Going Abroad

Connecting business potential across borders

The Success Team method – a tool for succeeding with your business

A handbook

for starting and running Success Teams

Part-financed by the European Union (European Regional Development Fund)

Foreword

Any enterprise, no matter what size, that wants to export and do international business development faces a number of challenges and obstacles that need to be clarified and taken care of. As a company you need to know how to build up sales channels and partnerships, which can be overwhelming for a small company. Going Abroad cuts these barriers for very small companies through cross-border cooperation and gives the participating entrepreneurs and their companies a head start.

Näringsliv Skåne (the department for trade and industry) is responsible for coordinating all trade and industry issues within Region Skåne. Together with public and private stakeholders, we are working to achieve the same goal: a stronger business sector in Skåne, south Sweden.

One of our main areas is working to promote entrepreneurship, increase the spirit of enterprise and strengthen the competitiveness of companies in Skåne. Other key areas of focus include the development of a platform for Skåne, entrepreneurship in the education system, as well as entrepreneurialism and entrepreneurship among women and minority groups, which is where Going Abroad plays an important role.

After the project has been going on for almost two years we are happy to see the outcomes of this project. Many types of cooperation have arisen between our Swedish, German and Lithuanian business women and we hope that the method can be spread and successfully implemented in other countries.

Therefore, this handbook, which is based on practical, project-related experiences is an important result and will hopefully help many organizations, networks, NGOs and even private people to apply the Success Team method.

Bodil Rosvall Jönsson
Director
CEO Business Region Skåne

The Success Team method – a tool for succeeding with your business
A handbook for starting and running Success Teams

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Yvonne Kievad (Levande Liv) and Christiane Bannuscher (Women into Business) at the Female Business Mile (Trade Fair) in Rostock, September 2013

Going Abroad

"At present the creative and business potential of women is the most effective potential for regional development. And it is necessary to lead this potential into the international market and the economic development!"

Danuta Hübner, Poland, at that time Commissioner for Regional policy in EU at the Nordic Conference of Female Entrepreneurship in Stockholm in October 2007

Who are we?

Going Abroad is a project amongst partners and associated organisations from Sweden, Germany, Lithuania and Poland. The project is part-financed by the South Baltic Programme and the European Union and runs between June 2011 and December 2013.

The objective of this project is to strengthen the business potential of women's enterprises across borders by creating networks and providing new knowledge to enable them to run their enterprises sustainable and competitive. It helps the female entrepreneurs to tackle the problems associated with accessing new markets and facilitates the steps to export and international trade. Thus, the project's efforts will contribute to economic growth in society.

Project aims

1. …to promote female entrepreneurs in micro enterprises to growth by helping them tackle the problems with accessing new markets
2. …to develop cross-border networks that are facilitating their steps to export and international trade.
3. …to train female entrepreneurs in rules, regulations and methods for export within different identified branch networks and to implement business meetings between micro companies in the three participating countries (Sweden, Germany, Lithuania)
4. …to work in Cross-Border Success Teams composed by 8-10 entrepreneurs with micro companies from the three countries.
5. …to spread the Success Team method to other countries.

The results will be increased business through export and through joint networks between micro companies. The network is going to be long-lasting as the Women Resource Centres will keep the contact data base available for the enterprises after the project has ended, as well as they will support the network.

Target groups

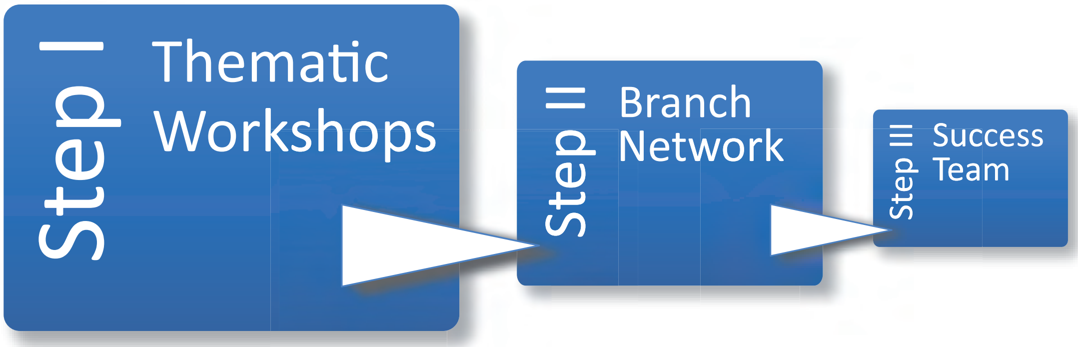
The primary target group is female entrepreneurs running micro enterprises in the participating regions. To secure expected results, the project will target enterprises that have a real business opportunity on the markets in the three participating countries.

The secondary target group is related to dissemination and durability. It consists of Women Resource Centres, including Winnet Skåne, Winnet Sweden, Winnet Europe and business and information organizations working with female entrepreneurs. This group will disseminate the project results and use the project method and experiences to further promote female entrepreneurs.

The third target group consists of enterprise organizations like branch organizations, Chambers of Commerce, National Trade Agencies, regional and local business service providers and incubators. They will be a platform to disseminate the project experiences and methods.

Group work at the Cross Border Meeting in Växjö, 2013

From thematic workshops to a Success Team in three steps



Step I

Thematic workshops are organized, with the purpose to provide the workshop participants with new knowledge relevant for them and their company and to find suitable participants for the branch network. Here the participants meet other entrepreneurs, exchange experiences, discover each other's potential and get ideas for the development of their business and for possible types of cooperation.

