The transformative value of professional development. Research into consultants' perspectives regarding training and consultancy

Il valore trasformativo dello sviluppo professionale. Una ricerca sulle *training perspective* di consulenti e formatori

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Abstract

This study is based on an analysis of a professional development programme proposed by a training centre in the North of Italy. Twenty-four trainers and/or consultants were involved in a 24-hour training programme in an outdoor setting based on methods and techniques inspired by Experiential Learning.

This research connects the literature on and practice of *Organizational Development* in the field of training and consultancy with the *Transformative Learning* theory. Within this framework, 14 participants were interviewed to collect qualitative data on their training/consultancy perspectives in order to develop and administer a *Training Perspectives Questionnaire* to a wider sample, according to a mixed methods approach. This paper presents the results of the first qualitative part.

Keywords: professional development; organizational development; transformative learning; training perspectives; semi-structured interview.

Abstract

La ricerca si è sviluppata nell'ambito di un programma di sviluppo professionale proposto da un organismo di formazione del Nord Italia. 24 tra formatori e/o consulenti hanno preso parte ad un percorso di 24 ore basato su metodi ispirati all'Experiential Learning in un contesto outdoor. Il contributo connette la letteratura e le pratiche nell'ambito dell'*Organizational Development* con la teoria del *Transformative Learning*. Entro questo framework, 14 partecipanti sono stati intervistati con l'obiettivo di raccogliere dati qualitativi sui valori, gli obiettivi, e le azioni dei formatori e dei consulenti per indagare le loro training perspective. La ricerca seconda un approccio mixed methods, si compone di una prima parte qualitativa, qui presentata, e di una seconda parte quantitativa volta alla costruzione e somministrazione di un *Training Perspectives Questionnaire* indirizzato a formatori e consulenti.

Parole chiave: sviluppo professionale; sviluppo organizzativo; apprendimento trasformativo; prospettive sulla formazione e la consulenza; interviste semi-strutturate.

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1. Introduction

The social context of adult learning is changing continuously and also rapidly. Many factors influence this rapidity such as globalization, technology, and changing demographics. Adult educators who have worked in different fields and with different purposes need to constantly ask themselves who their learners are as well as how they learn, but also who they themselves are as adult educators by questioning their perspectives on training and consultation: what role do they wish to play in the field of adult learning? What values and beliefs guide them during their intervention with adults such as not-employed people, employees undergoing compulsory training (e.g. safety, privacy, and so on), adults involved in professional development pathways, and many other targets who make up the complex and multi-faceted field of adult education and training?

This research was developed starting from a professional development programme offered by a training centre in the North-East of Italy. Twenty-four technical trainers and consultants were involved in a 24-hour training programme in an outdoor setting which proposed methods and techniques inspired by experiential learning to improve their generic skills and enhance awareness of their training/consulting styles and approaches (Tino & Frison, 2018).

The paper presents the theoretical background which connects *Organizational Development* literature with the *Transformative Learning* (TL) theory. In addition, the contribution focuses on the first qualitative part of a wider-ranging research project based on a mixed-methods approach (Creswell, 2008; Ellinger, Watkins & Marsick, 2009; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009) aimed at developing and administering a *Training Perspective Questionnaire* to investigate the training and consultation perspectives of a wider sample of trainers and consultants (Frison & Tino, 2018).

2. Theoretical Background

As mentioned, the research connects two main theoretical foci: firstly, Organizational Development to identify research and tools developed to investigate and recognize consulting and training styles (Bierema, 2014; Block, 2011; Cockman, Evans & Reynolds, 1996; Lippitt & Lippitt, 1986; Schein, 1987); and, secondly, Transformative Learning theory and research developed in the field of professional development (Cranton & King, 2003; King, 2004) with a specific focus on trainers and consultants.

