



SETTING UP OF A COMMON EUROPEAN STRATEGY FOR THE TUTORING IN THE CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES

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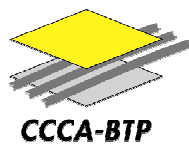
PHASE 2 OF THE PROJECT

SURVEYS OF TUTORING AT CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES IN FRANCE

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SURVEYS CARRIED OUT WITH THE HELP OF THE APPRENTICE TRAINING CENTRES IN ANTIBES,
AVIGNON, ÉVREUX, PERPIGNAN, PLÉRIN, ROANNE, TOULON AND TROYES.



Paris, 30th September 2007

The CCCA-BTP is engaged in a COPILOTE European project the aim of which is to come up with a strategy designed to develop and optimise in-house tutoring. A number of professional organisations (unions, professional federations) and French, Italian, German, Spanish, Swedish, Polish, Belgian and Swiss education experts are also involved in this project.

The COPILOTE project, which is co-financed by European resources and also designed to offer a reminder that good vocational training requires in-depth collaboration between a training centre and a company which hosts apprentices, is being run under the aegis of the CCCA-BTP.

For further information about the project see: www.copilote.org

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For the purposes of this project, surveys have been carried out in all of the partner countries in order to gather information about what the heads of and tutors working at companies, training centre staff and apprentices expect from the role of the tutor and how they see it. The surveys in France were carried out solely on combined work and training apprenticeship schemes, covering only young people aged from 16 to 25.

We would like to thank everyone who spared the time to fill in the questionnaires they were given.

The information collected was processed, on the French side, by Bruno Oldani from the Centre de Formation du Bâtiment d'Antibes (Antibes Building Industry Training Centre), working in collaboration with the CCCA-BTP. It is designed to feed into a European survey the responsibility for which lies with the BYN, a Swedish professional body which is, of course, one of the partners in the COPILOTE project.

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1. Results of the surveys carried out in companies

Eighty-four contacts from French construction companies answered the questionnaire they were given. The typology of the people who answered is as follows:

- 37 heads of companies who are themselves tutoring apprentices,
- 32 heads of companies who are not themselves tutoring apprentices,
- 15 people tutoring apprentices who are merely company employees.

This sample is highly representative of the position of construction companies who are training apprentices (young people aged from 16 to 25 who have a special contract of employment and who alternate between training and work-based learning, i.e. one week at a training centre and three weeks with a company).

It should be noted that 83% of the companies in contact with the network of training centres coordinated by the CCCA-BTP are small structures usually made up of the head of the company plus from 1 to 3 employees and 1 or 2 apprentices. Most of them are family businesses. This explains why there are more answers given by heads of companies who are at the same time themselves tutoring apprentices.

An initial analysis of the questionnaires raised a question:

"Why is it that heads of companies who are not themselves involved in tutoring were a lot more likely to answer the questionnaire than employees involved in tutoring who are not heads of companies?"

Here is our hypothesis:

In the building industry, and especially at very small companies, the employees who are involved in tutoring are usually not very highly educated and often have a lack of writing skills. They are reluctant to fill in documents, make reports, or simply to write anything at all. So it is hardly surprising that heads of companies have trouble encouraging those of their employees involved in tutoring to answer the questionnaire.

We need to remember this in the rest of our work on the strategy for communicating with in-house tutors.

Something else we noticed: 8 training centres were originally asked to help the CCCA-BTP to carry out all of the surveys. Each centre was to approach 15 companies in order to obtain 120 questionnaires. At the end of the day we managed to get 84 answers.

"So what is the level of commitment amongst companies when it comes to the apprenticeship of young people? Are they given enough of the support they need to carry out their training work? Who ought to be providing this support?"

The training centres who were asked to help with the surveys are based all over France. The companies we consulted are involved in bricklaying, tiling, heating, sanitary facilities, electricity, painting, locks and metalworking. 95% of the companies which replied to the survey have from 1 to 10 employees. All of the people who answered are male.

Answers from heads of companies who were themselves involved in tutoring apprentices

Summary of the answers to each question

1. What is the most important part of your work as a tutor (please check just one answer):

- helping the apprentice to do his work,
- training him in how to go about a trade,
- other

97% of people answered the question.

95% of them say that the most important part of their work as tutors is to train apprentices in a trade.