Step II

Participants that become interested and inspired to further develop their business during the workshops can become part of a branch network.

Step III

Branch network participants interested and motivated to continue their work can become a member of a Success Team.

Step I: Thematic Workshops (recruitment for the branch network)

The first step in the project was to analyse the present situation in every participating region in order to establish a basis for building branch networks. The purpose of this analysis was to find out which branches can be relevant for *cross border cooperation* and how the female entrepreneurs are currently presented in their region. Based on this analysis, Going Abroad developed thematic workshops. One purpose of a workshop is to provide information about cross-border possibilities and to create a platform for the exchange of experience between female entrepreneurs in order to support their business activities. This applies to both import and export, as well as to cooperations. The participants get to know the supporting organisations for cross border business development (e.g. the Chamber of Commerce) and other projects in the area of cross border businesses. Moreover, the workshops act as meeting opportunities and, as such, contribute to the continuity of the relations that are being established. They are also the platform from which the cross border network will be built and the participants of the Success Teams are recruited. Everybody is welcome to attend the workshops, no matter if they are just generally interested or if they already have concrete plans about how to further develop their company and expand to international markets.

Four preliminary branches for thematic workshops were listed in the beginning of the project, **Creative business, Food and Tourism, Textiles and Healthcare**. These branches may never be static and the needs of the entrepreneurs in the Success Teams and the network always have to be considered. The level of knowledge and the preferences in terms of skills development that are in demand will be taken into account as far as possible. Examples of topics for thematic workshops are *Business English* and *IT skills*.

The structure for a thematic workshop

The purpose and objective of a thematic workshop is to provide the participants with the knowledge needed to establish new markets for entrepreneurs. The structure for how to perform the workshops is:

1. Presentation of participants
2. Basic information about the arranging organisation/ NGO or in this case Going Abroad
3. Lecture providing new knowledge about options for business development
4. Discussions in smaller groups about the potential and possibilities for further development of the entrepreneurs' companies
5. Summary, questions, wishes that can be taken into account for planning the next thematic workshop

In order to create business contacts and for the development of the company it is important that the participants have time to present themselves and their company and that the workshops include time for group discussions.

It is important to pay attention to:

1. Information about cross border options
2. Branch network
3. Exchange of experience
4. Establishing contacts with chambers of commerce etc.
5. Considering the participant's wishes and needs
6. Information about and recruitment for Success Teams

Step II: Branch Network (recruitment for Success Teams)

The participants of thematic workshops are important in order to create a network that makes it easier to find business contacts and to keep in touch. Moreover, it makes the participants and their companies visible online and gives them the possibility to present their company, which hopefully leads to further contacts with other entrepreneurs and possibly even customers.

In the beginning of 2013, Going Abroad created a branch network on the Going Abroad homepage that enables project participants, and even entrepreneurs that are part of a lager network, to publish their company information, to find new ideas, valuable business contacts, a possibility to market their business together with someone else etc.

The network is divided into the participating countries Lithuania, Sweden and Germany, as well as into different branches such as Art and Design, Consulting and Coaching, Retail etc. so that it is easy for people who visit the branch network on www.goingabroad.nu to find the kind of contact they are looking for.

Entrepreneurs who publish their company profile on the branch network describe what their company is working with, as well as they specify what kind of contacts they are looking for.

As of autumn 2013, about 50 female entrepreneurs have published their company profiles on www.goingabroad.nu

Step III: Success Teams in Going Abroad practice

Once a Success Team has been recruited and formed, six to eight female entrepreneurs meet regularly in order to develop their businesses and to support each other. Each and every participant works towards their individual goals but gets help and support from the other team members. By giving themselves "homework" and setting achievable goals, the participants train to be successful business women.

Group work at the Cross Border Meeting in Rostock, 2012

National Success Teams

National and regional Success Teams are formed by female entrepreneurs with an interest in and the sufficient potential for cross-border cooperation. The participants start to work in a regional Success Team (as for example in Kretinga or Rietavas) and those entrepreneurs who are motivated to work in an international Success Team can become a member of a Cross Border Success Team in the next step. Going Abroad focuses on entrepreneurs who run small businesses and lack the capacities to establish international contacts, to enter the international market or to cooperate with companies from abroad. The Success Team method means to invest in the development of business skills and the sustainability of female enterprises. Success Teams aim to exchange experience on the basis of a structured meeting plan, in order to improve their competitiveness, growth and international cooperation, as well as to develop new products, services and new ideas.

In February 2012, the Success Team method was introduced in Lithuania. Since then, five national teams have been established both in Rietavas and Kretinga, have worked together successfully and several participants are now part of Cross Border Success Teams.

Cross Border Success Teams

The Success Team method was being further developed and applied for Cross Border Success Teams. Groups of businesswomen, who earlier have been part of a national Success Team in one of the participating countries, form international Success Teams, work together for 12 months and exchange their experience and development potential.

Herma Stein, Team HABBLYK, Cross Border Meeting in Rostock, September 2013 – Female Business Mile (Trade Fair)

The development of the method entails the use of the internet as well as social media as a tool for communication between the entrepreneurs. Moreover, the entrepreneurs in the Cross Border Success Teams act as an international board in each other's companies. Smaller companies do not usually have a board and even less likely, an international board – this is highly valuable for the development of a business. During Cross Border Meetings that are arranged about twice a year, the participating entrepreneurs have the chance to meet in person, to exchange information and experiences. Moreover, a Cross Border Meeting can include taking part in workshops, doing study visits at the chamber of commerce, at other entrepreneurs' companies and creating valuable business contacts and different kinds of cooperation with each other.