2.1. Organizational Development and Consultants' Styles and Beliefs

The first theoretical focus is Organizational Development and the exploration of tools and inventories to explore consulting styles and beliefs. As mentioned in a previous paper (Frison & Tino, 2018), starting from the early 1980s, Organizational Development studies and practices once focused on organizational values and culture (Schein, 1987) as well as the roles and behaviour of consultants in the consulting process (Block, 2011). As Nolan stated (1993), "most people in the consulting/helping professions have styles or patterns of doing their work" (p. 1) and several inventories have been developed and administrated to investigate and recognize these consulting styles. For instance, the *Consulting-Style Inventory* (Lippitt & Lippitt, 1986), the *Training Style Inventory* techniques (Brostrom, 1975), or the *Instructional Styles Diagnosis Inventory* (Cripple, 1996), all created to explore trainers' and consultants' styles and/or beliefs in order to support consultants and, more widely, the helping professions, to examine their personal styles as well as their

ability to change styles to meet clients' needs (Nolan, 1993). Other inventories like the *Student-Content Teaching Inventory* (Spier, 1994) and the *Teaching Perspectives Inventory* (Pratt & Collins, 2000; Pratt, Collins & Selinger, 2001) were especially conceived for teachers and adult educators, to investigate their teaching philosophies (Fabbri, Striano & Melacarne, 2008). As Pratt and Collins underlined (2000), research on adult learning has highlighted "that the teaching of adults is a complex, pluralistic, and multi-faceted enterprise" (p. 2) but, despite this complexity, Kember's work (1997) and later that of Pratt and Collins, revealed that, while there may be a great many variations in personal style, "people conceived of teaching in ways that were remarkable similar to one or more of five perspectives on teaching" (Pratt & Collins, 2000, p. 2): Transmission, Apprenticeship, Developmental, Nurturing, and Social Reform.

A previous deeper analysis of both categories of tools – addressed to consultants, teachers and adult educators – underlined that, on the one hand, tools designed for teachers and adult educators tend to focus on the investigation of teaching philosophies/perspectives; on the other, tools designed for consultants and trainers seem to focus more on training/consulting styles – from non-directive to directive – and less (or merely indirectly) on trainers' philosophies, values, and beliefs (Tino & Frison, 2018). Which is why this research moves from an interest in trainers' and consultants' perspectives about training and consultation in order to, first, identify them, and second, observe whether training perspectives overlap those of teaching in order to develop a tool to encourage trainers and consultants to critically reflect on their training perspective.

2.2. Transformative Learning and Professional Development

The second theoretical focus is the Transformative Learning theory (TL). As Taylor underlined (2016): "TL involves the most significant learning in adulthood, that of communicative learning which entails the identification of problematic ideas, beliefs, values, and feelings, critically assessing their underlying assumptions" (p. 167). Disorienting dilemmas, personal and social crises, and situations that question the very core of our existence or its dimensions (job, education, family, etc.) can encourage a transformation in perspective. Indeed, TL is rooted in the idea that an "individual's worldview is framed by structures (e.g. frames of reference) of assumptions that form the basis of individuals' thinking, beliefs, values and actions" (Taylor, 2016, p. 168). Furthermore, these assumptions are often tacit, and the individual is usually unaware of them (Mezirow, 1978; Taylor, 2008; 2016). Indeed, during our daily life, we make sense of the world through our experiences, and through this continuously recurring process, we develop habits of mind and a frame of reference to understand the world. When something out of the ordinary happens, we may feel compelled to question our perspective of the world.

TL is a valuable frame to investigate adult learning (Bracci, 2017; Fabbri & Romano, 2017; King, 2004) and professional development (Cranton & King, 2003), particularly for adult educators (Boffo, Federighi & Nuissl, at the press; Federighi, 2018). As Cranton and King stated (2003), "most educators of adults come into their positions through a circuitous route, one that does not include teacher training" (p. 31) and this point applies to trainers and consultants too. Which is why professional development programmes need to incorporate activities that encourage critical reflection and a questioning approach to one's personal worldview, premises, and assumptions on the values and beliefs related to training and consultation. "Our habits of mind about teaching", and, we might add, about training and consultation, "are absorbed as we experience life. We acquire values and assumptions

about teaching from the community and society we live in, from the institution we work in, and from family, friends, and colleagues" (Cranton & King, 2003, p. 33). Indeed, a professional development programme can be considered an experience with the potential of opening up the participants' frame of reference, of encouraging them to see alternatives, and of letting them behave differently in their job as adult educators (MacKeracher, 2012; Mezirow, 2000). This should be a goal of professional development.

