



## Language Support for Migrants *A Council of Europe Toolkit*

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### Tool 38 - Supporting migrants who need to describe their general skills when applying for a job

**Aim: To enable migrants to reflect on their work-related and general skills and to describe these skills.**

Certain priorities such as looking for a job cannot be left until migrants have the language skills needed to carry them out. For this reason, the role of those providing language support to migrants may/must often go beyond language support, especially if no counsellors or other relevant specialists are available in the organisation.

Below are some simple ways in which those providing language support can assist with this problem, but additional mediation may be needed, for example via online translation and reference to relevant websites. It is also important to brief other professionals who migrants will be dealing with so that these people are prepared to be understanding and helpful.

Certain learners in your group may be in a position to look for employment, or at least a part-time job, in their new environment. You can offer help with preparing for job interviews and with writing CVs and application letters.

Leaving aside the factual information about their studies, certificates, previous professional experience etc., this tool aims to focus attention on the competences they have which are not directly related to a job or profession, but which may be important when describing their individual profiles in a CV, application letter or job interview. These kinds of competence are often forgotten because they seem obvious or because they are not listed among relevant job recruitment criteria. They are sometimes called 'transversal or work-related competences'.

You encourage migrants to assess their own transversal competences if you ask them to think about questions like the following as a means of reflecting on their own work-related competences<sup>1</sup>.

- *Am I generally punctual?*
- *Am I well organised in my daily activities?*
- *How do I deal with the unforeseen in my activities?*
- *Am I flexible? Am I able to adapt to changes?*
- *Do I pay attention to and remember the instructions about a given activity or procedure?*
- *Have I worked in a team before? How well did it go?*
- *Do I enjoy collaborating with other people? Why?*
- *Do I know how to use maths, measurements and so on in calculations related to my work?*
- *Do I know how to search for information related to a given work activity?*

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<sup>1</sup> Derived from the RECTEC Erasmus project. led by the Académie de Versailles – details available in French at <http://rectec.ac-versailles.fr/wp-content/uploads/sites/135/2019/06/Referentiel-rectec.pdf>

- *Can I use digital skills and resources for work-related tasks?*
- *What are my career aims for the coming years?*
- *Could I adapt to new ways of learning in order to further my professional development?*
- *Which three words would I use to summarise my general attitude and skills?*

Encouraging migrants to think about these and other similar questions and to discuss them with each other in pairs or small groups will help them to identify the qualities and competences they have and that should be highlighted in their CVs, application letters and during their job interviews.

See also the three scenarios ([Tools 73, 74 and 75](#)) related to preparing a curriculum vitae, a job application letter and a job interview.