional Development*

Elena Karpievich,
Tatyana Krasnova



Where can an ordinary Belarusian coach get assistance in developing professional competence from nowadays? What prevails in the process of professional growth of typical Belarusian coach of non-formal education nowadays: learning from the mistakes spotted, self-training, "learning on the step of a bus" — while going from one place to another with your colleague, taking part in trainings, or maybe supervision, individual consulting¹? It may be interesting to hold research into these questions and obtain an objective image. The authors of this article made an attempt to conduct a sort of pilot poll where they themselves appear as interviewees. The results received are certainly subjective and full of emotional flashes this time initiated by the Festival of Non-Formal Education (15–17 September, 2006) can be regarded as the ground for the next reflection in turn on forms of support, not periodical but rather constant, for professional (as well as individual, without putting on a modest air) development of trainers. Maybe the moment when NGO will create their own supervision institution (or we shall call it otherwise) and examination of training programs for coaches will come? Maybe we are already late and there's no necessity in such practice as fewer and fewer seminar have been taking place lately... **Elena Karpievich and Tatyana Krasnova** are speculating on that (and not only) topic.

The first question that we would like to ask is connected with the announced in our practice demand of a participant for education which is being received. One of the myths belief which unites us is that education is efficient if a participant has first and foremost got a motive and a formulated demand. If you are to face this thesis it will be logical to ask the following question: can you clearly formulate your demand for personal professional trainee's competence development?

assistance, on the one hand, and questions to myself that will let me revise my professional activity, on the other. In that case it would be useful to find a coach² who would help to formulate the demand. Unfortunately, Belarusian Trainers' Association doesn't possess such intuition.

— All these "beating about the bush" do not cancel the direct answer to the direct question. Without thinking for too long, I'll mention the thing that comes first to my mind. I'd like to master the case-study method to its full extent. By the way, this method could be used to a wider extent not only in my work with different target groups, but while holding trainings for NGO coaches as well. I'd also like to learn how to make multimedia presentations of such a quality so that they shouldn't just be a nice wrapping of some material of big volume with even greater pleasure. Quite often multimedia presentations represent a very convert way of conventional transmission of information. The embodiment of this is when an attempt to stock the slide with as much information as possible is being realized. In its nature it's not any difference from an academic lecture that is often opposed to training or a seminar.

- I consider this question too straightforward.
- I agree that the question is rather harsh, but to my mind it's justified in case of short term duration, the rhythm within the boundaries of which a Belarusian coach has to work nowadays.
- By the way, this is the form the question sounds when the participants are interviewed: what are the prospective results of your taking part in the training? What would you like to learn from it? To answer the questions it's easier to stick to a ready-made sentence, for example, (what is being assumed by the training?) and "to try it on".
- Trying to give a sincere answer to the question, personally I faced the difficulty of formulating a concrete demand for

— I'd go on enumerating and add to the list: generally speaking, there's a lack of skills (computer-aided skills);

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¹ The discussion of the issue concerning the creation of trainer consulting practice has been held in our society for quite a long time and within the course of different educational events. In particular, such an idea was stated by L.Kirilyuk at the conference devoted to the results of the Project "School of Coaches" run by the partner organizations of Belarus and Sweden.
² Coaching — professional help rendered to a person in setting personal and professional aims and means of their fulfillment, in acquiring the skills he / she needs to improve individual efficiency, in overcoming difficult intrinsic situations, in preserving calmness and acting efficiently in difficult time.

delicacy towards the situation unwinding in the group at the moment; abilities to “watch and see” the situation in the group with your eyes wide open; skills to work with your own confidence; abilities to notice and learn from your mistakes, and barely a detached view is required.

“We begin to find our limits only when we start to work and develop. There are some boundaries that are surmountable. For example, you can be quite reserved. Knowing that you have to pay much attention to communication in a group you can develop your attentiveness to another person and as result improve your communication skills. But there are some insurmountable limits. Realizing them can be painful. At the same time one should take it as it is. One shouldn't get stuck on something unattainable...