3. Research Design

This study was developed within a professional development programme conducted by a training centre in the North-East of Italy. The 24-hour programme, partly indoor and partly outdoor, involved 24 technical trainers, information specialists, consultant experts and SME staff in charge of training activities as internal or external consultants in different contexts and sectors (companies, third-sector, schools and training centres, etc.). It was inspired by experiential learning and outdoor training approaches (Di Nubila & Fedeli, 2010; Fedeli, 2011; Fedeli, Grion, & Frison, 2016; Kolb, 1984; Rotondi, 2004) and used cooking, orienteering, and adventure sessions to work on communication, teambuilding and networking, flexibility, and change management. Specifically, the programme aimed to provide trainers with professional development opportunities to enhance awareness of their approaches and styles as trainers and to improve their generic skills.

The research was carried out in accordance with three questions:

1. What are the participants' perspectives of training and consultation?
2. How do trainers/consultants translate their perspectives into practice?
3. What changes has the experience promoted in the participants' practices or perspectives?

To answer the research questions, within the original group a convenience group of 14 trainers who participated in the programme was involved in the collection of data on the research. Their areas of expertise included Marketing & Communication, Safety/Environment, Integrated Management Systems (safety/environment/quality), Social Cooperation, Education & Training, Quality Management and Systems, Company Organization, IT, and Accounting.

In line with the second theoretical dimension referred to above – TL theory, the qualitative methodological approach sought to promote participants' critical reflection on the learning and training experience through a semi-structured interview.

The participants were contacted for the interview through individual emails presenting the research project and asking them to indicate dates and time which might be suitable for them. The interviews were scheduled fairly quickly and were carried out between June and December 2018. Prior to the interviews, which averaged about one hour each, the participants were asked for the permission to audiotape them, in order to have the possibility to transcribe their answers verbatim afterwards to simplify the analysis process.

The interview was mediated by the use of *metaphors of knowledge* (Fabbri & Munari, 2010). They play the role of a cognitive tool useful to explore the interviewees' approach to knowledge and experience, engaging them in a reflective process concerning their conceptions of training and consultation.

Specifically, after collecting biographic data, the interview focused on four dimensions: (i) expectations from the experience; (ii) training perspectives (in term of values, objectives/intentions, actions); (iii) changes (from a personal and/or organizational perspective); and (iv) feedback on the outdoor experience. The focus of the paper is on an analysis of the data referring to (ii) training perspectives and (iii) changes, through the investigation of some important factors:

- significant events of the participants' experience connected to real life as trainers (Marsick, 1998). In fact, thanks to the support of the metaphors of knowledge, participants were invited to reflect on the key elements of their approaches to training and consultation, mentioning specific episodes (actions, behaviour, activities);
- the possible transformation of participants' training perspectives and practices as a result of the training programme attended.

4. Findings

All participants were interviewed in accordance with the interview protocol described above. We encouraged respondents to provide us with details and reflections on their training and consultation experiences and how these experiences might have shaped their beliefs, values, behaviour, and perspectives about training and consultation.

The interviews were transcribed, and the transcripts analysed using qualitative data in a paper-and-pencil analysis. Identifying some meaningful parts of the texts was possible to find out some important themes connected to values, objectives and intentions, actions, and changes. It was necessary to analyse what was said by the participants deeply in order to identify the sub-codes which would allow the researchers to better interpret the data and create a connection with the literature (Figure 1).

Theme 1: Values in training and consultation: transmission of knowledge and expertise, crucial role of relationships, problem-solving approach to clients' needs, and encouragement of a lifelong learning approach

Theme 2: Objectives and Intentions in training and consultations focusing on the transmission of knowledge and expertise, promoting a positive learning environment, personal/professional and organizational development, a focus on clients' needs and on organizational culture changes and innovation

Theme 3: Participants' training practices reflected three different ways to carry out training and consultation interventions: promoting a positive learning environment, empowering an owner's organization, focusing on the organization's needs

Theme 4: The training experience promoted both professional and personal changes

Figure 1. Interview themes.

More specifically, the researchers manually coded each transcript naming and selecting codes that were related to the research questions (top-down approach) or that emerged from the interviews (bottom-up approach). The coding process was carried out through the assignment of pre-codes and codes to the texts and, in addition, through aggregation in themes. The pre-codes were useful to identify the following categories, the codes, and the themes, and to aggregate codes that could best explain and represent the dimensions investigated. The coding process generated 25 codes (Figure 2). These codes were aggregated into the 4 themes mentioned referring to the interview protocol.