Only 2 out of 37 think that apprentices are at the company to work and to do so to the highest possible standard. Nobody made any other suggestions. It should be noted that a number of heads of companies have their sons on apprenticeship schemes with a view to taking over the family business at a later date.

2. What do you think is the most useful thing about being a tutor at your company?

18 answered: "passing on knowledge".

10 answered: "training young people".

Other people talk about development, teaching people how to do a job, helping the apprentice to move forward.

Heads of companies who were themselves also involved in tutoring see themselves more as passing on techniques and do not underline the fact that at the same time they are passing on a trade, a skill.

3. What do you think is the biggest drawback about being a tutor at your company?

80% of people answered the question.

13 out of 30 think that the main drawback is "the amount of time it necessarily has to take to train a young person".

However, 11 people think that there are no drawbacks at all.

4. What do you need in order to do your job as a tutor properly?

73% of people answered the question.

Only 4 out of 27 heads of companies who are themselves involved in tutoring talk about a training centre as a place providing them with support in doing their jobs.

11 question the apprentice's qualities and life skills, thus leading to a lack of motivation to learn the chosen trade.

6 would like more time to spend on their work as tutors.

Only 1 person talks about the apprentice's family as a partner in the process of learning the trade.

It is interesting, perhaps even crucial, to note that **none of the heads of companies called for training for themselves.**

4A. Do you have any special internal or external support in doing your job as a tutor? If so what kind of support is it?

13.5% of people who answered felt that they did have support in doing their jobs as tutors, but they did not specify the nature of this support and only two people **mention the training centre as a potential resource**.

The others all underline the fact that they feel alone in their jobs as tutors.

5. Is there anything preventing you from doing your job properly? If so what is it? What can be done to put this right?

54% think that there is nothing preventing them from doing their jobs as tutors. This means that, in spite of the difficulties mentioned above, the lack of time, the lack of commitment and motivation amongst the apprentices, they are still managing to do their jobs as tutors at their companies properly.

Only 13% feel they are being hindered by legislation, the personalities of some apprentices or a lack of time.

The others, i.e. 33%, did not give any answer at all.

6. What do you think are the main qualities that a tutor should have?

70% of people answered the question.

When it came to the main qualities needed by a good tutor, heads of companies who are themselves involved in tutoring mention:

- patience: 57%,
- the ability to listen, to understand, to be human: 11%,
- teaching the apprentice his trade properly: 27%.

7. How do you work with staff from training centres nowadays?

This is one of the key points of the survey: 66% of people answered the question.

28% think that they have no relations with the training centre.

28% think that they have good relations with the training centre.

44% say that they have relations with the training centre without giving any qualitative opinion.

These answers should be compared with those given to question 4a, where only 13% of heads of companies and tutors claim to have been provided with any outside help. This may mean that 72% of the people who are in contact with training centres do not necessarily feel that this is a place offering resources and support to them in doing their jobs as tutors.

7A. How would you like to see this partnership develop?

49% answered the question.

The answers are mixed and there is no majority trend to be drawn from them, for instance: "*more meetings, follow-up at the company, more frequent contact, being warned if there is a problem, carrying out assessments*". This is something we need to look at in greater depth.

8. *How can we make the most of an increased awareness of the importance of the in-house tutor?*

Only 33% of people answered this question.

2 people replied: make the most of it by providing the tutors with training.

The rest of the answers are mixed: *"better financing for tutoring work, making the apprentice take more responsibility, winning over the public authorities, communication and information about tutoring"*.

General summary for the target group

95% of heads of companies who are themselves involved in tutoring apprentices say that a tutor's most important job is **to provide training in a trade**. These answers should be cross-referenced with those given by apprentices (see below), because only 37% of them think that their tutors see training in a trade as their main task. In addition to this, 83% of apprentices who replied to the survey say that tutors think that apprentices are at the company first and foremost to work. Obviously here we come up against a clash of perceptions probably due to a lack of communication between the apprentices, tutors and heads of companies.

When we note that almost half of the people who answered question 3 say that the main drawback of being a tutor is the amount of time spent with the apprentice, we can see that there is root and branch work to be done on the way participants in the vocational training system in the Building and Public Works industry see apprenticeship and tutoring in general. Of course, this does not mean that the people who answered see in-house apprenticeship as a waste of time, but rather as a workload which needs to be organised.