A trainer certainly has to develop as a person. Why? What for? If the purpose is in understanding oneself in all the variety of manifestation and in connection with that understanding other people and life in general, then this ways lead one to improvement of one's cooperation with the group members. If the aim is to reach an ideal state, and make a role-model out of oneself, then it's the route to a sect not training. It restricts the coach as well as the group members in their development and perception of life in all its diversity” [1].

What do you think? Do our demands seem typical to other trainers or maybe we are absorbed in our extremely selfish illusions? What if a typical list of demands is possible, it may be a sign testifying some drawbacks in the system of coaches' training and some new trends and demands from the side of consumers of our educational services (though the system does not exist in NGO by all accounts).

— Judging by a small poll among our fellow workers we managed to find out what they consider to be topical nowadays: to diagnose hot buttons that are often faced with during the work with specific target groups by reflecting on their activities; to determine the level of one's own trainer's competence and prospects of its development; to work out methods of search, preparation of handouts for the participants, to systematize the types and functions of these handouts; to acquire the skill of working with different points of view presented at the seminar including the discussion of them, thus turning it into a rich in content one, etc.

“In reality not 100% of participants come to the seminar to learn something or to accomplish some certain tasks. Here are some extracts from the participants' statements:

- generally speaking I'd like to know what a training is;
- I haven't studied for a long time, I'd like to get to know something new (anything at all), I'm tired of going round the circle;
- I was actually sent here by my company, why not to go...;
- I've heard a lot about the coach (company, theme), it's interesting to see everything with your own eyes;
- I need to adorn my resume, and here they confer a good certificate, the company is reliable;
- I'd like to come off the press... to make a beneficial acquaintance...

They say as a man sows so shall he reap. Where are You heading to?” [2].

To conclude with our brief exchange of opinions let's guess that a coach may find it useful asking himself / herself some amount of questions that help him / her to analyze his / her own activity as a mean of professional deformation precautions.

E.g.

- What are you good at doing at the training (seminar)? Why do you make such a conclusion (give several examples)?
- What skills, competence³ do you lack of?
- Do you feel confident in the group? What is this confidence based on?
- What makes you feel anxious before the seminar? How do you manage to compensate this anxiety?
- How do you know the seminar or the training that was held was successful or failed? What are the signs of it? Etc.

The list of questions can be further specified as well as differentiated in accordance with the degree of professional experience of a trainer.

Besides one can make an attempt to draft a table⁴ that will format some mind map of the trainer's demand for

³ It's extremely productive for self-analysis to use the list of trainer skills described in a wonderful book by L.M.Korol, E.L. Mihailova “Training for trainers: how the steel was tempered”. — Moscow: Independent Company “Class”, 2004. — 192 p.

⁴ Compiling of the chart was done on the basis of ideas taken from the texts: Astafyeva L. Navigator for those who want to study or what criteria are used to evaluate a business seminar. Consulting and trainings in St. Petersburg http://www.treko.ru/show_article_379; Korol L.M., Mihailova E.L. Training for trainers: how the steel was tempered. — Moscow.: Independent Company “Class”, 2004. — 192 p. — (Library of psychology and psychotherapy. Psychology and business, edition 100).



education, it would be compiled on the grounds of the formal and logical bases and would lay claim to getting the role of a “universal means” that allows us to trace the demands of the participants as well (below you will find a possible variant of such a chart). It’s very easy to use it:

one just has to ask himself / herself a question “What do I need for an effective trainer activity?”, and then one moves cell by cell (e.g. there’s lack of equipment units, namely new information on the theme...).

Table 1. A “Mind map” to assist a coach in formulating the demand for education

Equipment	Information	Novelty of the information Demand for the information Practical character of the information The method one can use to work with the information The method of information presentation, etc.
	Toolkit	Novelty of the modes, methods, ways The potential of the educational power of the methods (an opportunity to initiate some changes in the mode of thinking) The technological character of the methods (an opportunity of their use in professional activities) Proportionality of methods and content Conformity of methods with the group dynamics, etc.
Models (precedents) for imitation (reproduction, repetition)	Trainer	Individual style of running a training Individual “myths” of an effective training Sensitivity towards the “situations” An exclusive character of an individual mode of training Direction of a seminar course of running
Integrity of practice	Feedback	Reflection on the targets of one’s own professional activity Non-conformation to the stereotypes and aims Work with personal anxiety or confidence, etc.
Training ground	Experimenting	Experimenting with new methods, questions, ideas, etc. outside the training space Enlarging the role repertoire of a trainer, etc.

