



Manual for the Nucleus

Objectives

Ideas

Activities

Effects

What I hear, I forget!

What I see, I understand!

What I do, I learn!

(Confucius)

This “Manual for the Nucleus” is based on practical experiences generated through the establishment and functioning of Entrepreneurs’ Nuclei in business associations and chambers mainly in Brazil (since 1991) and Sri Lanka (since 2002) but also in other Latin American and African countries.

To the collection, elaboration and transfer of these experiences into a manual, many entrepreneurs, Nucleus Counsellors and collaborators of International Projects for the promotion of SMEs and business associations / chambers contributed but especially

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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview of the Manual

In elaboration ... we are working

| | Do's | Don'ts |
|--|------|--------|
|--|------|--------|

2 Some general “Do’s” and “Don’ts” for the Counsellor

Here are some “Do’s” and “Don’ts” for the Counsellor concerning the Nucleus. More will be listed in the future.

| | Do's | Don'ts |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| 2.1 Counsellor | | |
| 1 | Always emphasize that the Nucleus members themselves are responsible for its efficient functioning. The counsellor only gives support and eases its functioning | Never assume responsibility for the Nucleus. The members will sit down, wait passively for you to act and, in case of problems, stay away |
| 2 | Establish yourself as Counsellor with the tasks of moderation, counselling, organisation and implementation, who talks with the entrepreneurs eye to eye; only then you'll be respected and trusted | Don't submit yourself, by taking the role of a secretary, an assistant, or helper of the Nucleus. The members will not respect you and consequently not trust you |
| 2.2 Nucleus | | |
| 1 | Stimulate SMEs to join and create a Nucleus | Don't try to create a Nucleus yourself – you'll probably fail |
| 2 | Use “internal “ criteria to stimulate the foundation of a new Nucleus (interesting personalities; entrepreneurs with leadership capacities; SMEs have company-internal problems and are aware of them) | Don't use “external” criteria to stimulate the foundation of a new Nucleus (many companies, importance of the branch for the economy, and others) |
| 3 | Look at whether the sector contains a sufficient number of relevant enterprises to form a Nucleus. In the beginning, you need a minimum of 7 members; in the long run 10 to 20 members are required. You need such numbers in order to increase the chances for including spirited entrepreneurs with energy and visions who will bring the Nucleus to life and push the other members | Don't start a Nucleus with only a few entrepreneurs in the sector – unless the potential members are of extraordinarily high energy, spirit and visions. However, always remember the economics of a Nucleus, i.e. investment of time and costs per capita; potential for financial contributions; overall quantity and quality of effects |
| 4 | Take care that the SMEs maintain ownership of the Nucleus | Never give the impression that a Nucleus belongs to you, the chamber / association or the Government |
| 5 | In case of a crisis, do everything to keep up the dynamics of the Nucleus and keep it alive – with new activities, new members, a new leader etc. | Don't try to keep the Nucleus alive by force. There are limits of time and money to be invested by the Counsellor. When there is actually no chance of mobilizing the members or of stimulating constructive |

| | Do's | Don'ts |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| | | interaction among them, let the Nucleus die – and eventually try again with a new group in a couple of months |
| 2.3 Nucleus meeting | | |
| 1 | Prepare yourself for the Nucleus meeting: What do you want to achieve? How do you want to do it? Be flexible and prepared to change your programme if necessary | Never go into a Nucleus meeting unprepared, hoping that the group will solve the problem or that you'll find a solution on the spot – chances are high that this will not work |
| 2 | Always use visualisation techniques to maintain the standards of discussion | Don't try to speed up the process by "shortcutting" the visualisation techniques. An unstructured discussion leads to a drop in quality |
| 3 | Finish the meeting with an evaluation of the meeting ("flashlight", i.e. ask for brief impressions of the meeting or for 😊 😐 😞.) Make your own evaluation. Everyone should know how the others perceived the meeting | Without an evaluation neither the counsellor nor the participants will develop an awareness of the success, performance or problems of the Nucleus |

3 Which Sector is Suited for the Foundation of a SME Nucleus? A Checklist

Initially, when Projects of Technical Cooperation start Group Counselling and introduce the idea of Nuclei, the approach is new and may appear strange to the target group, i.e. SMEs. In addition, business chambers / associations and possibly other public and private institutions involved in the promotion of SMEs and Nuclei formation may lack credibility with the SMEs. Strangeness, lack of credibility and SMEs' traditional caution lead to mistrust and caution. Consequently the probability is high that they display a certain reluctance and lack of interest in the new activity. Therefore, in the beginning Group Counselling is not a "self-runner".