Themes	Codes
Values	Problem-solving
	Transmission of knowledge
	Relationships
	Meeting
	Exchange
	Lifelong Learning approach
Objectives/Intentions	Customer satisfaction
	Creating a positive learning environment
	Transmitting knowledge
	Stimulating new experiences
	Awareness of others
	Awareness of themselves (focus on participants)
	Developing soft skills
	Personal/professional development
	Organizational Development
	Promoting sense of responsibility
	Problem solving
	Gaining a certificate
Training practices (Actions)	Creating a positive learning environment
	Time management
	Problem-solving
	Connection of theory-practice
	Organization analysis
	Tailor-made training
	Training design
	Empowering
Changes	Professional change
	Personal change

Figure 2. Themes and Codes.

4.1. First theme: values in training and consultation

The data related to the first and second themes are related to the first research question: what are the participants' perspectives regarding training and consultation? Values in training and consultation were linked by the participants to six key codes.

First of all, the participants referred to *transmission of knowledge and expertise*. One participant clearly explained: "My role is to offer my expertise, in terms of knowledge and skills, to be recognized as reliable by my client. Previous experience and concrete examples are crucial." Participants stated that "the trainer is an expert", and that there is "plenty of information", referring to the "book" metaphors of knowledge (Fabbri & Munari, 2010). Accordingly, his/her role is to transmit and disseminate knowledge.

Interviews also underlined the crucial role of *relationships*. Interviewees highlighted the crucial role of *empathy* and *listening* in terms of "listening to clients' needs", under an *intimate relationship*, focus on *group harmony* and *attention to different learning styles*, but also related to *willingness to receive knowledge* referring to trainees and clients, since, as a participant explained "training makes sense if there is a willingness to receive on the other side".

They also referred to the *problem-solving approach to clients' needs*. Training is seen as a *means to face difficulties/problems* according to correct *time management* in order to *open* the client *to new perspectives*. Participants underlined that training and consultation need

to offer "concrete help to face difficulties", to "find the right way to reach the right solution".

Furthermore, interviewees describe training and consultation as a *meeting* and *exchange*. Concerning the meeting approach, participants focus on *sharing of knowledge/experiences* ("people meet to share experiences", "get on the road together", "sharing previous experiences"), under a *common framework* and with a clear *purpose* ("[people meet to share experiences] with a specific purpose", "[it is important] to have a clear idea of the goal of training otherwise you will lose the thread") to lead to the client's *needs analysis*. Concerning the focus of training as an *exchange*, they referred to *transferability* ("making sure that the things I transfer are reduced to everyday life", "…solutions that are more practical and usable"), starting from a *systemic approach*.

Finally, they focused on training as an opportunity to *encourage a lifelong learning approach* in terms of "a path that never ends".

4.2. Second theme: objective and intentions in training and consultation

The second theme highlighted objectives and intentions in training and consultation linked by the participants to twelve key codes. We shall focus on the main ones only.

Once again, participants underlined that training/consultation focus on *transmission of knowledge and expertise*. This topic emerged as a belief/values as well as an objective/intention. Interviewees underlined the crucial role of collecting *feedback* from the audience, *efficacy, content expertise*, and *transferability*. Participants stated that it is vital to offer "notions that are immediately applicable". Furthermore, through their intervention, they aimed to stimulate curiosity and recognize the role of *assessing learning* outcomes.

The trainers and consultants interviewed underlined a second issue. The objective of their intervention was to *promote a positive learning environment* to encourage a *positive attitude, humour, fun, informal relationship, engagement*, and *empathy*. One participant underlined that he/she tried to encourage "the shortening of distances" and that he/she did not like "to be seen as a person too remote from them" [the participants]. *Debriefing* was also part of a positive environment that encouraged "reflection after activities". According to this perspective, the trainer/consultant paid attention to the interpersonal processing of events (communication, feelings and emotions, conflict, etc.) rather than needs, problems or content. As one of the interviewees underlined: "My aim is to create a relationship with my clients and base my work on this."

Furthermore, *personal/professional* and *organizational development* are among the interviewees' intentions. From a personal/professional point of view, training and consultation aim to *encourage a lifelong learning attitude* ("the desire to learn lifelong") and at *encouraging changes in behaviour* ("operators should pay more attention to what they normally do" and "I expect the attitude of looking at everyday things has changed"). Trainers aimed at *stimulating new experiences* ("a participant waits for new experiences) and looking for *awareness of themselves as a trainer* ("a trainer must have had the same experience first-hand") and *awareness of others* in term of "knowing the target", "knowing who the participants are", "knowing the methods" and "using methods, tools, and games according to the target" and the *ability to manage unexpected events* ("with your experience you can manage unexpected events").