Supposing a trainer manage to formulate the demand or state the intention to search opportunities to reform the quality of his / her activities, then the next question arises: do you have anyone to discuss or reflect on your practice (answer your own questions)?

– Unfortunately, I reckon that I personally practically don’t have any opportunities to discuss my training and teaching practice. I allow myself to verbalize this thought publicly just because there some feeling that the situation I’m in is typical of the coach environment.

– I think that the most important thing is to believe that reflection is the mean that can improve one’s work that it helps to study its productively. Although teachers and psychologists substantiated this function of reflection long ago, the question is maybe in coming to believe in its strength. It may seem strange but reflection isn’t so spread in our work. One has to take the real truth into consideration: e.g. right after the seminar there’s neither force nor time for reflection as a rule. Some time later the edge is lost. This is a complicated type of activity that requires much time and mediated participation of some other specialists. That is why it’s timely to put the question about coaching for a trainer.

– The second issue that is not less important: often discussing our own seminar we do not reflect on it but simply exchange our ardent opinions about what we managed to do and what we didn’t. One can hardly call such an exchange of opinions a reflective practice. Observations show that coaches first and foremost discuss the activity of the participants most often – what they were doing and what they were not doing, whether they were of an advanced level, capable of studying something, open-minded and not aggressive. Discussion also centers on how effective was this or that method, how it can be improved, to what degree the content of the lesson was learnt. Though one should reformulate the question: “what was I doing as a trainer?” and “what effect did this activity produce upon the participants?”. Maybe the acquired skills of reflection on the activities will lead to the ability of reflection in the course of an activity.. This is namely one of the distinguishing features of a professional.

Summing up all the above mentioned we may conclude: there’s still a certain priority of “doing” rather analyzing among coaches. In accordance with these priorities our professional time is charted. Although we will hardly ever afford any other correlation, we think it’s important to make these two processes parallel.

Reflection may be lagging behind the time as the trainer's practice hasn't reached its "climax of identity" yet or the trainers haven't merely taken care of organizing a developing educational space for themselves. Though the forms that organize the reflective space which help a coach to analyze his / her activity are as a matter of fact known. These are "trainings for trainers", a club, a circle [3], coaching that has already been mentioned not once in the article, supervision, etc. But the question is whether these forms can function effectively on the territory of Belarus? What should we do to make them work?

Perhaps it will do NGO coaches good if they periodically have a look at the nitty-gritty of business-trainers' education to widen their horizons. Take for example wishes that are expressed by business-trainers and consultants and forwarded to the management of the companies in connection with the improvement of their qualification, they are worth paying attention to [4]. If we are to make projections of the situation as to the sphere of informal education then we have to establish the fact that its trainers unfortunately have an opportunity to lay claim to themselves or to each other and these wishes can be reinterpreted as possible forms of self-development.

Thus business-trainers are expecting the attendance of conferences, seminars, trainings to be organized for them. Perhaps this trend of qualification is the most popular one in our practice: being guided by various internet links we get information and react on the topic / name / trainer / name of the organization that is going to hold the training.

The theme of carrying out a regular supervision at all stages of work is popular. Business-trainers and consultants place their hopes in organization of internal educational seminars, methodical in particular. There has of course been mutual education as a form of advanced vocational training activity of a number of NGO organizations. It was particularly popular at the beginning of the trainers' activity development in the sphere of non-formal education when the question of methodical equipment was a burning issue and it was important to exchange those novelties that had been brought to us by foreign trainers. It would be interesting to analyze why the practice of mutual education is not so developed in the sphere of NGO nowadays: there's nothing to exchange, we don't have enough time for that, competition between the organizations has become tense?