The main source that helps to overcome this reluctance and mistrust are other SMEs, who already participate in a Nucleus and can disseminate their positive experiences. They have a natural credibility with other SMEs.

Therefore, one should try to create as fast as possible one, two, three and more positive examples of functioning Nuclei, thereby proving the justification of the approach. Success is needed. A Nucleus, which does not function in the beginning, can easily be taken as proof against the Nucleus-Approach in general. If later one of several Nuclei does not work, people do not blame this on the approach but on other reasons.

The question is how to select promising sectors to start with.

Rule number 1: Do not apply economic, political and other top-down driven criterion for the definition of a sector. A sector may be important for the economy or have an interesting growth potential. But this does not guarantee the success of a Nucleus within this sector.

Instead, use only criterion, which indicate whether group dynamic processes may be successfully stimulated.

Rule number 2: Start with an easy case with a relatively high success potential, which helps all participants, including the group counsellor, to learn, to gather experience and gain competencies. When learning to high jump, one does not start at 2.40 metres but at 1.00 or 1.50 metres ...

The following eight criterion help to analyse the suitability of a sector for the establishment of Nuclei.

- Credit a criterion with 0 to 4 points.
0 points means low, negative, does not exist, is not suitable.
4 points means high, positive, exists, is suitable. The extremes are described below.
- Be realistic in attributing the points. It is better to give a lower score than a too optimistic one.
- The first and most important criterion – 'the sector does not have entrepreneurs with leadership capacities' versus 'the sector has entrepreneurs with leadership capacities' – is a "killer" criterion. If it is not possible to identify one or more entrepreneurs with leadership capacities in the sector, one can already stop the analysis here because the main prerequisite is not given. If, however, one or more entrepreneurs with leadership capacities take the initiative and request the start of a Nucleus, one can actually consider ignoring the results of the other criterions applied.

The main prerequisite for a start are some interested and motivated entrepreneurs.

- At the end, the points are added up.
 - 22 points and more (> 80%) : the prerequisites are good for a successful implementation of a Nucleus in this sector. Start with this sector.
 - Between 14 and 21 points (50% - 80%) : the prerequisites are medium for a successful implementation of a Nucleus in this sector. Further information and analysis might be useful.
 - 13 points and less (< 50%) : the prerequisites are bad for a successful implementation of a Nucleus in this sector. It is not recommended to start with this sector.

This set of criterion is relevant especially in the beginning of Group Counselling and the implementation of Nuclei. Later on, after a year or more, when some Nuclei are functioning successfully and the approach is widely accepted, activities in more “risky” sectors can be considered. But even then it makes sense to analyse the success potential of a Nucleus by using these criterions.

NB: please see annex at the end of this manual for a summary of these criterion

3.1 Criterion : Leadership

The sector does not have / has entrepreneurs with leadership capacities

Do not start with a sector, which does not have some entrepreneurs with charisma and leadership capacities but with one, which has one, two or more entrepreneurs with a strong personality and leadership capacities.

- A sector without entrepreneurs who have leadership capacities gets 0 point
- A sector with many entrepreneurs who have leadership capacities gets 4 points

Attention: This is the most important criterion, which can be a “killer”! If 2 or less point are scored, one may stop the analysis at this point already because the probability is high that it will not be possible to create a Nucleus successfully.

- When starting the implementation of the Nucleus Approach the credibility of employees of business associations, projects of technical cooperation and other institutions with regard to SMEs tends to be very low. The SMEs do not trust the employees when they try to convince them of participating in a Nucleus.
- Therefore it is better to find an open-minded entrepreneur (better several) with leadership capacities, who is serious and has a certain standing and credibility in the sector. He / she should neither be the owner of the biggest nor the smallest company of the sector because this might make the other SMEs reluctant to follow him / her. The next step is to explain to this potential leader the idea of a Nucleus. If he / she is interested, he / she should select and together with the counsellor visit other potential participants. This increases the chances of them accepting the invitation for a first meeting.

3.2 Criterion: Qualification

The entrepreneurs and companies of the sector have high / medium / low qualifications

Do not start with a sector which consists of very highly qualified and very low qualified entrepreneurs / companies but with a sector having entrepreneurs of medium qualification.

- A sector with very highly or very low qualified companies gets 0 point
- A sector with medium qualified companies gets 4 points

- When the sector consists of technically and organisationally highly qualified companies

with proud, self-confident entrepreneurs they may think that they already know everything. They do not feel that they have problems and are not affected as a result. Consequently it is rather difficult to motivate them to participate in a Nucleus.

