

COMMUNITY THEATRE HALFWAY TO SOMEWHERE

REVES EXCELLENCE AWARD 2013 BRUSSELS



A PARTNERSHIP WITH DIFFERENCE

The city of Kokkola, The professional theatre of Kokkola,
The Employment office of Kokkola, Kokkotyö foundation,
Piia, Emilia, Noora, Mikko and Pekka

Partnership is all about them....



PARTNERSHIP WITH DIFFERENCE

- Partnership as usual: officials first, organized by will, formal structure, political commitment, well resourced
- Partnership with difference: people first, developed ad hoc, organized by need, informal structure, creating resources

HALFWAY TO SOMEWHERE

- A story about a community theatre production dealing with unemployment, involving five young long term unemployed persons in writing the manuscript, playing the roles and assisting
- A journey from exclusion to inclusion and empowerment, many steps closer to employment
- A partnership that will last when the show is over

THE INITIATIVE

- The director of the play initiated the partnership
- The story about unemployment had to be told and played by unemployed persons
- First contact to the foundation
- Agreement – yes we can do it (but first we have to solve a lot of problems)
- And we did!



THE CHALLENGE

- To change the contracts related to training schemes and benefits
- To interpret the rules of work rehabilitation in a broad sense
- To arrange the working hours of the clients and coaches to fit those of the theatre
- To motivate and activate the clients
- To produce and direct a professional play with amateurs



THE PARTNERSHIP

- **The social and health care department in the city of Kokkola** (responsible for work rehabilitation by law)
- **The employment office of Kokkola** (responsible for unemployment benefits by law)
- **Kokkotyö foundation** (responsible for putting the schemes into practise, coaching the actors)
- **The professional theatre of Kokkola** (setting up the production, marketing, taking the economic risk)

THE OUTCOME

- The play was a great success for the theatre and for the actors, only one performance out of 20 was cancelled, 1000 persons in the audience
- Awareness was raised about unemployment and how it affects people
- The officials in the partnership learned that interpreting rules in a broad sense really can make things happen



THE OUTCOME (2)

- The partnership generated new innovative ways and means of working
- The five young actors and their couches were included in the theatre community and directed by professionals
- The theatre and Kokkotyö foundation developed new and permanent ways of cooperation



IT'S ALL ABOUT ME - PIIA

- Due to health problems I had problems to adapt to changes – not anymore!
- I proved that I can work hard, I am now ready to enter the labour market
- As unemployed I am not only a burden for the society – I am the potential!
- I stretched every limit, I am brave and I have selfesteem
- I am unemployed, but still useful
- I have to move on!

I AM BECAUSE WE ARE



THANK YOU!