Business-trainers are puzzled as to the necessity of writing books, articles. This type of activity solves a number of pragmatic problems besides it assists the development of one's own research skills. As I. Igolkina, an independent trainer-consultant, states that the book protects the copyright on one's own pieces of work, it gives an opportunity "to construct a wall protecting from a competitor", having taken interest in the book of a trainer the reader may attend a training, seminar, meeting [5]. Publication is a certain indicator of the trainer's professionalism in its own way. At the same time author's work describing in ideal author methods is accentuated. In our case trainers are mainly practitioners that prefer organizing some particular activity, they are involved in communication not research. We'd like to remind ourselves that writing articles plays an important role not only in making an introduction of an

external experience but reflection on coach's activity as well which the society lacks to our mind.

In this research it is said that it's necessary to take care of enlarging the library of a coach. Some consider creating the lists of literature obligatory for the trainers to read to be essential. No doubt we represent a not less involved in reading group of professionals, although it seems that for more productive work with new books on training one needs: time for profound reading (to tell the truth books for trainers aren't read but looked through most often, or even more often the fact of having new books makes us feel comfortable), some venue where they can be discussed. In the majority of cases we hold presentations of our books or write book reviews. These forms have got their boundaries and do not provide an opportunity for a versatile interesting discussion of our (and not only our) written opuses.

Among a great number of old and new ideas in the research presented above a not so widely known form as Balint group is mentioned. We have an experience of holding seminar within the framework of the project "Trainers' School" (2nd school seminar) where we used Balint group method. This form is aimed at improving professional and psychological competence by analyzing interpersonal relationships and interaction of specialists of "communicative" professions in difficult situations in their work. One of the main tasks that Balint group method fulfills is the realization of misrepresentation and "blind spots" in interpersonal perception and self-perception, the abovementioned hinder the productive professional relationships with people.

Besides we can be astonished at finding out that our pragmatic colleagues from business sphere are interested in such a close to us form as trainer clubs. In our case we could make use of trainer circles on analogy. I guess they may become the simplest forms of support rendered to permanent development of professional competence. Problems that could be solved by these associations are vivid: experience exchange, information exchange, experimenting with feedback.

Having discussed "club" issues with more than 60 trainer-consultants from 6 cities of CIS and having visited several professional clubs in St. Petersburg and Moscow the author marked the following forms of their existence...:

- Club as a permanently operating full-time conference uniting the partisans of a certain school.
- Club as a means of search of Clients, advertising spenders, contractors (in a particular case — Club as a means of getting orders by the Club President).
- Club as one of the means of financial aid rendered to its Organizers (e.g. with the help of membership dues or certificate sale).





- Club as some corporate organization that lobbies professional interests (rate of payment for work, corporate standards of work, etc.).
- Club as a place of spending leisure time together, entertainment.
- Club as joint psychotherapy of its participants.
- Club as the school of beginners in the sphere of training.
- Club which is organized by some exiles to spite some other club.

By the way business trainers even practice out of club one evening conferences, open-club ones, e.g. Pilot-club work in this manner. One should pay attention to the fact that the activities are organized by the trainers on the basis of real life module training followed by the discussion with the third degree [7].

In our opinion the biggest problem in organizing a club or a trainer circle is its duration. I allow reminding you

“The participants of the club should quarterly if not monthly prove their right to take part in the meetings by demonstrating their professional level...

...The participants are invited to each club session individually.

...Regular appearance of the participants with the reports on the theme of the meeting (during the season each participant should make at least one report).

...Reports are made following the scheme: “handing in written theses beforehand — making corrections — making a report — report discussion”. ...It's advisable for the reports to contain some new information communicated by the Reporter; its practical use for the listeners; availability of concrete business tasks from practice.

...Participation in interactive discussions that are openly held on the largest in CIS and the Baltic Sea Region internet forum that is concerned with business problems. These discussions let the members of the Club and their potential Clients evaluate each other.

...The results received at the regular Club meetings are included into the publications” [6].

that our trainers' circle existed for an academic year only. For the sake of comparison we shall refer to the above-mentioned experience of St. Petersburg Club of Consultants and Trainers the organizers of which are proudly writing about their two-year experience contrasted to two or three meetings organized by some other clubs. What is the key to long life of non-formal trainer unions? Maybe we should “spy” the godsend of some other trainer clubs?