When the sector consists of companies that are technically and organisationally with low qualifications, especially when belonging to the “Informal Sector”, it is possible that in this sector the minimum entrepreneurial spirit and self-confidence required to start Nucleus’ activities does not exist.

Therefore, in the beginning both types of sectors should be avoided.

- Companies with medium technical and organisational qualifications (they have some machines, workers with different qualifications, a certain range of products and services), with medium self-confident entrepreneurs, most likely feel some problems in their company without being able to find solutions. They are affected by this. Therefore they are relatively easy to motivate to participate in a Nucleus.
- Examples: A carpenter suffers, when a door twists and he does not know why and how to avoid this. The motor mechanic suffers when he does not find out how to adjust the electronic injection. These entrepreneurs want to change something, and their sector is interesting to start with. The technician, who repairs computers, changes one component of the computer after the other until it is successfully fixed. He neither suffers nor feels the necessity to change anything. Therefore, although a modern sector, it is normally not a very good one for starting a Nucleus.

3.3 Criterion: Organisation

The sector is strong / weak

Do not start with a “strong”, well-organised sector but with a “weak”, unorganised one.

- A strong sector gets 0 point
- A weak sector gets 4 points

- A “strong” sector is well organised, with functioning business associations. The SMEs get training and consulting services through efficient schools and other business service providers.
- A weak sector is not organised, has no functioning business associations and the SMEs do not get training and consulting services through schools and other service providers.
- When the sector is “strong”, the Nucleus may eventually run directly into rivalry with other organisations in the sector. In addition, SMEs do not see the need of a Nucleus because they feel already well attended to. Both aspects hinder the successful foundation of a Nucleus.

3.4 Criterion: Structure

The sector is very homogeneous or heterogeneous / homogeneous or heterogeneous to a certain extent

Do not start with a very homogeneous or very heterogeneous sector but with one, where there is a good balance between homogeneity and heterogeneity.

- A very homogeneous or heterogeneous sector gets 0 point
- A sector with a good balance between homogeneity and heterogeneity gets 4 points

- A sector is very homogeneous when there are no differences among the SMEs. They have more or less the same products, technologies, know-how, markets, number of employees, entrepreneurial and life experience etc. Often they have a very small number of

different products and the production process consists of one or two steps only. In this case it is very difficult to stimulate an exchange process between the SMEs because when there are no differences there is nothing to exchange.

Typical examples are small farmers of rice, tea, coffee etc., quarries, dairy milk producers, newsstands, small commercial shops etc.

- A sector is very heterogeneous when there are relatively big differences among the SMEs. They have very different products, technologies, know-how, markets, numbers of employees, entrepreneurial and life experience etc. Often they have a wide range of products and services, and the production process consists of many different steps. In this case it is not possible to stimulate an exchange process among them because their experiences and entrepreneurial realities differ too much. Therefore, they cannot learn from each other.

Example: An entrepreneur with two employees has almost nothing to exchange with the one employing 200 people because their day-to-day work is totally different. The former participates personally in the production process while the latter is only managing it. Often the metal processing sector is very heterogeneous due to different raw materials, technologies, products and sizes of the companies.

- In a sector with a good balance between homogeneity and heterogeneity the SMEs have much in common in their day-to-day working life, while at the same time there are a lot of differences with aspects to be exchanged and which stimulate learning processes. In addition the entrepreneurs can compare their companies.
Typical examples: carpenters, bakers, car-mechanics

3.5 Criterion: Quantity

The sector consists of few / many SMEs

Do not start with a sector, which has only a small number of SMEs, but start with one with many SMEs in a defined catchment area.

- A sector with few SMEs gets 0 point
- A sector with many SMEs gets 4 points
- A Nucleus requires in the beginning 7 to 12 SMEs; in the long run it needs more than 10 members.
- When the sector consists of a small number of companies only – less than 20 – in a defined catchment area, it is difficult to gather the required number of Nucleus members. Some will never participate and others drop out. Therefore the number of Nucleus' participants falls easily below the required minimum. In addition, the smaller the sector, the higher the chance that the SMEs already know each other, are competing directly, and have had quibbles in the past which might hinder the Nucleus' development.
- The more SMEs a sector has, the easier it is to gather the required number of SMEs for a Nucleus, and the higher the chance to find more qualified entrepreneurs and those who have no old quibbles with each other
- Criterion for defining the catchment area: the potential Nucleus' participants should not need more than a maximum of 45 minutes travel time to the meeting place.