Marina Leyerer, Team Wommarts, and Inna Kirsannova, Team Baltic Women at the Business Mile in Rostock.

Participation and results

Between 2011 and 2013, 74 women participated actively in 5 National Success Teams and 7 Cross Border Success Teams:

14 business women from Sweden
23 business women from Germany
37 business women from Lithuania

Over the course of the project the participants had the chance to meet face to face on six occasions: Two times in Sweden, in Kristianstad and Växjö, once in Rietavas and once in Kretinga in Lithuania, and twice in Rostock, in Germany.

These Cross Border Meetings were very fruitful: the participants got to know each other, had the chance to attend workshops such as *Time for "fika", the art of doing business in Sweden,* Michael Engström or *Doing Business in Germany,* Benny Egholm Sørensen, and most importantly, different types of cooperation resulted from those meetings. Here we will name some of them:

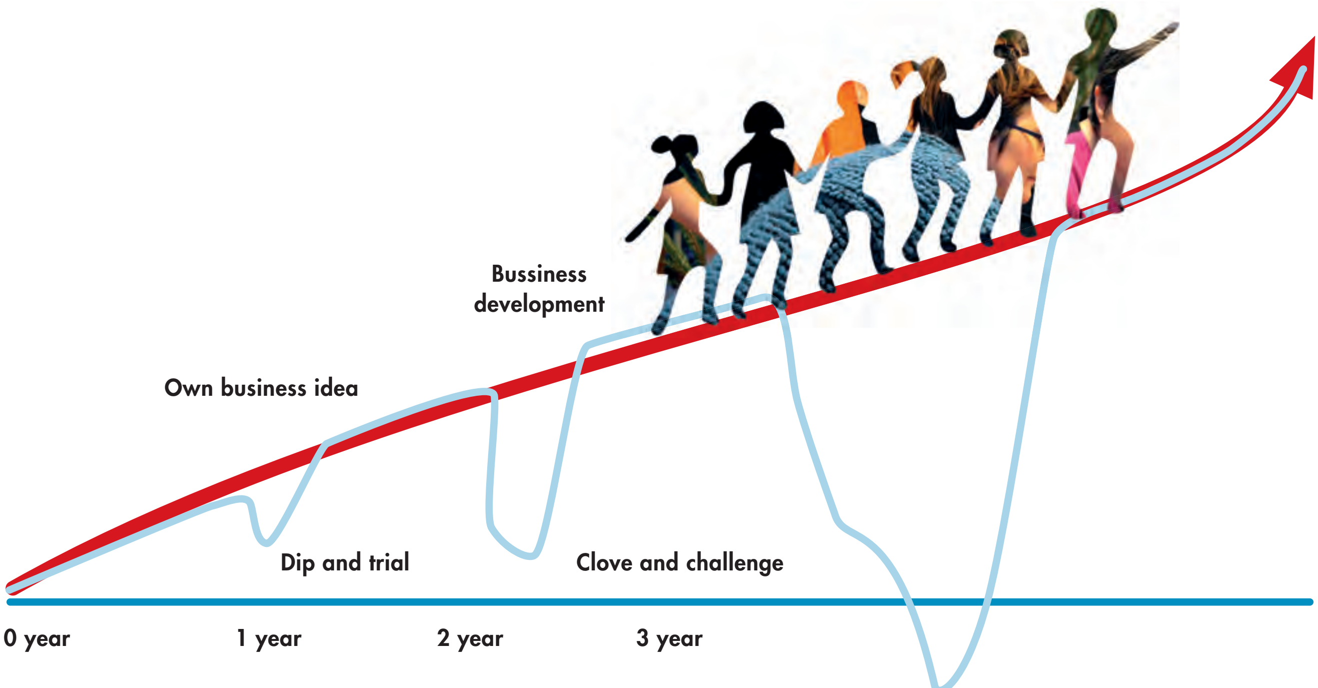
- Herma Stein and Barbara Simon from Rostock, Germany, have started The other Footschool together and hold workshops about "Walking Properly with Joy".
- In 2013, Yvonne Kievad (Levande Liv) from Fjälkinge, Sweden, who runs a company that guides people and teams in transformational leadership and Margareta Hjelmqvist (Vånga 77.1) from Vånga in Sweden, who owns an orchard with apples, granite, water and forest as a basis for business products and activities, started working with Herma Stein (The Other Fotschool) from Rostock, who held a workshop on "Walking Properly with Joy" in Sweden in autumn 2013 and who has already planned another workshop series for spring 2014.
- At the Cross Border Meeting in Rostock, Margareta Hjelmqvist found three possible resellers in Germany for the Birch sap her company produces.
- Eva Stanleysson, a health counselor from Svängsta in Sweden, is in contact with Herma Stein, and got new input and exercises for her work as a water gymnastics instructor as well as new ideas for marketing her own company.
- Kati Jaeger (PibuG) from Rostock, Germany, a project manager who works with adult education and health care, works together with Birgitta Estberg's (Biest Firma) from Växjö in Sweden, who developed The Maintenance Game that has been used in more than 200 companies, schools and organizations. Kati Jaeger developed the Maintenance Game further to a team-player workshop for companies in Mecklenburg Western Pomerania. Moreover, she is the reseller for the game in Germany. Birgitta Estberg is also planning a cooperation with Rietavas Business Information Centre to export the game even to Lithuania.

- Gerda Lichtenau, who runs her own shiitake mushroom production near Rostock, sells her mushrooms to Monika Kaiser, owner of the hotel Kaisers Ostseeperle near Rostock.
- Regina Chinow, owner of Rakurität Event Ceramics from Rostock, sells jewellery made by Daiva Saliene (Karoliai) through her company on markets in Mecklenburg Western Pomerania.