These small organizational tips can certainly be helpful but are they a necessary and sufficient condition to sustain the existence of the club? Or is human factor more important namely the fact of an organizer presence that is sure to support the framework of association coexistence by his / her energetic style? There may be some other, profound reasons. An experienced NGO trainer verbalized one thought in the course of one personal conversation: as the experience of trainings and seminars within the framework of the NGO sector is minimized there's no necessity in trainers' clubs and circles. Nowadays we are living through the stage when trainers working in different styles have their practice in the sphere of state education (e.g. various institutions of advanced vocational training). Here's an example of some other activities: it's not an example of pure trainings but of an educational course with some elements of coaching. One can't but agree with this statement but what is the consequence of it for the training practices and NGO seminars? As we know muscle atrophy without training. If a trainer doesn't have an openings “to keep fit” by not only training itself but in the sphere of advanced vocational training then we are at risk of finally falling out of the context of common trends of this sphere of education development. For example, business trainers mark that namely at present very essential changes in the direction of their work are taking place. What can be said about some changes to the content of our work or new trends?

Or is that our prognosis is too pessimistic and ungrounded?

“Business trainers as the most widespread phenomenon — professionals in illiteracy elimination — sink into oblivion of the past. ...Current situation on the market of training can be characterized as being at the turning point. ...The crisis manifesting itself in absence of market correspondence between demand and supply has reached its climax. The demand on training services grows in one direction and the supply of training services moves in a completely different direction. ...The market supply of training services has to turn towards the Clients in the end, study their real needs and satisfy them in a competent way — everyone at the conference expressed these ideas! But in accordance with the laws of psychology that means that in reality few of those who so eloquently speak about it do so.” [8].

All the abovementioned followed from the thesis on the necessity of a specially organized space, institutions of trainer's competence development. But on the face of it there's a simpler way of sustaining the trainer's professionalism — make use of feedback received after the training, seminar from participants.

On the basis of such a supposition there arises a question: **is there enough of feedback from participants for the sake of understanding what you have to change in your personal training work?**

“Learn how to criticize yourself constructively. Then no one will ever tell you something that you don't already know about yourself... These are not the trainers' mistakes that are important for our education but his / her way of dealing with them. If after a feeble training you start blaming yourself and searching for an excuse in bad behaviour of the group or some members of it, this training won't have an educational effect upon you. This reaction will on the contrary stop you from developing as a trainer” [1].

— The first reaction to the question is a unanimous and straightforward “we lack it”... This gives rise to fear that the trainer is in an illusive reality.

On the other hand one can answer the question by asking another: what do we, trainers, expect from feedback? Are these marks, praise, tips, instructions, recommendations, support or anything else? The question may be defined more exactly or change its character — be either positive or negative. It depends on expectations.

— At the very beginning of my trainer's activity I undertook an attempt to ask about the evaluation of the way the seminar was held quite straightforwardly as well as consider all the personal achievements of the participants as the effect of good work done by the trainer. There was great hope in the power of final questionnaires the function of which was mostly to improve one's own self-appraisal rather than to supply information for further changes to the activity to take place. Now it's more interesting how the participants' statements different in character (while the seminar is being held, feedback questionnaires) can be transformed into feedback for the trainer himself / herself, namely how should they be chosen. In other words these are difficulties that one faces while translating words from the “statements of a participant” language into the “demand forwarded to a trainer” language. As there is a gap between these two languages maybe we should resign ourselves to the fact that there can't be straightforward answers providing the awaited feedback resulting from this or that aspect of training from the participants.