3.6 Criterion: Entrepreneur Participation

In the selected sector entrepreneurs do not participate / participate actively in the production process

Do not start with companies in which the owner does not participate in the production process and in addition does not know very much about it. Instead, start with companies in which the owner dominates the know-how

- If the owners do not dominate the know-how of the company give 0 point
- If the owners have the know-how for the production process give 4 points

3.7 Criterion: Investments

In the sector, companies can improve with / without larger financial investments

Do not start with a sector in which improvements in the SME companies require large financial investments right at the beginning. Instead, start with a sector in which improvements in the SME companies are possible through a lot of small technical, organisational and managerial changes.

- If bigger investments are required give 0 point
- If a lot of small improvements are possible give 4 points

- In some sectors, SMEs can improve their companies only in one big step through costly investments in machinery. This often requires a total change for the company (more qualified staff, different organisation etc.). But first, this is economically very risky for the SME. Second, it easily provokes frustrations, when nobody can tell how to finance the investment. And third, in the beginning there is no trust between SMEs and counsellor. Therefore, the Nucleus will not appear useful to the SME and he / she probably will stay away. Example: Quarries: The stones are either manually crushed by hammer and sorted, or they are crushed by a machine. There is nothing in between.
- In other sectors, companies can improve through a lot of small management, organisational, behaviour and technical measurements, which do not require any investments. Therefore, the SME can test the advice of the Nucleus members and the counsellor without running financial risks. In case of positive results he / she gradually develops trusts in the work of the Nucleus and in his / her own capacity to develop his / her company. Therefore he / she will be more likely to continue to participate in the Nucleus and promote the Nucleus' work. Examples: carpenters, bakers.

3.8 Criterion: Know-how Sources

External know-how sources and Business Development Service (BDS) providers do not exist / exist in the region for the sector

Do not start with a sector for which there are no local or regional external qualified know-how sources and b **Business Development Service (BDS) providers**. Instead, start with a sector for which such know-how sources and BDS providers are available.

- If know-how sources and BDS providers do not exist or are of very low quality give 0 point
- If various know-how sources and BDS providers of high quality exist locally and regionally give 4 points
- Know-how sources and BDS providers can be technical schools / institutes, universities, suppliers of hardware (tools, machinery, products), and raw materials, technicians of big companies, freelance specialists and consultants, and others.
- A basic idea of the Nucleus Approach is the stimulation of the development of networks among the SMEs and local / regional know-how sources. Important is the easy and low-cost access for the SMEs, which they can organise and finance without external subsidies.

- When such sources for a sector do not exist locally / regionally, chances are high that the Nucleus will fail and eventually die.

4 List of Nucleus types

This is a – not complete – list of some of the Nuclei, which exist in the above-mentioned countries. Others are in the process of being created.

4.1 Sector Nuclei

= “Vertical Nuclei”: The participants are from the same sector and offer similar products and services

- **Agriculture**

- Afforestation
- Banana cultivation
- Cut Foliage
- Farmers / Agribusiness
- Garden Maintenance
- Mushrooms Production
- Ornamental Fish
- Pig-breeding
- Protected Agriculture

- **Auto**

- Automobile Electrician
- Automobile Workshops
- Gas Stations
- Motorbike Workshops
- Truck Workshops

- **Building Construction**

- Architects
- Brickworks
- Building Contractors
- Suppliers of Building Materials
- Construction of Swimming Pools
- Real Estate Agents

- **Business Services**

- Accounting Offices
- Enterprise Consulting
- Environment Consulting
- Insurance Brokers
- Legal Advisers
- Security Companies

- **Food**

- Bakery
- Butcheries
- Canned Food Product.
- Catering
- Confectionaries

- Food Industries
- Grain Grinding
- Ice-Cream Parlours
- Yoghurt Production
- Restaurants

- Beauty Culture

- Brassware
- Freight companies

- **Commerce**

- Textiles and Shoes (sales outlets / retail stores)
- Supermarkets

- Communication & Advertising

- **Data Processing**

- Hardware
- Software

- Electricians

- Fire-brigades

- Florists

- Foundings

- Gem & Jewellery

- Hairdressers

- Handicraft

- Handloom Weavers

- Hotels and Guesthouses

- Leather Production

- Light Engineering

- Lime Production

- Pharmacies

- Photo Laboratories

- Photographers (profession)

- Plumbers

- Printing

- **Schools & Academies**

- Computer Schools
- Gymnastic Academies
- Language Schools
- Private Schools
- Sport Academies

- Swim Academies

- Vocational Schools

- Shoe Production

- Stonemasons

- Tailoring & Dressmaking

- Textile Production

- Toolmaker & Model Builder

- Tourist Transport

- Watchmaker

- **Wood**

- Carpentries

- Furniture Industries

- Plywood Industries

- Saw Mills

1.1 Topic Nuclei

= “Horizontal Nuclei”: The participants are from different sectors, produce different products and services but share common topics, interests and problems