In terms of *organizational development*, participants focused above all on *improving organizational project design, cooperation,* and *encouraging responsible leadership* as well as *effective management* ("to allow them to effectively manage dangerous or unexpected situations") and *changing the organizational culture*. Organizational development was seen as intimately connected with *organizational culture change and innovation* in terms of *increasing the sense of responsibility* (towards normative duties): "the goal is to develop a sense of responsibility in people".

Finally, they focused heavily on clients' needs in terms of *customer satisfaction* ("I expect the customer to be satisfied in terms of time and costs") and multiple strategies ("diversification of learning strategies and methods to satisfy the client").

4.3. Third theme: training and consultation actions

The data on the third theme made it possible to answer the second research question: how do trainers/consultants translate their perspectives into practice?

The three different approaches showed different training styles and perspectives. Some of them were more focused on the encouragement of a positive learning environment through the development of the right climate for engagement: "I try to involve them through practical experiences"; "I try to involve them through questions; […] I start the meeting asking them about their experience on the topic… I support the interaction, the use of different strategies", "I choose strategies according to the kind of participants", and *time management* in order to be sure to have "[…] time to ask questions/to understand participants' experiences", but also to have time to know each other as an opportunity to build a learning community. This aspect shows how attention to the participants' needs is one of the key dimensions that supports training practice.

Some others focused their attention on the *empowering* process since this allows people to gather information and to facilitate the culture of change, with the awareness that every transformation depends on the involvement of people as actors of the process of innovation.

The third way to carry out training in practice was to pay attention to the organization's needs. This was shown by those participants who focused their attention on *gathering information about the organization*: "I gather information on people who need to be trained, on their roles, on the enterprise"; which allowed them to create *tailor-made training* and a suitable agenda: "I prepare the training material on the base of the information gathered [...] During the first day of training. I modify the activities according to the feedback from participants". During the training design and practices the trainers' attention is usually also on the *connection between theory and practice* ("If there are graduate participants I use examples of enterprise and…a theoretical perspective to reflect on them"), which shows how important it is for them not only to demonstrate to participants that what is being said finds its roots in concepts widely investigated in the literature, but also to be supported by a scientific point of view in their reasoning.

4.4. Fourth theme: professional and personal changes

Concerning the second research question: "What changes has the training experience promoted in the participants' practices or perspectives?", the fourth theme shows how these changes involve both personal and professional aspects, even if the professional changes seemed to be more significant than the personal ones. In fact, the professional changes were registered in relation to various aspects: the *awareness of a new methodological approach*,

the *use of new strategies*, showing a willingness not only to try out new methods, but also to make their own training ability and professionalization dynamic peculiarities; the possibility to play the *role of a leader* ("I found out that I could use this skill") improving their own self-efficacy and as an opportunity to know themselves better; *time management* ("Planning activities, because we can't always work in a rush"), and the *monitoring* process ("I have learnt not to take anything for granted, but to monitor what I'm doing… what is working or not"). Some other important factors were connected to the learning of how *to build good relationships* ("I have learnt to have a better relationship with the group I work with, and with the top manager")**,** becoming able to *delegate* ("I don't usually delegate, but now I consider the value of people"); the possibility to learn from others through *peer-observation* processes. The participants' professional dimension registered impact also on their *skills development*: teamwork, listening, communication, reflection **(**"I have learnt the importance of spending time on reflection activities, because this encourages engagement and motivation"); on the increase in *awareness of their role, by questioning themselves* ("I have learnt not to take anything for granted, but to monitor what I'm doing… what is working or not); on the importance of also reflecting on *group dynamics* with some more attention to "reflection on the emotion of group work". *Reflection* was identified as another key aspect of change, in fact, one of the participants stated: "I have learnt the importance of spending time on reflection activities, because this encourages engagement and motivation". This is a process that leads trainers to focus better on a *definition of objectives* ("Previously, the aim of class work wasn't so clear, but now I try to clarify it immediately").

Personal changes were connected to participants' private life and specifically to their personal relationships ("I noticed that I'm better able to manage some different situations"), their *self-awareness* and *empathy* ("I try to step into other people's shoes without being fooled by first impressions"), and *self-confidence*. This last important aspect was connected to all the previous ones ("The way to present myself to others"; more awareness of relationship aspects; more willingness to take risks) as proof that when a process of change involves people from a personal point of view, they achieve significant changes in their assumptions and perspectives.