— Generally speaking it's amusing to compare the participants' feedback questionnaires of the elementary level and an experienced trainer. It's more often that a

beginner-trainer immediately dashes to read the questionnaires and essays that are like hot cakes, an experienced trainer calmly puts them into the box with hand-outs and other stationery nick-nacks left after the training. Why does this happen? I'll take the risk of making a supposition that the questionnaire answers provided, with a rare exception, as a result of various trainings and seminars look much alike. This may happen because the questionnaire questions and the modes of trainings are generally speaking similar? Once I was quite amazed by the content of the participants' feedback presented on different trainer internet sites. In principle it reminds me our participants' feedback as well very much. This problem of lack of a concrete (specific) character of feedback makes it difficult for us to use it as a means of development, and namely this function is traditionally a priority function for feedback. Feedback should be for the sake of further changes not just mere ascertaining. This idea is fixed as part and parcel of a stage of quality change management (on the whole the educational process in the process of training in particular): making projects — carrying them out — feedback — making projects. In this case personally I lack such feedback from the participants, a co-trainer, that feedback which could be used to change the obtained results or the process that took place.

— It goes without saying that this problem is a multi-level one. Absence of a specific character of the feedback may show a participant latent inability to verbalize, describe how he was / was not affected within the educational process. By the way the practice of writing a resume also requires the ability to formulate what has changed in a form of an articulate text: I'm able to, I can, I do understand, etc. but a reflective competence of a participant is just one side of the problem. **The second side is that the educational processes that take place are not evident to the trainer himself / herself.** This side of the problem highlights vulnerability of the trainings and seminars that are planned on the basis of the educational model introduced by D.Kolb in experiment that was based on the priority of “bringing up”. One can get this process of “bringing up” muddled up while trying to escape the translation of ready-made knowledge to that degree that the meaning, process, and result of the training will be lost.

In this sense a trainer should honestly and realistically formulate hidden and clear aims of what he / she does and define the processes that provide their accomplishment to make feedback work in the function of management of the changes. In connection with that a trainer should formulate the questions and the form of feedback. This also requires certain trainer skills. For example, “the price” of the question “What are the three main results of the training?” is very low from the point of view of the potential of feedback as the instrument of management. It's evident that the answers like: gained new experience, got acquainted with new methods, exchanged experience, etc. do not provide us with too many opportunities for changes. In order not to be that egoistic we should state that this question doesn't have any potential for development even for the participant himself / herself.



One more characteristic tendency is the prevalence of participants' emotional reactions. This tendency hinders work with feedback that is aimed at changing oneself within the trainer's activity. Consequently we are facing the traditional problem of an educational event evaluation on the level "reaction" in accordance with the model of Kirkpatrick [9]. Though while gaining experience a trainer may acquire a scornful and condescending treatment of emotional splashes in the questionnaires of the participants it's worthwhile gaining control over an upsurge of such a feeling (trainer's irritation because of praise) and consider the fact of its presence as a necessary but insufficient condition of trainings and seminars. This commonplace tendency starts to unwind in a different way when you find out that for example in the practice of the system of MBA education regardless of the advanced level of its students the teachers regularly experience fear of classes and a tense atmosphere in the auditorium. They undertake much effort to change the situation and create a so-called atmosphere of trust, which is being highly praised.

In general the question of usefulness of feedback is so complicated and topical that it deserves to be discussed within the framework of some other practice — coaching for NGO trainers. Though it's possible that having gained popularity with business trainings and personnel management, it may not settle down in informal education in Belarus at present. It's expensive. In the given situation it's not so adequate to offer it to trainers whose opportunities of any work with their target groups are on the whole limited. On the other hand we hope that the trainer who finished a course of an effective coaching where she / he gained experience of introspection, understanding of his / her own activity may be flexible and have an opportunity to look for solution of different problems in a stressful situation without any pain while forming a group, preparing, holding as well as living through the consequences of a seminar or a training. That is why we may soon face the moment when the preparation of coaches for NGO trainers will take place.

Supposing the trainers' association should strengthen its former and create new opportunities of advanced vocational training while overcoming hardships. Let's define its specifics more clearly, having thought about: **what type of education should it be for you to be ready to pay for it (spending money or time)? What would you like the education to be like?**

"A good" seminar produce an IMPRESSION.

"An effective" seminar causes CHANGES (in one's vision, understanding, strategies) and REALIZATION of these changes in our experience. This is the very education." [2].