- Commercial Shops in Shopping Centre xyz

- Electrical Energy Supply (Consuming enterprises)

- Environment

- Human Resources

- Public Market (owners of sales outlets)

- Technology and Quality

- Total Quality

- **Women**

- Company Secretaries

- Entrepreneurs Wives

- (working actively in the husbands’ enterprise)

- Women Entrepreneurs

- Young Entrepreneurs

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| | 5 Nucleus Activities | |
| | A Internal Activities of a Nucleus | |
| Activity | A.1 A member of a Nucleus of the same or another sector explains how his Nucleus works and the experiences gained by its members | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation of the participants by presenting a successful Nucleus entrepreneur and his / her experiences • Increasing of the credibility of the Nucleus Approach through an entrepreneur with similar professional and personal situations, problems and opportunities • Stimulation of ideas about the Nucleus organisation and possible activities | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better image of the counsellor: "The messages of both, the experienced entrepreneur and the counsellor, is similar!" | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The selection of the entrepreneur is important. He / she should have credibility and be convinced about the Nucleus Approach so as to be able to talk and explain clearly about it • Give guidelines to the invited entrepreneur about the most important messages that he / she should put across • He / she should talk about two items: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The development of the Nucleus: How the situation was in the beginning and how it is now b) The changes in / impacts on his / her own company: What changed and how because of his / her participation in the Nucleus • This activity can be carried out at the start of a Nucleus as an element of introduction, but also later, especially in phases of stagnation and demotivation | |
| Activity | A.2 Discussion of problems and objectives | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of common problems and objectives of the sector and its companies • Indication of the similarity of the problems and objectives of the entrepreneurs • Structuring, concretisation and setting of priorities of the contributions in order to reach a more concrete and operational level | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The participants start to perceive that they are in the "same boat" – a shared problem is a smaller problem • Collection of raw-material for further discussions | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out during the first meetings • Start with a presentation of the process of problem and solution identification (questioning, clarification, definition of priorities, decision, action plan) so that the group knows the steps • Apply METAPLAN so that the group learns the importance of the methodology and the counsellor • Group the cards with problems and ideas referring to areas of a company • Try to identify one or more immediate solutions for each problem group. This is important so that the participants go home with the feeling that they already got something useful through the first meetings • Always ask whether the participants already know a solution for a problem. This can give pride and self-confidence to the participants. • Separate the problems of the companies as internal and external ones. Orient the | |

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| | <p>discussions to the internal ones, because they can solve these problems easier based on their own autonomy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the group on two plans: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – short-term about problems and activities – long-term about visions • In the beginning, avoid treating complex and big problems. Instead, concentrate on simple and small items • Especially in the beginning immediate success is most important. The entrepreneurs must get the feeling that the Nucleus is useful for them personally and for their companies | |
| Activity | A.3 Meeting of the Nucleus in the workshop of an entrepreneur | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaking the feeling of isolation of the entrepreneurs • First step of a process where the entrepreneurs compare their companies and perceive, where they are in comparison with the others • Stimulation of ideas for changes in the companies | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaking of barriers and reinforcement of the cohesion of the group • Promotion of formal and informal communication • The entrepreneurs learn typical and common problems and objectives of the companies in the same sector | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not propose and carry out this activity during the first Nucleus meetings and do not force it on the entrepreneurs • Carry out this activity in a workshop / company which represents the average of the Nucleus in size and technology (not the smallest and weakest nor the largest and strongest) • Talk to an entrepreneur interested in this idea before you propose it in the meeting and make sure that he / she accepts it and is willing to open his / her workshop to the other participants. (For many of them this is a great step) • Start the meeting with a short visit of the workshop • Concentrate during this meeting / visit on technical items (techniques, technologies, tools, organisation, work processes) • Conclude the meeting with some refreshments • Collect a financial contribution from the participants to cover the costs (raw material, beverages, food etc.) – the host entrepreneur should not be left to cover these costs on his / her own | |
| Activity | A.4 Distribution of a list with name, address and telephone numbers of the participants | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitation and increase of the informal communication between participants • Initiating the creation of a network between the participants | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact among the entrepreneurs between the meetings • The entrepreneurs start to talk and exchange more ideas and knowledge. The isolation decreases • They start to see one another more as colleagues than as purely hostile competitors | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute this contact list of the participants during one of the first meetings • Redistribute updated lists regularly | |
| Activity | A.5 Survey of the Nucleus companies by questionnaire | To Contents |