There is another point highlighted by this questionnaire which is worth thinking about: even though the training centre is a key partner for apprenticeship in France and handles a quarter of the training time, only 4 answers out of 27 refer to the training centre. So we need to continue with important work to bring all the participants in work-based training closer together.

Conclusion on the current image of tutoring: requested changes.

The people involved in training do not meet up often enough. Sometimes these meetings only take place out of a sense of obligation. Communication, information and joint projects are the main lines for development upon which we need to concentrate in dealings between the company providing the training and the training centre.

Answers from heads of companies who are not involved in tutoring apprentices

Summary of the answers to each question

1. What is your most important job as a tutor (please check just one answer):

- a. helping the apprentice to do his work,
- b. training him in how to go about a trade,
- c. other

Like the tutors who are themselves also heads of companies, they answered that a tutor's most important job is to train the young person in a trade. There were no other suggestions.

2. What qualities do you look for in a tutor?

A third of the people we spoke to failed to answer the question. Those who did answer underlined the following:

- the ability to pass on knowledge,
- patience and the ability to listen,
- professionalism.

3. What does a tutor need in order to do his job properly?

Almost half of the heads of companies answer that **the tutor needs time**. At the same time, the tutors we consulted as part of this survey all complained that they do not have enough time to spend on apprentices. So we can deduce that, in spite of the awareness that it takes time to provide tutoring, day-to-day production constraints often take priority over the company's training work.

Other answers given:

- communicating with the training centre (one answer),
- being a teacher,
- having a good knowledge of your trade.

3A. Does the tutor at your company get any special internal or external support? If so what kind of support is it?

85% of heads of companies failed to answer the question which suggests that the tutors do not get any support in their work. Only 3 of them say that they provide the tutor with support in doing his job. As a result, **the question about the nature and organisation of support for tutors is genuinely raised**.

4. What advantages does your company draw from having tutors and apprentices?

94% of heads of companies answered the question, which proves their commitment to training young people, in spite of the difficulties involved in tutoring:

- getting ready for the next generation (50% of answers),
- training young people (30% of answers),
- developing team spirit (3 answers).

5. *What is the main drawback and how can this be put right?*

47% of people answered the question.

Most of them talk about the “time” factor in tutoring and one head of a company mentioned the cost of training. So these answers are practically the same as those given by heads of companies who are themselves involved in tutoring.

6. *Do you have any difficulties in finding good tutors? If so why?*

Only 5 heads of companies answered this question. They talk about a lack of training among the tutors. On the other hand, they did not reply to whether it is difficult to find a good tutor and, above all, based upon what criteria.

7. *Does your tutor see his job as an advantage or a disadvantage? Why?*

65% of heads of companies who are not themselves involved in tutoring failed to answer the question. Out of those who did, 34% think that being a tutor is an advantage and 28% think the opposite.

The answers given to this question confirm something already underlined in the previous questionnaire, in other words a lack of communication and consultation, not only between the training centre and the company, but also within the company itself. This is yet another reason to look into the nature of the support systems which need to be introduced.

The heads of companies who talk about tutoring as a disadvantage also tally with the answers to the previous questionnaire: this work takes time, it is additional work even though the production constraints are not altered for the tutor.

8. *How can we make the most of an increased awareness of the importance of the in-house tutor?*

78% of the heads of companies consulted failed to answer the question. Those who did emphasised the following:

- the need to train the tutor (2 answers),
- getting the tutor to take responsibility (3 answers).

General summary for the target group

The answers from all heads of companies (whether or not they themselves are tutoring apprentices) are very close to one another.

The heads of companies agree to train apprentices because they get the feeling that they need to train a next generation. On the other hand, their perception of tutoring work remains vague and fairly poorly integrated into their professional activities, probably because **the support system needs to be improved.**

The heads of companies who are not themselves involved in tutoring delegate the work, sometimes without either support or consultation with the person who is to be the tutor. It should also be noted that, most of the time, two thirds of heads of companies failed to answer all of the questions.

Conclusion on the current image of tutoring: requested changes.

The way that the heads of companies and non-tutors see the training of young people is still all too often based upon out-of-date ideas. The heads of companies are too infrequently asked to think about the relevance of in-house training, so that it ties in with the issues faced by a fast-changing society.

The communication strategy we need to build must also take heads of companies into account - perhaps even as a first priority – because they are the people who put together the in-house tutoring. The answers we need to find cannot be limited to training initiatives. Here we are looking at the issues of the management of human resources, covering the skills which need to be taught, the motivation and raising of awareness about the future both of the company in particular and of the profession in general.

