

Easy-to-read newspaper articles, written by persons with learning difficulties

Austria – Jugend am Werk GmbH and the daily newspaper KURIER

SUMMARY OF PROJECT

Because official websites should be accessible by everyone, there is an enormous need for easy-to-read information. The mission of this project is to teach people with disabilities how to write easy-to-read news articles. Participants with learning difficulties are trained to understand the journalistic approach to conveying information. The goals are to prepare participants for regular jobs, especially as experts for easy-to-read texts, and eventually to provide easy-to-read news on a daily basis for the online-platform of the KURIER, an Austrian daily paper.

QUOTE:

“In the past it was like this: I simply was not interested in news, I right away zapped to another channel or flipped the pages. Now I am interested in news. I am aware of political affairs, when there are news on television or in a paper, I read or listen to them.”

- Mr. Marco Marinic, Participant

FACTS & FIGURES:

- The inclusive editorial training group consists of six participants (people with some kind of disability), two pedagogic attendants, and two journalists who serve as instructors.
- Currently, the project is planned for three years.
- The project is fully funded by Fonds Soziales Wien, the social service provider of Vienna Outlook.

PROBLEMS TARGETED:

There are many people with mental or learning disabilities that cannot follow the regular news, and who are thus disadvantaged in terms of access to information. Further, there are only a few official websites that provide information in an easy-to-read format. Through this project, participants learn to understand complex texts and to translate them into easy-to-read-texts, thereby providing important information to other people with mental or learning disabilities.

SOLUTION & METHODOLOGY

Participants, all of whom are people with special needs, are trained to understand the journalistic approach to conveying information. They learn to write their own stories and to rewrite other texts in easy-to-read language. Additionally, they learn to handle modern information technology and to publish on the web. . Tests showed that a special editorial team was needed to provide easy-to-read news on a regular basis. But when the media company involved was not able to fund such a team, a cooperation agreement was reached with a community organization so as to implement the programme.

OUTLOOK & TRANSFERABILITY

If successful, the editorial teaching group could become a permanent institution, providing permanent jobs for people with disabilities. The aim of the project is to provide a steady news flow for people with intellectual disabilities and to empower participants to become experts in writing and rewriting easy-to-read-texts. The project draws special attention to planning individual goals (what are my special qualifications, interests, and prospects concerning work?); providing support in the preparation of job application papers; accompanying participants to job interviews; and providing internships in appropriate firms.

Photo: Yes

Life story: Yes

CONTACT

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