The questions are without doubts topical as we being adult students don't have that much lifetime to spend it on "no matter what kind of education to be laid in store". Mere understanding of the specific character of an adult

student that trainers forget quite often at present includes the following: time becomes shorter in adult students' minds. Thus understanding of **the perspective of knowledge use: from a postponed one to an urgent one** changes. Special value of lifetime and an aspiration to decide all the life and professional problems with the help of education steer adult students' orientation into obtaining a result. He/ she is preoccupied with how to learn to do something in a quick, easy and cheap way [10]. Of course adult education has got a lot of other specific nuances that have not once been discussed at the conferences and NGO festival, but things aren't moving, if so they haven't gone far. Understanding of this problem with the trainers' association surely exists, in confirmation of this one can get acquainted with the poll carried out among the leaders of public organizations. It was published in "Educator" magazine (№1(7), 2006) under the title "Knowledge we share must have an approximate character" [11]. The problem won't be solved soon and it's characteristic of the whole sphere of adult education.

— Anyway if we are to return to personal grounds in case of these questions, my readiness to pay (in a broad meaning of the word) for my education may be predetermined by the name of the expert; a claim to be an original model of a seminar; the theme that corresponds to the question or problem that troubles me; a detailed, transparent programme (I wouldn't like to buy a pig in a poke).

"What do we pay attention to when we choose a seminar?"

- To the **name** of the author (leader, trainer, and teacher), the name of the company...
- It's good that the trainer has got an **information base** (a number of articles, books, video tapes, site), where besides ads one can find theoretical materials, types of problems solved by this company and trainer, evaluation and results of those who finished the course...
- To **opinions of some other people** — we make use of rumours, opinions of former participants...
- To the **ad of the seminar**...

We can also make calls to the indicated numbers and gather information there" [2].

— It's easier to answer the question about the method of education in an abstract way. Then general thoughts come to your mind that one has to teach in an active, interactive way changing different types of activities, stimulating me to speak up as when keep silent nothing important will ever happen to me. To answer the question sincerely I'd say I'd like to be taught in a "natural" way.

“One of the main peculiarities of active methods of education is a compulsory activation of the process of thinking (forced activity), a student has to be active regardless of his wish. In comparison with traditional methods active ones are more efficient and weaker and the same time: as activity is first and foremost programmed by the method and realized by the subject, when the method is no more used the activity of the subject is over as well. So will there be any activity after the function of the method that shapes it is exercised, the question remains open for discussion. In this case one should also answer the question to what degree this or that active method penetrates into the mechanism of self-development of the subject?” [12, p.39].

— I can't offer anything more effective than to apply to the styles of holding a class to be through with a ponderous and forced “activity for everyone without an exception”. If I go on speaking about myself and the style I prefer it would be good if they teach me without any haste, providing me with the space for personal work. Generally speaking I'd like to have an opportunity to choose types of activities, tasks, and to have an opportunity to draw my own program of my participation in the seminar, to concentrate. The latter is the most important for me. Most of the seminars and trainings that I have taken part in were held where the prevailing situation was that one of time trouble, emotional and intellectual anguish.

In conclusion we'd like to mention that nowadays there so-called “navigators” that were devised for adult education. They offer a system of criteria in accordance with which one can choose the form and style of education. These are very useful means that may even suit our work. As a rule these lists of criteria of choice provide the statements of what should be looked for in the description of training, what should one expect from it and what one shouldn't. We could add to the list the question of a participant to himself / herself: what should I be prepared for. (For example, it would be useful for both the trainer and the participant to realize that one can't master most of the skills in 2-3 days, the process of education presupposes one's readiness to call himself / herself in question, etc.).

Having looked through what has been written we are aware that the text contains more hints of different character about something rather than an integral subjective image of an ideal trainer professionalism development. Although we may try to give an “elementary answer” to the raised question: the system of professional competence development must be specially designed — we should introduce the practice of supervision, coaching, Balint group; create clubs, circles that would embody the space for trainer's demand satisfaction in the terms of self-development. One should also be taught how to formulate the demand.

Disclosing the image of professional development of a non-formal education trainer we were trying to stop and reflect on certain issues of trainer competence development. **Consequently the continuation of this reflection should follow.**

Translated by Olga Verbova

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