Heads of companies need to realise (as do the training centres, in fact), that the quality of the induction of young people into companies is decisive for their vocational integration in the future and, as a result, to the long-term future of the company itself.

Answers from people tutoring apprentices who are not heads of companies

Summary of the answers to each question

We should remember that we only managed to get 15 answers from tutors who are not themselves heads of companies, which undoubtedly limits the representative aspect of the answers which are often very short. Indeed, these are people who are not used to expressing themselves in writing. We would probably have learned more by holding interviews with these tutors than from asking for written answers.

1. Why are you a tutor?

Some tutors (3) failed to answer the question.

All of those who did answer say that they got involved in tutoring because they want to pass on their trades. None of them said that they were told to do so by an authoritarian head of company.

2. What is the most important part of your work as a tutor (please check just one answer):

- a. *helping the apprentice to do his work,*
- b. *training him in how to go about a trade,*
- c. *other*

Those who answered the question (almost everyone) say that the most important part of a tutor's work is to train the young person in how to go about the trade.

3. What do you think is the most useful thing about being a tutor at your company?

It is revealing that people failed to understand the question. Rather than talking about what tutoring brings to both their working and private lives, the tutors give the same answers as for the two previous questions.

4. What do you think is the biggest drawback about being a tutor at your company?

40% of people failed to answer the question.

Most of those who did answer it mentioned a lack of time to spend with apprentices, sometimes a waste of time with certain apprentices.

5. What do you need in order to do your job as a tutor properly?

30% of people failed to answer the question.

The answers are linked to the previous question: the tutors say they need more time to do their jobs.

Some tutors also talk about a lack of recognition.

5A. Do you have any special internal or external support in doing your job as a tutor? If so what kind of support is it?

80% of people failed to answer the question.

The rate of failures to answer is highly significant: There is a kind of desire not to offend the employer, not to say that there is a lack of support. Only those who answered say that they enjoy support from their employers in their tutoring work. On the other hand none of them mention the training centre, which hints at the scope of the task involved in bringing the places at which work-based training takes place closer together.

**6. Is there anything preventing you from doing your job properly?
If so what is it? And what can be done to put this right?**

The answers to this question do not offer anything new when compared to the previous questions. So none of the respondents think that there is anything preventing from doing their tutoring work properly and only the "time" factor is mentioned as something which is lacking.

7. What do you think are the main qualities that a tutor should have?

Factors mentioned:

- patience: 33% of answers,
- know-how and knowing how to pass it on: 20% of answers,
- the interpersonal aspect: 13% of answers.

8. *How do you work with staff from training centres nowadays?*

It is highly significant to note that 9 tutors out of 15 failed to answer the question. We should remember that tutors who are themselves heads of companies say that they are in touch with the training centre, but they do not necessarily see it as a potential resource centre.

The tutors who answered the question mention the following examples of collaboration:

- 13% talk about the apprenticeship booklet (a document used for communication between the company and the training centre),
- 13% talk about visits by staff from the training centre to the company,
- 7% talk about meetings with the tutors held at the training centre.

8A. *How would you like to see this partnership develop?*

53% of people failed to answer the question, which probably means that the question is a long way from the tutors' concerns.

Those who did answer talk about more frequent visits by training centre staff, meetings, assessments, interviews at the training centre. We should definitely look into this issue in greater depth.

9. *How can we make the most of an increased awareness of the importance of the in-house tutor?*

As in the cases of the previous target groups, there are not very many answers to this question: 40% of people give an opinion:

- 66% of those who answered talk about the need to be trained in tutoring,
- 16% talk about a need for recognition.

General summary for the target group

As in the case of the previous target groups, the tutors emphasise the lack of consultation on the subject of their responsibility and the training of apprentices in general both with their employers and with the training centres.

Company employees feel that their tutoring work should consist mainly of a passing on of knowledge linked to the trade. The fact that many of the answers mention a "time" problem suggests to us that the tutors who are company employees come up against problems involving profitability and production requirements.

Tutoring work is seen by this target group as an additional responsibility which, most of the time, is imposed upon them without releasing them from other constraints.

Conclusion on the current image of tutoring: requested changes.

The survey clearly shows that there is a lack of communication between the employee tutor and the employer. In all probability, this is due to production requirements which are the most important thing within the company, because it is production which guarantees immediate income.