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| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the Counsellor: to get basic information rapidly about the situation of the member companies • Stimulation of new ideas through a comparison of the member companies | s |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The data contributes towards first steps of a “benchmarking” process of the companies: which equipment, stock, how many customers, turnover per customer etc. (benchmarking = comparison referring to defined criterions) • The research can give the Counsellor and the Nucleus ideas for new topics and questions, which the entrepreneurs never asked themselves (Example: who are the customers, where do they live, how much is their income and purchasing power? Most entrepreneurs have never thought about this and therefore have no marketing strategies) • Already the questions in the questionnaire can provoke reflections of the entrepreneurs and stimulate changes | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See also the “Good Housekeeping Guides” of GTZ-P3U, which exists for some sectors • It is also possible to do a “Quick-and-Dirty”-Research about one item only during the meeting of the Nucleus • The Counsellor can fill in the questionnaire together with the entrepreneur during a visit to his / her workshop. This gives the opportunity to discuss all aspects of his / her business | |
| Activity | A.6 Dinner of fraternization | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the group unity | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater and faster cohesion | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation of wife / husband • Can be organised in a workshop, restaurant etc. • Eventually invite representatives of the business association / chamber (chairperson, board members, CEO) | |
| Activity | A.7 Meeting of the entrepreneurs’ wives who participate actively in the company business | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilization of the wives of the entrepreneurs who participate actively in the enterprise • Identification of their needs and difficulties without intermediaries • Development of special training courses and other promotional activities which address the wives of the entrepreneurs directly | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cohesion between the partners of the entrepreneurs • Break of the isolation of the women in the companies • Definition of common activities • Eventually creation of a Women Nucleus of the sector | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is this activity necessary? On the one hand the entrepreneur’s wife often has a fundamental role in the functioning of a small company. On the other hand in many cases, she never participates in training courses, information trips and other external activities. There are many reasons for this. One is, that there are normally no specific and adequate supply / activities from business associations / chambers and SMEs promoting agencies. The wives are more or less ignored • Analyse the quantity – you need at least 5 participants, preferably more • Start with an activity with a mixed group (meeting or fraternization dinner) in a neutral place (in a restaurant) | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take care to fix a suitable day of the week, time and duration for the meeting (often women have a more fixed timetable of the day / week than male entrepreneurs) • Avoid pressure – it is sufficient to organize a meeting with special and relevant information 3 or 4 times per year | |
| Activity | A.8 Three / six months evaluation of the Nucleus activities | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal identification of the results obtained by a comparison of “BEFORE and NOW” • Strengthening of the group cohesion by showing the participants what they were able to reach in and outside of their company through the Nucleus and that this would not have been possible individually • Start of the revision of the activity plan | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reflection and comparison “BEFORE and NOW” helps to perceive the changes in the Nucleus and company, to valorise them and to develop more ideas for the future • Perception of a certain power of the entrepreneurs when acting as Nucleus and how they can successfully exert influence as group associations / chambers and service providers | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This activity needs a thorough preparation prior to the meeting (visualization of the activities, results, participants etc.; special observations of the counsellor) • The evaluation should be a critical one. The Nucleus: What functioned successfully? Why? What did not work successfully? Why? What are the consequences for the future? • At the end the wall should be full of papers with eulogies, critiques, proposals, postulates • It could be considered to invite the CEO of the business association / chamber and / or other relevant persons for the Nucleus • Conclude the meeting with a small fraternization activity | |
| Activity | A.9 Planning of the Nucleus activities for the next months / for the following year | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of a set of rules for meetings and activities • Avoidance of pure ad hoc activities without preparation • Avoidance that the Counsellor always acts as fire extinguishing “fireman” | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection of the entrepreneurs and Counsellor about the situation of the Nucleus: What do we want to reach and how? • More time and security for the Counsellor and the participants for the preparation of Nucleus activities | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be carried out when the entrepreneurs have time for it. Depending on the sector, during certain periods of the year they have a lot of work or other important activities • Which ideas does the counsellor have for new activities? • Which activities – courses, visits of trade fairs etc. – should be repeated because of the need of the members or due to new members of the Nucleus who did not participate in the first event? | |
| Activity | A.10 Debate with the CEO, chairperson and other directors of the business association / chamber about the relationship, expectations and needs of the Nucleus | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration of the importance of the Nucleus in the association / chamber | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification of the relationship between entrepreneur, Nucleus and association / chamber • Informing the organisation's leaders about the situation and problems of the sector | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Nucleus feels honoured and motivated through the presence of the chairperson and directors • Start of a process of lobby of the Nucleus in the association / chamber | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This activity should not be done during the first Nucleus meetings, only after three to six months of functioning • Moderate the event in the way that it works in two directions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) In the direction of the leaders of the association / chamber: They shall learn what their members and Nuclei are doing: "How is the Nucleus going?"; "What was done up to now?" "Which problems the entrepreneurs encounter?" "Which successes and changes occurred in the companies due to the work of the Nucleus?" b) In the direction of the Nucleus members: They shall learn that the association / chamber is on their side, that it is "their" organisation, that it takes the entrepreneurs serious: "What can the association / chamber and its board of directors do for the Nucleus and the entrepreneurs?" • Observation: Only someone who knows, can appreciate, support and defend the Nucleus approach! The ignorance of the board of directors about the work of the Nuclei and their members provokes uneasiness and refusal • Observation: The more the Nucleus presents its work and success the better for the Counsellor: He / she gets more opportunities of being recognised and appreciated by the board members • Consider preparing a table with cards about the activities, changes, problems etc. of the Nucleus during a previous Nucleus meeting. This eases and accelerates the presentation • In case certain Nuclei do not have too many members it might be possible to execute the event with two Nuclei. But the total number of participating persons from the Nuclei and board should not be more than 20! • The activity should be carried out once a year | |
| Activity | <p>A.11 Debate: What do the entrepreneurs expect from the Counsellor</p> | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearer identification of the expectations of the Nucleus members in relation to the Counsellor • Clarification of the tasks of the Counsellor concerning his / her work in the Nucleus and companies • Feed back for the Counsellor from the members concerning his / her performance | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better relationship between the entrepreneurs and Counsellor • The Counsellor gets hints about his / her "strong" and "weak" points and where he / she has to improve | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take care to choose the right moment for this evaluation. It can be the right instrument to clarify problems in the case of a crisis between the members and the counsellor; it might be the wrong instrument in case of a crisis between the members • The participation of the CEO is important in this meeting. He / she can take a neutral position and explain to the entrepreneurs, what the Counsellor can do and especially what he / she cannot do • It is important to visualise the discussion and to define the priorities | |