Lithuanian group on their way to the Cross Border Meeting in Rostock, 2012

- Inna Kirsanowa and Barbara Simon (The Other Footschool) from Rostock made it possible and organized that Ausra Jukneviciene (Vaura designs – knitted fashion) and Daiva Saliene (Karoliai – jewellery) from Lithuania could participate in the big fair "Hansesail" in Rostock in August 2013.

The Success Team Method



Business Success Team

A Business Success Team is a new approach in the pattern of contacts and networks. The idea is that business women from different branches meet regularly to motivate and support each other in the management and development of their own enterprises. The Business Success Team is a group of 4-6 people, who meet regularly every 3–4 weeks to support each other and to help each other achieve the goals they set for themselves. This programme usually takes at least 6 months, depending on the composition of the group. Activities in a Business Success Team focus on improving the participants' abilities in starting up and managing a business, and on motivating each other and sharing their individual experiences.

The aims are in particular:

1. To detect and formulate goals
2. To draw in external suggestions and impulses
3. To further develop the entrepreneur's and their company's potential

> **Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success!** Henry Ford

The idea of Success Teams comes from the USA, a method invented by Barbara Sher that Ulrike Bergman brought to Germany in the 1990s. Women Resource Centres (WRC) in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern have been working with Success Teams since 2000 and this has inspired WRCs in Sweden to start working with the method too. The idea of Success Teams can be applied for various groups. Here, we describe how it has been used with women running their own businesses but it can also be used in groups where the participants have other wishes for personal or professional development.

Women in Success Teams achieve their aims faster and improve their self-discipline and management thanks to the regular meetings and the motivational impact of the group dynamics. Important factors include group pressure on members, the interactive structure of the team-work and the development of common stragegies applied to achieve aims. The communicative interchange and social support from others, and celebrating achievments together with like-minded people are other positive success factors.

In order to find suitable participants and to put together a Success Team with a specific focus (e.g. entrepreneurs from one specific branch, from several specific branches, from different countries etc.), the recruitment can be based on interviews. These interviews help to evaluate and determine the preconditions and potential of the entrepreneurs and contribute to the Success Team's success.

Moreover, the participants sign a contract with each other, commiting to the work with the Success Team.

Going Abroad

Principles of the work in the Success Teams – commitment

The Success Team Supporter (not part of the team) helps the participants to develop the principles of cooperation:

1. We will work together in the Success Team over the course of one year and the dates for the meetings must be respected and kept.
2. Every entrepreneur has equal rights in a Success Team.
3. Everybody shares responsibility for moderation, writing the minutes and keeping the time structure.
4. Everybody takes responsibility for reaching their own target and for asking for the support of the other members.
5. We support each other on the basis of experiences, networks and ideas in running an enterprise.
6. We work on the basis of respect and appreciation for every participant.
7. We support each other and work on a "give and take" basis.
8. We work together in a constructive way and take responsibility for the cooperation in the Success Team.
9. Business information shared during the work in the Success Team has to be treated confidentially.
10. We speak openly about problems and conflicts in the group.

Requirements

There are various requirements for running a Business Success Team, including readiness to participate in a team with people in a similar situation e.g. entrepreneurs. Each member follows concrete aims and is supported in achieving them, whereas everyone can rely on assistance from the others. Specific collaboration guidelines ensure an efficient approach. The survival and success of the team is dependent on the commitment of the individual members.

The members need:

1. Time, energy, stamina
2. Trust in each other
3. A positive attitude
4. Discretion
5. Honesty in sharing experiences – related to problems and failures as well as successes
6. Appreciation of each other
7. Respectful communication
8. Constructive criticism

Realisation and implementation of a Success Team

It does not cost a lot of money to set up a Success Team; it takes time, energy, optimism, support and taking on responsibility.

Working in a Success Team can be realized in different ways: face to face, via chat, via mail and Skype. Within Going Abroad, we put a lot of effort into the participants getting to know each other personally during kick-off meetings and at about two more meetings (Cross Border Meetings), so that the participants can hold a productive Skype – Team – Meeting about every four to six weeks.

Three steps are necessary in order to set up and run a Success Team

1. Learning the method of Success Teams

Thematic workshops are used to inform about the Success Team method.

- Presentation of the participants and their enterprises.
- Success Team: development of the method for supporting growth and business cooperation, history of development, preconditions for the participants in order to take part.

2. Activity in a Success Team

- A kick-off meeting for the Success Team takes place, where the participants meet face to face and are taught how a Success Team works. The participants also learn how a meeting is structured and what the preconditions for the work in a Success Team are. Moreover, they learn about commitment and different roles, the potential members of a Success Team are presented, and teams are matched. After such a kick-off meeting, the Success Team starts to work.
- Support, preparation for the first meetings of the Success Teams (room, date, time, roles and responsibilities).
- Support during the process, communication in between, minutes, and evaluation of the results (separate documents). Meeting of all Success Teams to share their experiences, progress evaluation and support during the continuing process.

3. Evaluation

- Final meeting to evaluate the results for the individual participant in their development.

How does it work?

Clearly structured "rounds of talks" are held, participants take turns to chair the meeting, a journal is kept, and the discussion within the group leads to the establishment of a Business Success Team.

Tasks and roles

1. The meeting is led by the participant who took notes in the previous meeting.
2. Choosing a participant who takes notes with the following content:
   a. time and place
   b. people participating in the meeting
   c. tasks for the next meeting
   d. other questions.
3. After the meeting, a copy of the notes is sent to the participants and the moderator.