Once again, it should be noted that there is a lack of structured support.

Conclusion relating to all heads of companies and all tutors

The survey carried out of heads of companies and of tutors clearly shows that tutoring work is not considered to be strategic work within the company whose main task is to produce goods or services.

Behaviour of this kind can easily be explained by the fact that it is production which contributes the company's immediate wealth and that of the people of whom it is made up.

Even so, it is important to develop a communication strategy with companies which will demonstrate that investing in tutoring is also a strategic matter. Indeed, the results of the surveys clearly show that tutors are not aware enough of the fact that the quality of induction into the company and, as a result, tutoring, contributes to encouraging loyalty from the young person, a human resource who, once trained, will be crucial to the company's success.

In addition to this, the surveys allow us to note that in-house training is often limited to the passing on of professional knowledge and know-how, whereas the questions of citizenship, responsibility, safety integrated into the protection of persons and property, professional ethics, and the issues of the sustainable vocational integration of the apprentice were rarely tackled in the answers.

It is also true to say that few of the heads of companies and tutors mention the apprentice training centre as a place offering potential resources to help improve the way that in-house tutoring work is organised. Work on bringing the two places where the training takes place (company and training centre) closer together remains important and the communication and support strategy aimed at in-house tutors which needs to be built must take this into account.

2. Results of the surveys of trainers from apprentice training centres

Seventy-one building and public works apprentice training centres staff filled in the questionnaire which was sent to them. The training staff who were questioned work in a field of general teaching (French, mathematics, sciences) or in a field of vocational education (vocational workshops, technology, drawing).

The majority of the staff we spoke to have open-ended contracts of employment.

The age of these staff varies from 28 to 55 and they are all specialists in teaching using the work-based learning system, each of them being immersed in the culture of apprenticeship and the vocational branch of the construction industry.

Out of the respondents, the ratio between men and women is roughly one woman to every five men.

The surveys were carried out across the whole of French territory covered by the CCCA-BTP network, represented by the following training centres: Orleans and Roanne in the centre of France, Troyes in the Centre-East, Antibes and Toulon in the South-East, Avignon and Perpignan in the South, Evreux in the North-West, Plérin in the West.

The smallest of these training centres takes 500 apprentices and the largest 1,500.

Summary by question

1. *What do you see as the most important job of an in-house tutor?*

All of the training staff consulted answered this question:

- 22 say that the tutor plays an important role in training the apprentice,
- 15 mention the passing on of skills and know-how,
- 13 believe that monitoring the young person's training, especially at the training centre, is a priority,
- 9 talk about the acquisition of vocational knowledge,
- only 3 feel that he plays a vocational integration role.

We then find varied answers such as: helping the apprentice to become independent, being there for him or helping to teach the apprentice about the various rules.

It would appear that training staff have a stronger sense of their vocational training responsibility than of the fundamental aim of apprenticeship, in other words the young person's vocational integration. As a result, they transfer their own perception of their work as training centre staff to tutoring. This is confirmed by the next question where only two training staff think that the most important part of their work is "supporting the apprentice in his vocational integration".

What do you see as the most important job of a CFA-BTP staff member¹ ?

All of the staff we spoke to answered this question.

Analyse of answers:

- only 2 talk about vocational integration,
- 34 – i.e. more than half of them – think that their primary mission is to pass on practical knowledge, theoretical knowledge and skills,
- 4 talk about helping young person “to obtain a vocational qualification”,
- 16 feel that first and foremost they provide the apprentice with support during his apprenticeship, a kind of mediator helping to ensure that the young person’s training runs smoothly, both at the company and at the training centre. Thus they talk about dialogue with the company, communication and complementarity.

The remaining answers relate to listening to what the apprentice has to say, giving him a sense of self-worth and motivation.

2. What do you expect of the in-house tutor?

95% of training staff answered the question.

Analyse of answers:

- 30 staff - in other words more than a third of them - expect tutors to communicate and cooperate with the training centre. Some staff even feel that the initiative to cooperate with the training centre should come from the companies,
- some training staff are of the opinion that tutors should fall in with the training centre’s approach and adhere to the programmes drawn up by them,
- 15 training staff think that tutors should monitor the apprentice’s training at the training centre and take it on board when planning in-house work.

The other answers emphasise the fact that a tutor needs to know how to teach, to encourage the apprentice to take responsibility, have more time to spend with him.