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| | <p>B Activities of the Nucleus for the development of the companies</p> | |
| <p>Activity</p> | <p>B.1 Collective purchase of equipment, raw material and services by the Nucleus members</p> | <p>To Contents</p> |
| <p>Objectives</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better quality of products and services for the entrepreneurs • Lower prices in the acquisition of equipment, tools, spare parts, raw material and services through increased purchase power • Change of the relationship between supplier and entrepreneurs | |
| <p>Possible Results</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better integration of the participating entrepreneurs into the Nucleus • The suppliers attend to the group of customers (entrepreneurs) better, faster and more adequately • More self-confidence of the entrepreneurs: “We are able to press our supplier!” • Eventually increasing technical development of the companies because of acquirement of better equipment | |
| <p>For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attention: This is a “high-risk” activity. The experience is that many attempts failed rather than working successfully • Check thoroughly with the entrepreneurs which items have the potential to be bought by the group • Take care that no group pressure (for example through a dominating, articulate entrepreneur) occurs on members to participate in this activity. Organise the discussion in a way that each Nucleus member can consider the advantages and disadvantages and take an independent decision. Stress that anyone is free not to participate in the collective purchase • In order to avoid an ad hoc and eventually emotional decision: Discuss and elaborate the plan for a collective purchase in one or two Nucleus meetings and let the Nucleus explicitly decide during the following meeting. Inbetween talk to Nucleus members individually about their participation in the collective purchase • Take care that the profit from the group purchase is bigger than the costs of its organisation – not all items are automatically suitable • Examples for suitable items: Tools, spare parts and consumption material which are frequently needed, small machines, computer programs, marketing items, items for the organisation of stocks • Consider the possibility that only a part of the Nucleus, a “Sub-Nucleus” of adequate “ready” entrepreneurs, starts this activity • Take care of laws and regulations, especially when each participant needs individual invoices and other documents (when the supplier sells a certain quantity of items he / she prefers to draw up only one invoice) • Attention: Often the proposal to buy in-group is made during the initial stages after the foundation of a Nucleus. At first glance, it appears to be an optimal activity. However, take care, the collective purchase involves financial transactions and consequently needs much confidence and trust between the entrepreneurs – which normally does not exist at the start of a Nucleus’. Therefore, if the collective purchase does not function, frustrations that follow could easily lead to the end of the Nucleus. Therefore, it is strongly recommended, to avoid this activity during the first year of the Nucleus. In most cases it is only after such a time period of working together that enough confidence has been built and positive experiences has been gained for the entrepreneurs to enter into a more “risky” activity • Attention: To buy in-group only to avoid and bypass certain suppliers (example: the entrepreneurs want to avoid the local supplier due to different reasons and want to | |