Structure of the meeting

Each meeting lasts 2–3 hours and has three stages or rounds: Getting started, support and aims.

Round 1: Getting started (5 min per participant)

Every participant reports on the progress of her work since the last meeting:

a. A short report of the results that have been achieved since the previous meeting is given.

b. A short summary of the problems that have been solved is given.

Round 2: Support (15 min per participant)

The goal of this round is to evaluate difficult issues and situations together and to find solutions for them:

a. The participants give each other advice on how to solve current problems.

b. They discuss how they can support each other.

The method provides a number of questions to guide the discussion:

1. Where have I not achieved progress?
2. Which aspects have I developed further?
3. What are the explanations for point 1 and 2?
4. What ideas and solutions can I contribute to help the other participants?
5. How should I proceed in the future?
6. Which more effective practices can I use?

Round 3: Aims until the next meeting (5 min per participant)

In this round, each participant defines her aims for the next meeting. These aims are recorded in the form of a journal, so that it can be checked that the participants work in a goal-oriented manner. Each participant has about five minutes to state her aims, particularly what will be achieved until the next meeting. The targets can be strengthened by being recorded in a journal. They are more clearly defined and easier to check because of the formulation and because a date is set for when the aim has to be achieved.

The journal

At the kick-off the participants agree on dates and meeting places for the coming 8 months.

MEETING 1 ....
Place ....

MEETING 2 ....
Place ....

MEETING 3 ....
Place ....

MEETING 4 ....
Place ....

MEETING 5 ....
Place ....

MEETING 6 ....
Place ....

MEETING 7 ....
Place ....

MEETING 8 ....
Place ....

Tasks – roles

1. The meeting is lead by the participant who took notes at the previous meeting.
2. Choose the participant who takes notes with following content
   a. the time and place b. attendants at the meeting
   c. task for the next meeting d. other questions
3. After the meeting – send a copy of the notes to the participants and the moderator

Structure of the meeting – method

1. Results (5 min/participant)
   a. a short report of the results that have been achieved since the previous meeting
   b. a short summary of the problems that have been solved
2. Support (15 min/participant)
   a. the participants advice each other about how to find solutions to current problems
   b. discussions on how to support each other
3. Task to be done until the next meeting (5 min/participant)

AS A PARTICIPANT, YOU COMMIT YOURSELF TO

- attend at the meetings
- document the meetings
- document your own, personal results
- keep this folder
- take part in surveys

My tasks and results of the Success team

KICK-OFF

MEETING 1
Commitment

Task to be done until the next time

MEETING 2
Results achieved since the previous meeting

Task to be done until the next meeting

MEETING 3
Results achieved since the previous meeting

Task to be done until the next meeting

MEETING 4
Results achieved since the previous meeting

Task to be done until the next meeting

MEETING 5
Results achieved since the previous meeting

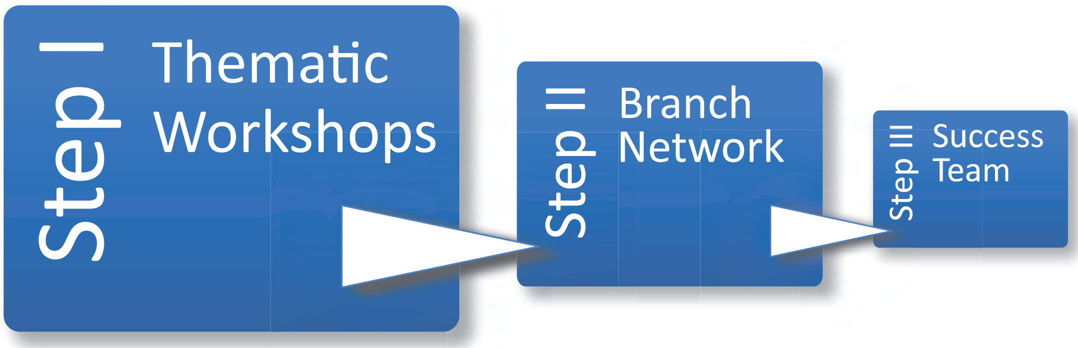
Task to be done until the next meeting

Different ways of realizing a Success Team

Option I

One option to set up and run a Success Team is to follow the three steps described above and run the Success Team as part of the work of an organisation, network, NGO, etc.

This implies that the organisation has the financial resources to employ someone, or to set aside time for an employee to work with the start, support and the follow-up of a Success Team.



This requires

On the organisation's, network's, NGO's, part

1. An organisation whose aim is to support female entrepreneurs and that has experience with projects that strengthen female entrepreneurship.
2. A well-functioning network of founders of new businesses and entrepreneurs that visit the organisation's events (as for example thematic workshops).
3. The organisational and technical conditions for setting up a Success Team, such as seminar rooms.
4. Moderators/Coaches/Trainers with experience in setting up and working with a Success Team.

On the part of starters of new businesses and participating entrepreneurs

1. The interest and motivation for working as a member of a Success Team.
2. Providing the technical equipment and skills, as for example, a computer or knowing how to use Skype and Facebook.
3. If the goal to achieve is to create different types of cross border cooperation – good language skills in English are needed.
4. Taking on responsibility for keeping appointments and tasks as for example the moderation of a meeting, writing the minutes or scheduling new meetings.

Option II – low-budget

Another option is to set up and run a Success Team in an existing group or network. Even without a big budget, it is possible to do this successfully. Instead of recruiting participants during thematic workshops, a non-profit organisation or even a private person can use the method in an existing group or in an existing network. Working with an existing group also means that the costs can be kept very low because there are no expenses for workshops, seminar rooms etc.