3. How can you support the in-house tutor in his work?

90% of training staff answered the question.

There are three types of answers:

- 26 feel that they can support in-house tutors by educational visits to companies, but the content and purpose of this visit need to be better defined beforehand,
- 19 would like more frequent exchanges by means of the apprenticeship booklet (a document used for communication between the training centre and the company) and other work-based learning tools, but there is a lack of details about the nature, content and the way that these exchanges would work within a work-based training context,
- 14 think that “the tutors need training”.

All of these answers are interesting, but they do not offer a great deal of information about the support offered to tutors on a day-to-day basis. **The issues of the support provided to in-house tutors by training centres needs to be reviewed.**

¹ CFA-BTP: Centre de Formation d’Apprentis du Bâtiment et des Travaux Publics (building and public works industry training centre).

4A. Do you have the resources to do this (support the tutors)?

78% of training staff answered the question.

Analyse of answers:

- 38 training staff said that they do have the resources to support the in-house tutor in his work, the resource most commonly mentioned was visits by training centre staff to the apprentice's place of work at the company²,
- 16 say that they do not have the resources to do so: 5 due to a lack of material resources, 8 due to a lack of time and 3 without giving any real reason.

Another interesting - or even contradictory – point emerges from this survey, in the answers given to question 3, 60% of training staff complain of a lack of relationship, consultation and communication with the in-house tutor. And then again, 70% of them say that they do have the resources they need to support the tutoring work. So this issue needs to be looked at in greater depth.

4. What resources do you use to cooperate with the in-house tutor, in order to give the apprentice the best possible training and skills?

90% of training staff answered this question and some of them overlap with the previous question.

Analyse of answers:

- 24 repeated that the resource used to cooperate with the in-house tutor is the “visit to the company”,
- 30 talk once again about the apprenticeship booklet or the work-based learning file³,
- 9 talk about frequent meetings or telephone contact.

5. How could you develop this cooperation?

83% of training staff answered the question.

The key idea relates to the need to improve and increase contacts with in-house tutors. Even so, 42% of training staff who took part in the survey provided no details about this improved cooperation.

Those who do give a more detailed answer mention the following:

- the development of links over the Internet and the use of other information and communication technologies (6 answers),
- the holding of more meetings at the training centre (8 answers),
- backing up visits to the company (7 answers)
- the setting up of training courses for in-house tutors (7 answers).

² This is hardly surprising because within the CCCA-BTP network visits to companies have been “near compulsory” for a number of years. This “near obligation” is backed up by the widespread implementation of an examination procedure known as “checks during training” which makes widespread use of visits to companies.

³ The apprenticeship booklet is a mandatory legal tool in France. For years the CFA management teams have seen the development and exploitation of this means of communication between the training centre and the company as extremely important.

General summary for the target group

The survey shows that the training staff are focussed first and foremost on the passing on of knowledge and helping the apprentices to acquire vocational skills. Like the in-house tutors, relatively few of the training staff who replied can initially see the bigger picture involving better vocational integration, which is the real issue for apprenticeship in France.

On the other hand, all the training staff we spoke to said that they were sure of the importance of complementarity and of consultation between the participants in training (company and training centre).

Some of the answers given by French training staff reveal a form of distress caused by the coexistence of two worlds which are rather unfamiliar with each other and which have to work together in the young person's interests. Indeed, the training centre and the company are forced to work together without really knowing much about each other because they have the same aims, the same logics, the same responsibilities, the same obligations and the same resources.

A system of support for apprentice masters really must take on board the constraints and perceptions of each of the participants in work-based learning. The effective, operational development of **a still stronger and more partnership-based system of collaboration between these two forums for work-based training** in France, i.e. the companies with their tutors and the training centres with their training staff is a matter of some importance and urgency.

Conclusion on the current image of tutoring: requested changes.

Below we shall see that there is a big difference between the perception of tutoring work amongst les in-house tutors, amongst training centre staff and amongst young people.

Both in-house tutors and often young people highlight the importance of the concept of work. The young people are also sensitive to vocational integration. Training centre staff often see training from a school-related point of view. Once again, there is an obvious need to bring these groups' perceptions closer together.