Conclusions

The integration between qualitative data collection and analyses of the literature allowed the researchers to identify five key trainers'/consultants' training perspectives: *transmission of knowledge and expertise*, *analysis of client's needs and problems, relationships*, *personal development,* and *organizational change* (Tino & Frison, 2018).

Transmission of knowledge and expertise: this perspective is the consultant's expertise centred, focused on the role of a trainer/consultant who offers the client his/her expertise in terms of knowledge and competencies. This approach is strongly content-centred and trainer-focused (Schein, 1987). As Schein stated (1987), the client expects support from an expert consultant who helps him/her to solve his/her problems. As an *information specialist* (Lippitt & Lippitt, 1986) "the consultant serves as a content expert for the client, often defining 'right' and 'wrong' approaches to a problem" (Nolan, 1993, p. 3). The focus on expertise came to light also through the actions that the participants usually carry out to design and prepare training. In fact, they underlined the importance of developing *tailored-training* and to *connect theory and practice.* It is evident that expertise and knowledge are key elements of this perspective.

Analysis of client's needs and problems: under this perspective we can mention the focus on client's needs. The trainer's/consultant's attention is focused on clarification and *diagnosis* (Schein, 1987) of the client's problems and needs. As a *joint problem solver* (Lippitt & Lippitt, 1986), "the consultant works actively with the client to identify and solve the problem at hand […]. This function consists of stimulating interpretations of the problem, helping to maintain objectivity, and isolating the causes of the problem" (Nolan, 1993, p. 3). All of this was analysed through some participants' actions by which they gather information on the organization, with the aim of giving clients the right solution, but also of empowering them through their involvement.

Relationships: based on a holistic orientation, the trainer/consultant encourages the engagement of the client in other ways of knowing, such as relational and affective ones (Taylor, 2008). According to this perspective, the trainer/consultant pays attention to the interpersonal processes (communication, feelings and emotions, conflict, etc.) rather than needs, problems or content. He/she focuses on consultation as a meeting and an exchange with clients who share and combine previous experiences and personal perspectives of the problem. The relationship is a strong part of the perspective of those participants who build their training on care over feeling and empathy but is a dimension that cuts across the others. The theme of relationships appeared in all parts of the interviews.

Personal Development: the trainer/consultant encourages a change in the client's perspectives related to security, quality, and various expertise issues, and then he/she offers the client the opportunity to question his/her assumptions on the topic (Cranton & King, 2003; Taylor, 2008; Taylor & Mezirow, 2012). This perspective is related to a client's TL opportunity. The approach is process- and client-centred.

Organizational Change: this perspective focuses on organizational culture innovation. This focus is very close to the previous one but with a specific emphasis on organizational culture (e.g. the culture of security). An organization's culture provides a "meaning system, that provides members of a culture a way to attribute meaning and value to the endless variety of events that occur, both inside and outside the organization" (Furnham & Goodstein, 1997). According to the collected perspectives, trainers and consultants work to encourage an improved sense of responsibility as well as critical reflection on the company's organizational culture.

Both *personal development* and *organizational change* focus on transformation. The first to change from an individual point of view, and the second from an organizational one. The assumption that underlies these two perspectives recognizes the trainer/consultant as a facilitator rather than a content expert, as assumed by the previous two perspectives: *transmission of knowledge and expertise* and *analysis of client's needs and problems*.

From a research process point of view, the identification of the five perspectives was challenging. As mentioned above, interviewees came from very different fields, including Marketing & Communication, Safety/Environment, Education& Training ICT, and Accounting. Their experience covered a wide range of working situations with different targets, needs, and learning environments including: small-medium and large companies as well as a variety of educational settings. This variety of adult learning contexts required expertise on the part of the interviewers in order to focus the interviewees on their personal beliefs, values, objectives, and actions related to their training and consultation experiences. Despite this challenge, the qualitative phase offered a wide variety of translatable quotations in questionnaire items – through an appropriate method. Indeed, as a next step, starting from analyses of the interviews and the definition of the five perspectives, a second phase of the mixed methods research design is in progress.

A *Training Perspectives Questionnaire* has been developed in order to further support trainers and consultants in gaining awareness regarding their training perspectives.

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