Success Team as a "Tool"

By learning the Success Team method and by applying it practically, the entrepreneurs get a "tool", respectively learn a technique that they can use in their own enterprise. As part of the method, the entrepreneurs have to set their next aims, formulate them and look for support(ers) in order to realize these aims. This can lead to, for example, setting up their own Success Team and winning business partners from other branches for bigger projects.

The demands on the participants are the same as for those working with a Success Team as described in Option I.

On the part of starters of new businesses and participating entrepreneurs, it takes

1. The interest and motivation for working as part of a Success Team
2. Providing the technical equipment and skills, as for example, a computer, knowing how to use Skype and Facebook.
3. If the goal is to create different types of cross border cooperation – good language skills in English are needed.
4. Taking on responsibility for keeping appointments and tasks as for example the moderation of a meeting, writing the minutes or scheduling new meetings.

Communication within Going Abroad

One of the project's cornerstones is the implementation of cross-border networks. Networking is vital for any Success Team as these networks not only simplify the steps to export and international trade, but also because every entrepreneur needs

- a group of people that they can trust, respect and that supports them
- a group of people they want to do business with

However, networking needs a lot of time and effort because it takes time to earn someone's trust and to get to know each other. Nonetheless, networking should be seen as a long term strategy for entrepreneurs and their businesses.

Networking within Going Abroad

On project level, we want our participants to get to know each other and each other's businesses. The better they know each other, the more they can learn from each other, judge their level of experience and of professionalism. There is no short term guarantee, but over time, this will lead to many benefits in terms of contacts, exchange of experience and references.

In order to establish such cross-border networks and to put our theory into practice, Going Abroad makes use of several social tools that help the participants to overcome the geographical borders between them, to network actively and to work closely together with their international colleagues.

We expect our participants to profit from this international cooperation in terms of

- Cultural diversity
- Inspiration, support and concrete ideas on how to promote their business
- Training and education to further develop their skills in the business area and to realize their potential

and resulting from that

- Economic growth for their business

In order to be able to have a well functioning communication within an international Cross Border Success Team, it is necessary that participants have access to broad band, a certain technical level (Skype) and speak English. If these factors are not given, the communication will be significantly affected and the success of the team is at stake.

If there is a lack of skills (e.g. lack of English or IT skills) or a lack of resources, such as no broadband, this can be compensated for. For example, one can organize thematic workshops with topics such as "Business English", or a workshop in "Social Media Skills". Moreover, participants without access to broadband can be recommended to work with the Success Team from the public library or another public institution.

Going Abroad works with the following communication channels

E-mail contact between the partners

The project partners are in constant e-mail contact with each other – updating each other and discussing problems, upcoming events etc.

Homepage

On the homepage, participants and other stakeholders find detailed information about how the project works, contact information and information about the partner organisations, the branch network, newsletters, events etc.

Blog

In the beginning of the project a blog was implemented. However, even after asking the participants repeatedly to use it and to create forums for their respective Success Team or branch, the blog was not being used. The participants responded much better to the Going Abroad Facebook page, which is used frequently by many participants.

Facebook

110 project participants, partner organizations and other interested people follow Going Abroad on Facebook. There they find information about the project, topic-related information from other projects and organizations and have the possibility to market their products, events etc.

Moreover, they can see who else is involved in the project and easily get in contact with each other.

More than 20 of the Going Abroad participants have created Facebook business pages for their companies, in order to market their products and services. Depending on the branch the entrepreneurs work with, a Facebook business page can be a great tool for online marketing.

(Online) Newsletter

Several times a year, we publish a print and online newsletter informing participants, partners, politicians, organizations etc. about the project's progress and activities.

Skype and e-mail contact between the participants

The international Success Teams use Skype to hold their Success Team meetings and also stay in touch via e-mail.

Dissemination conferences

Dissemination conferences were held on several occasions in different countries in order to spread and implement the method in other places.

A report

A report on the *"Gender analysis of the present situation in Germany, Lithuania and Sweden – labour market, entrepreneurship, cross border exchange in trade and business cooperation"* was written and published by Marta Hozer- Kocmiel, Szczecin University, Poland and Urszula Zimoch, University of Helsinki, Finland in 2012. This analysis of the current situation in the participating countries and regions was the basis for building branch networks and for developing thematic workshops.

Specific methods for working with a Success Team

The working process

The fact that the three rounds in a team meeting are so straight forward helps the participants to describe the current situation of the company and, with help of the other Success Team members, to take the next steps towards reaching their aim. Through inspiration and motivation from the team, the participant gets new ideas and inspiration for their business management.

The participants' aims are focused on the growth of their company, increasing their company's competitiveness and on building different types of business cooperation.

Moreover, the participants will have learned how important a structured and planned approach is, based on aims made in writing.

Several techniques showed to be helpful to support this progress: the SMART-Rule, the power questions to achieve goals, as well as using the timeline; all of which support the mental implementation of the method and help to visualize the aim.

Cross Border Success Teams: Skype meetings

For the international Cross Border Teams the communication via Skype could create an obstacle, due to technical problems as well as language difficulties. Therefore, we recommend using different tools for communication such as e-mails.