3. Results of the surveys of apprentices

We spoke to one hundred and sixty-six apprentices for the purposes of this survey. Each apprentice has signed a specific contract of employment with an employer and the length of this contract is set by law according to the type and level of apprenticeship. In regular work-based learning phases (three weeks at a company, one week at a training centre chosen by the head of the company), apprentices share their apprenticeship time working towards a qualification and vocational integration into the world of work.

The age of the apprentices we spoke to varies from 16 to 25. The educational level is CAP⁴ (the first diploma level in France) and BP⁵ (baccalaureate level). They are all male and come from the professional branch of the building and public works industry. The trades they are studying for are: bricklaying, tiling, heating, sanitary facilities, electricity, painting, cooling and air-conditioning. The surveys were carried out across the whole of French territory covered by the CCCA-BTP network with the participation of the same training centres as for the training staff.

The educational level of some apprentices, most of whom had a frustrating time at school, is still fairly unsatisfactory. Many of them are training via apprenticeship as this is all that is left open to them.

92% of the apprentices we spoke to are employed by companies with fewer than 10 employees, and the vast majority of these companies have from 1 to 3 employees.

Summary by question

1. *Do you have a person who regularly monitors your work at the company (tutor)? If so, are you satisfied with this monitoring? Please explain why.*

77% of apprentices say that they have a tutor who is appointed by the head of the company, whereas 18.3% say that they do not have a tutor, the rest fail to answer the question - they probably do not understand what it is about.

62% of apprentices who have a tutor say that they are satisfied with their tutors.

The main results in terms of satisfaction:

- the tutor helps the apprentice “to learn a lot of things”, to find out about the trade, to explain things properly,
- the tutor takes an interest in the apprentice, making sure that he does not feel totally alone,
- the apprentice feels that the tutor makes a commitment and takes his role to heart.

7% of people were not satisfied but they hardly give any explanations about their dissatisfaction.

⁴ CAP: Certificat d’Aptitude Professionnelle (Vocational Training Certificate).

⁵ BP: Brevet Professionnel (vocational certificate).

2. *Is there anything that your tutor does as part of his work which you like?*

21% of apprentices failed to answer the question. This figure matches the number of apprentices who say they have no tutor or are not satisfied.

So the reasons for satisfactions given are, in order of importance:

- the tutor explains things and gives you work to do: 39 answers,
- the tutor is approachable and takes the time to explain things: 25 answers,
- the tutor gives you responsibilities and builds your self-confidence: 21 answers,
- the tutor is nice: 15 answers.

Other positive answers: a good professional with good communication skills.

The thing to be taken from this survey is that the two main values which attract the apprentices' attention is first of all the fact that **they are being taught the trade** and then that **they get to do meaningful work**: spending time with them, making their work meaningful and trusting them.

3. *Is there anything that your tutor does as part of his work that do you not like?*

Only 1 apprentice out of 2 answered the question.

This confirms that apprentices do not dare to offer any criticism, especially in writing.

Those who do give an answer say that they do not like the following things:

- tutors who lose their tempers, shout and get angry for no apparent reason (16 answers),
- the feeling of being seen as an unqualified worker who can be told to do absolutely anything (19 answers),
- tutors whose behaviour is incomprehensible, who "moan" all the time, who criticise excessively, who lack sincerity, who are referred to as "insincere" (16 answers); this kind of behaviour often leads to interpersonal problems.

There are other less frequent answers which are still worth thinking about: a lack of trust on the part of the in-house tutor, being too demanding, the tutor is away absorbed by another task, a lack of constructive communication.

4. *What do you see as your tutor's most important role?*

16% of apprentices failed to answer this question and this figure matches the number of apprentices who say they do not have a tutor.

Those who do answer have very precise ideas about what they expect.

Thus:

- 68 apprentices answer: "learning the trade",
- 12 answer: "explaining things and giving me work to do"
- 32 answer: "training me and keeping an eye on what I do".

Only one apprentice clearly expressed what he wanted: "Working towards the qualification".

There were a few other answers relating to safety at work, profitability or the purely interpersonal aspect.

5. *What qualities do you think a good tutor should have?*

16% of the young people failed to answer the question. The same comments can be made as for the previous question.

The answers are balanced in terms of numbers and are varied: the tutor needs to be able to teach, be patient, serious, respectful, honest, pleasant, attentive, prepared to listen, trusting and offer explanations and advice. He must also be hard-working, professional, calm, show composure, encourage you to get involved in the trade by listening to you, give you a sense of self-worth, understanding showing indulgence and firmness.

