

3. Action-oriented testing

The principle of action-oriented training also applies to testing, including several different aspects:

■ Testing requirements:

Examinations are procedures for measuring the competence of trainees in each professional area and their associated skills, knowledge and abilities. This results in testing requirements in which the necessary qualifications are integrated. Complex situations are analyzed, and solutions and decisions are developed and weighed. Different perspectives are explained, along with their various consequences.

■ Testing tasks:

Testing tasks are to be developed in a systematic manner so that they are distinguished by situational reference, practical focus, inclusion of documents or appendices, integration of specific action elements (planning, execution, monitoring) and process orientation. Testing tasks are to be designed in such a way that they can be simulated using the complete action model.

■ Verbal and practical testing:

Action-oriented written, verbal and practical testing tasks particularly include situational tasks, tasks relating to projects, tasks which are divided into individual steps, blocks of tasks, project tasks, work assignments, operational tasks, technical discussions, simulated discussions (e.g. discussions with customers) and presentations.

■ Training and workshops for instructors:

The training sessions focus on the creation of action-oriented testing tasks. This particularly includes formulating questions and challenges in the verbal and practical examinations, as well as being able to validate and assess action orientation.

■ Assessment criteria:

Finally, action orientation also determines assessment criteria and the assessments themselves, with the primary focus on actual professional skills.

Impact and benefits of the action-oriented training method

In the course of their action-oriented training, trainees will learn the specific skills, knowledge and abilities which are needed by skilled workers in order to operate without limitations. They will be able to execute the tasks of a skilled worker independently, and to analyze and solve problems on their own.

The German dual vocational training system's focus on practical skills ensures that its trainees are highly employable. The in-service component of the training is a major part of this. Practical on-the-job training prepares trainees for the specific tasks they will face in their future careers, both in their particular company and in other companies as well.

The result is to improve productivity and competitiveness and fuel innovation.

Summary:

Vocational action orientation as a methodology and as a fundamental pedagogical concept is a decisive factor in the success of the dual vocational training system in Germany. It is therefore applied in all phases of the training process, as well as in higher-level vocational education, for students seeking degrees in business administration or undergoing training as executives.

All dual vocational training activities conducted abroad by AHKs, IHKs and DIHK incorporate the basic principle of action orientation as a key feature. Accordingly, it is a component and an established quality standard of vocational training services worldwide.



Publisher and copyright:

DIHK | Deutscher Industrie- und Handelskammertag e.V.
Breite Straße 29 | 10178 Berlin | Telefon 030 20308 - 0 | www.dihk.de
Authors: RA Steffen G. Bayer | Yorck Sievers | Bernd Müller-Hepp |
Marc Tilo Marpmann | **Graphics:** Friedemann Encke
Date: January 2018 | **Printing:** DCM | Druck Center Meckenheim

Dual vocational training in Germany

Success factor: action-oriented training



Success factor: action-oriented training

The success of Germany's dual vocational training system is built on various pillars. Together with the feature of dual training locations (in school and on-the-job) and the assignment of responsibility to established industry organizations (e.g. Chambers of Commerce and Industry), the principle of action-oriented training is a decisive element of the system.

It is expected that skilled workers will be able to perform tasks on their own, as well as analyzing and solving problems largely on their own.

The purpose of vocational training is to convey practical skills throughout the entire length of the training. To this end, the idea that vocational training should be action-oriented is fully integrated within the German dual vocational training system as a guiding principle, extending from training regulations to the training itself and the final examinations..

1. Action-oriented training regulations

Training regulations describe the professional skills which skilled workers are expected to have at the end of their training. This includes the following skills, e.g. for the job profile of a mechatronics engineer:

- **planning and managing workflows;**
- **supervising and assessing work results;**
- **combining modules and components into systems and machinery;**
- **assembling and dismantling machinery, systems and equipment, etc.**

Companies' framework training plans and vocational schools' framework lesson plans define the standards for the skills, knowledge and abilities which are to be conveyed by inhouse training for each job profile and in the vocational school's „learning areas.“ They describe which individual skills are to be conveyed during training by which actions, and at what level. This includes the following, e.g. using the example of the framework training plan for mechatronics engineers:

- **assigning tasks, planning work in the team;**
- **identifying modules and components and inspecting them to ensure defect-free quality;**
- **connecting equipment to supply and disposal pipeline systems, selecting and creating junctions, etc.**

All further specifics are conveyed afterwards at the training location, i.e. in a company-specific manner.

2. Action-oriented execution of vocational training

Company instructors are trained and tested in such a way as to enable them to guide and manage trainees in an action-oriented manner. To this end, appropriate training methods have been developed, particularly the "complete action model." This is a concept from vocational pedagogy which conforms to the practical reality of the professional world and enables trainees to learn in an action-oriented manner.

The model consists of six levels:

- gathering information
- planning
- decision-making
- execution
- review
- assessment