1. All members are responsible to find a suitable date for the next meeting and the duration of the meeting, according to the last "minutes".
2. The moderator is responsible to send out an invitation for the upcoming meeting.
3. All members have to answer and let the moderator know if they can participate in the meeting (if not, the person who cannot take part is responsible for finding a new date that works for everybody in the group.)
4. The meeting takes place according to the structure of the meeting (3 rounds): 1. results, 2. support, 3. next steps.
5. All participants help the person who writes the minutes (points and notes can be filled in).
6. Once everybody has received and read the minutes, they reply to the person who sent the minutes with possible additions. Moreover, participants will stay in touch between the meetings.
7. If someone has a good idea for the support of one woman, they also have to inform the other members about it.

In the following part we describe several detailed methods that can be used when working with a Success Team.

Method 1: Elevator Pitch

The meaning of the Elevator Pitch is a very short and interesting presentation of an enterprise and a person.You have to speak in pictures to develop a good understanding of what am I doing in my daily entrepreneurial life and what do I offer in terms of services and products, like during a very short stay in an elevator:

1. Who am I?
2. What am I doing?
3. Which competences do I have?
4. Which are my projects for the future?

With the help of this method I learn to inform other people about myself, "sell" me, my products and my services. I also learn to present my enterprise as a part of my entrepreneurial competences in an interesting way and to create a good impression for my customers and cooperation partners.

Elevator Pitch = short presentation of my services and competences in a very personal and interesting way.

Method 2: Objectives – finding and formulating objectives

When you know your objectives, you can concentrate on your daily work. Here you can find some recommendations to find your targets in all fields of life and development of your enterprise.

Objectives have to be **"smartly formulated"**:

Specific

If objectives are very concrete they can give you strength! It has to be your own objective in order to reach it. For instance: "Until the 31st of December 2013 I will have 5 new customers."

Measurable

How can I notice that I achieved my objective? What do I have to change in the future? e. g. "I have 3 new customers, 2 new projects and created a website"

Activities or steps

An objective is the achievement of a new quality. What needs to be done? What ideas do I have to achieve my objectives? What steps do I have to take?

Participation in network meetings, creating texts for the website, making phone calls to new potential customers and other enterprises for cooperation, ideas for new projects.

Realistic

Do the objectives fit my present situation? What are the milestones on the way to reach the objective?

For example, what work load can I get done until summer? In which quality is my website useful?

Time/date

Every objective has a deadline and several short-time objectives will be achieved, e. g. the year can be divided into months, the month in weeks and the day in hours and on this basis one can formulate the objectives for a year, a month, a week and a day.

"Power" questions to reach your objectives:

- What are my objectives?
- How do I want to achieve them?
- How can I realize them?
- When and where will I achieve them?
- What changes if I achieve my objective?
- What is the value? What is the price? What do I have to do?
- Which are the steps on the way? Who will have the capacity to support me?
- Which obstacles do I have to overcome? (internal and external according to the circumstances)
- What do I have to do concretely? What is the first, what is the second step?

Method 3: Time Line

To achieve objectives, the *Time Line* is a very supporting and helpful method. Here you have to draw a line on the floor or on a piece of paper, which shows all milestones on the way to achieve the objective. This vision is now also in your head and supports you to go towards your goal, step by step. Once I have achieved my objective I will feel … Once I have achieved my target I will hear … And what I will see? Which internal picture do I see?

In the Success Team, there are several possibilities of using the *Time Line.* In general, the timeline can be divided into: 1. Before, 2. Now or present time and 3. Future.

More specifically and related to the work within a Success Team, the timeline can be divided into: 1. Before achievement of objective, 2. Working on the objective and 3. Achievement of objective.

The Time Line functions as an anchor for the different milestones on the way of achieving the objective.

Method 4: Cooperative Counselling in the supporting round

Round 2 of the Success Team method can be further developed (see journal page 12) by using method 4. This method can be interesting and used when one or more Success Team participants are facing a particularly difficult challenge or situation. It helps to open the view on the present situation and to develop new perspectives and new patterns of behaviour.

Cooperative counselling has to be organized in groups with 4–5 participants. In the following structure, the person who needs help with a problem is called *reporting person.* One member is the *moderator* and responsible for the moderation and structure of the meeting and the remaining group members are called *counselling persons.*

Preconditions:

- All participants are willing to speak about their experiences and want to help the person asking for help and support with a certain problem.
- The counselling person also has to be willing to speak about impressions, feelings and assumptions openly and honestly.
- The reporting person also speaks openly about the case or situation and is interested to hear about new ideas and recommendations to solve the problem
- All information has to be taken seriously and has to be honest.

1. Phase: Report	Duration: 5 minutes
Reporting Person	Counselling Persons will…
What are the topics and questions? What do I want to change? What do I want to achieve? Short presentation of the current situation – problems and challenges, feelings, emotions, difficulties, obstacles, to describe the situation very clearly	Listen – take short notes

2. Phase: Interview	Duration: 10 minutes
Reporting Person has to…	Counselling Persons have to…
Answer and to describe the details	Ask open questions Wh-questions (why? what? where?) in order to understand the situation und to clarify the situation. No suggestions, questions, solutions for the problem, and no directive recommendations.

3. Phase: making a hypothesis	Duration: 10 minutes
Reporting Person will…	Counselling Persons will…
Listen – take short notes	Ask: What happened? Shadowing the first impression (impressions and feelings) What is my opinion about the situation? What am I feeling? Which assumptions and hypotheses do I have? Non-directive behaviour. Not like a teacher!