6. *How do you feel when you are at the company?*

- a. You're there, first and foremost,
 to work: 70% to be trained

- b. Do you think that your tutor has the same opinion as you on this subject?
 YES NO
The answers to this question are not significant in terms of percentages (see comment below).

- c. Do you feel at ease in this situation?
 YES NO: 17%

83 young people say that they are at their companies to work and they think that their tutors agree with them. The apprentices feel at ease in this situation. On the other hand, 37 apprentices say that they are at their companies first and foremost to be trained.

Even so, the answers need to be treated with caution, because the distinction between these two concepts is not always easy for the apprentices to understand. In addition to this, they are sure that their tutors must think the same way as they do.

We should also note that 17% of the apprentices we spoke to say that they are not at ease in their apprenticeships. This is a high percentage if we consider that 8% of apprentices failed to answer this question.

7. *What changes/improvements would you like to see in your in-house tutor?*

65% of the apprentices we spoke to failed to answer this question.

The answers given cannot all be exploited or are significant only in relation to a personal situation. Overall, this question was too abstract for the apprentices.

General summary for the target group

From the apprentice's point of view the concept of a tutor is fairly clear. Indeed, more than three quarters of the apprentices who answered the survey know the person who has the job of monitoring them at the company. They have a fairly precise idea of the role that the tutor should play and have coherent expectations of him.

18% of the apprentices we spoke to say that they do not have tutors which is still a lot but should be put into a downward perspective. Indeed, as was stated in the preamble, in very many cases the apprentices are alone with the head of the company. And, as a result, they confuse titles and positions and can thus say in all sincerity that they do not have a tutor even though they do.

The survey reveals that 75% of the young people are satisfied with their situations, in other words with training through apprenticeship. At the same time, 62% of apprentices who have a tutor say that they are satisfied with him, even though there are a number of aspects of this relationship which leave room for improvement, especially when it comes to working under better conditions.

The answers given by the apprentices need to be put into perspective, because the training centres are aware that, in actual fact, the vast majority of breaches of apprenticeship contracts are due to interpersonal problems within the company.

4. General summary: the most characteristic elements of each target group

The apprentices want to work, to start their working lives, to earn money and the vast majority of them do not want to find themselves back in a traditional school system. The means offered to them is learning a trade right there within the company, whilst working at the same time. Most of them are not in a position where they are disputing, objecting or showing any bitterness. They are prepared to accept a lot of constraints provided that they are not put back into an education system of which they have had quite enough. They want to be considered as active members of society, men who can be given responsibility.

Most of **the training staff** talk about education, training, apprenticeship, qualifications. Generally speaking, they take up positions as teachers. This position is backed up by the current education system which, even though efforts have been made to move closer to business, means that the training staff are broadly stuck in their training centres where the priority in terms of their timetable is given to creating lessons and organising tutorials with the apprentices.

The heads of companies intuitively understand the urgency of training a next generation of workers and get involved in training young people through apprenticeship without really measuring everything that is involved in it, so they are trapped in an institutional, legal and economic logic and fairly often have a perception of in-house training which is out of step with reality. This perception is a matter of cultural heritage, because most of them also learned their trades through apprenticeship. **Having said that, they do have a real desire to train the young people, but need better support in doing their work.**

Heads of companies who are themselves tutors are closer to the tutoring work. This is largely due to the fact that they are the heads of small companies where the apprentice is considered rather like "the boss' son" even if he is not really. This is the context in which **apprenticeship works best because there is a stronger human and emotional relationship**. Indeed, each of the participants is better aware of his responsibilities and of the importance of his role. The relationship is less institutional, legal and mechanical, it becomes more human and sometimes emotional, which involves greater motivation on all sides.

Tutors to whom the tutoring work has been entrusted rather arbitrarily, without any relaxation of production demands, can have a fairly negative perception of it. They can feel that this work makes them lose their tempers and takes up time. **Tutors who are not motivated do not ask for support in their work.**

Overall, the survey carried out confirmed a significant lack of communication between the heads of the companies and the in-house tutors, training centre staff and the young people being trained.

Obviously this is as a result of the fact that each of the partners remains locked into his own logic and there is no mechanism encouraging them to make the first move towards the other partners of their own volition. Either through a desire not to offend or by default, neither of the partners in training talks about or questions the other. And yet each of them feels alone in the job of training the young person.