4. Phase: election of one topic	Duration: 5 minutes
Reporting Person has to…	Counselling Persons have to…
Make a description: what will she do now? What are the next steps? What was useful and supportive? What are the new facts? What is the main topic for the future? Misunderstandings have to be overcome	Listen – take short notes

5. Phase: Ideas and new alternatives	Duration: 10 minutes
Reporting Person has to…	Counselling Persons have to…
Listen – take short notes	…discuss solutions! Setting new ideas and alternatives - brainstorming Solutions do not have to be evaluated or discussed

6. Phase: end	Duration: 5 minutes
Reporting Person has to answer the following questions:	Counselling Persons have to…
What happens? What will I take with me? What will I take on? What have I learned? What will I think about the setting of the cooperative counselling? … a short statement according to the solutions; formulating new points and steps and measures No evaluation of the solutions A short feedback about the cooperative counselling and thanking the team	Listen – take short notes Reflecting of the counselling persons about the cooperation during the cooperative counselling

Method 5: Reflecting Team

The reflecting team is an innovative method (technique) developed by Tom Andersen used in training and supervision. The aim of this method is to organize a good basis and atmosphere for the development of new perspectives, ideas and alternatives in a current situation.

Two teams are formed:

3–4 members form the *reflecting team* whereas the other group consists of two people, the *case presenter* (who has a problem and needs support) and a *dialogue partner*.

Case presenter and *dialogue partner* discuss recently reached results, new steps and visions for the future, problems etc. The *reflecting team* does not get involved in this dialogue but observes the discussion.

After a while, the positions are changed and the *case presenter* and her *dialogue partner* listen to the reflections, ideas and thoughts of the *reflecting team.*

The positions change again and *case presenter* and *dialogue partner* now talk about what the *reflecting team* had to say.

This is in a very respectful and helpful way of supporting each other. The changing of reflecting and dialog can be organized several times. All participants will get information that they would not get without the *reflecting team.*

Progress Evaluation

It is recommended to record and analyse the progress of the work of a Success Team in order to secure its success. Ideally twice, once after half of the time the Success Team has worked together, and once after the Success Team has stopped working together.

Evaluation of (Cross Border) Success Team's progress I

1. What have you learnt from the cooperation with other business women in your Success Team?
2. Which results have you reached personally and for your enterprise?
3. What have you learned?
4. What do you want to change in the future in your Success Team?
5. What do you want to tell the participants of the other Success Teams?
6. What are your expectations for the (Cross Border) Success Teams in the future?

Evaluation of (Cross Border) Success Team's progress II

Questionnaire: results and climate in the Success Teams

Please write down 3 characteristics about the atmosphere/climate in your Success Team!

1. Are you satisfied with the results for you and the team in the work of your Success Team?

   not satisfied | partly satisfied | fully satisfied

2. Are you working on the basis of the roles and the commitment in your Success Team?

   yes | partly | no

3. Are you working on the basis of the structure of the meeting, the time, moderation and minutes of the meeting?

   yes | partly | no

4. Is there any progress in your personal development and in the development of your enterprise?

   yes | partly | no

5. In the meetings we discuss a lot of ideas and recommendations, we exchange our experiences in running a business and we find solutions for new tasks and steps.

   yes | partly | no

6. Have you met the participants from the other Success Teams?

   yes | partly | no

7. Please write down 3 recommendations for the cooperation in the work of your Success Team in the future!

Project forms and material

Files and documents that are mentioned in the handbook can be downloaded in different languages on www.goingabroad.nu

Thematic workshops

A structure/plan for how to perform them

- Presentation of participants
- Basic information about Going Abroad
- Lecture about a topic that provides the participants with new knowledge
- Discussions in smaller groups
- Summary, questions, wishes

Evaluatin of Success Team progress I

Questions for the Progress Evaluation

1. What have you learned from the cooperation with other business women in your Success Team?
2. Which results have you reached personally and for your enterprise?
3. What have you learned?
4. What do you want to change in the future in your Success Team?
5. What do you want to tell the participants of other Success Teams?
6. What are your expectations for the Cross Border Success Teams next year?

Strategy for the start of the Success Teams

Preparations:

1. Identification of participants will be made on the basis of individual contacts and information about the project. Going Abroad and the possibilities to take part in a Success Team will be presented at the thematic workshops. This will lead to applications from participants.
2. Specific information about the method of Success Teams targets, roles and commitment, responsibility of every participant, methods for the work in all three steps of the structure - in form of a specific meeting or at one of the thematic workshops.
3. Interview
   a. Analysis of the actual potential of the participants and real interest in the work in a Success Team working across borders and in a cooperation for one year
   b. Discussion of ideas: what are the chances for business cooperation abroad, which services/products/projects could be developed?
4. Kick-off meeting for the Success Team
5. Moderation and support for the meetings every month (training of the technique will be part of the cross border meetings)
6. Business English (or other specific training can be needed)
7. Kick-off for Cross Border Success Teams

Project partners and associated partners

Project partners

Region Skåne, Regional Resource Centre for Women, Sweden

www.skane.se
www.goingabroad.nu

Women into Business, Mecklenburg-West Pomerania, Germany

www.fiw-ev.de

Hanseatic City of Rostock, Germany

www.rostock-business.com/en

Winnet Kronoberg, Sweden

www.kronoberg.winnet.se

Kretinga Women's Information and Training Centre, Lithuania

www.kmimc.lt

Rietavas Business Information Centre, Lithuania

www.rietavovic.lt

Christina – the association for enterprising women/

www.christina.nu

Associated partners

Rotorwerk Project Services, Rostock, Germany

www.rotorwerk-project.de

Winnet Sweden

www.winnet.se

Winnet Europe

www.winneteurope.org

The municipality of Växjö, Sweden

www.vaxjo.se

The municipality of Kristianstad, Sweden

www.kristianstad.se

University of Szczecin/WRC, Poland

www.us.szc.pl/main.php/uk

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www.goingabroad.nu

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