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| | <p>buy in group from a supplier in the capital city) normally leads to a miscalculation, especially, when competition exists in the local market. Often the entrepreneurs think that the supplier is making a big profit and that they can get a share of this profit for themselves through bypassing him / her. This is normally a wrong calculation because the costs of the supplier (market research, communication, transport, storage, losses, advertising, staff, storeroom, invested capital, etc.) are totally underestimated.</p> <p>Therefore, the better strategy is to negotiate with the local suppliers as a Nucleus for better terms, conditions and services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A collective purchase is especially justified when the entrepreneurs have difficulties to get the items on the local market (the supply does not function) or when the suppliers are geographically very distant | |
| Activity | B.2 Purchase of bigger equipment (investment of higher value) through a consortium of Nucleus members | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitation of the acquirement of bigger equipment (investment of higher value) which an entrepreneur alone does only with difficulties • Better prices and services (example: additional training course about the proper use of the machine) • Avoidance of costly bank loans and interest rates • Higher guarantee for the suppliers that they will receive the payments on time | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger position of the entrepreneurs facing the supplier – alone an entrepreneur is treated top-down, in a group he / she is more respected and has more bargaining power • Positive impact on the technological level of the sector • Closer relationship between Nucleus members | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See all observations mentioned above in 5.1 • Consortium means: a group of entrepreneurs orders a certain quantity of a particular machine. Every month it is delivered one by one to the members of the consortium. All participants pay a certain amount monthly into a fund which is used to pay for the item delivered monthly • Example: The Nucleus of car repair shops in Joinville, Brazil, founded a consortium to acquire hydraulic ramps for cars. They agreed with a supplier to buy 12 ramps to be delivered and paid one per month for a very favourable price. Afterwards the participants paid monthly 1/12 of the price into a fund, which was accordingly used to pay the supplier the delivered ramp in that particular month. Earlier they had drawn lots for the decision as to in which order the participants get their ramp. – This system worked perfectly well and after one year each nucleus member had gotten his / her ramp | |
| Activity | B.3 Discussion about price agreements | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrepreneurs tend to complain about lower prices offered by competitors. The reaction is frequently to consider price agreements. Task of the Counsellor and the association / chamber is to prevent those agreements • Sensitisation of the entrepreneurs that products and services have different quality and costs and therefore also different prices • Demonstration that markets develop only with competitive prices, costs and qualities • Explanation that the association / chamber defends the free initiative and competition and that price agreements are also an act against its other members | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More sensitisation concerning the relationship between costs, quality and prices • Better understanding that the cooperation in the Nucleus does not prevent | |

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| | competition through different prices | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to treat the subject? Explain the objectives of a Nucleus and the dangers of cartels • If this does not work: Ask, why the entrepreneurs want price agreements? How to define? How to control? What to do if someone ignores the price agreement? What would they say if their suppliers would create a cartel and define common prices? • If this does not work: Prepare a cost calculation of a product in different companies including all types of costs, showing the differences. Eventually organise a training course about this subject and prior to the event explain the intentions and the state of discussion to the trainer • As a last step: Invite the chairperson of the association / chamber to confirm that it cannot support the creation of cartels under its roof • Attention: The proposal of a definition of a “maximum” price normally has the intention and effect, to fix a minimum price to be charged | |
| Activity | B.4 Introduction of data processing | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase of the efficiency of the administration, organisation and eventually production of the Nucleus companies • Search in-group for hard- and especially software related to this sector and typical types of enterprises and procedures (management of clients, bills, costs, finances, stock of products, spare parts, etc.) • Proof that the know-how of the participants about this subject permits the elaboration of individual projects better linked to the reality and needs of the enterprises • Better and faster information required about this subject | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alone the majority of Nucleus enterprises are easily lost when confronted by computer and software sellers – normally they tend to sell what they have and know, and not, what the clients need. In group they are taken more seriously and afforded more respect as clients • Better possibilities of intensive tests of the hardware and especially software | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look together with Nucleus members for the most adequate hardware (the best and fastest is often not necessary for data processing SMEs). Eventually involve specialists and consultants of this subject • Define together with members of the Nucleus the requirements of the software; have it checked by a specialist • Check whether a SME-support agency will subsidise the acquisition of hard- and software • Important: The contract with the software company should include the training of the entrepreneur and his / her employees as well as the prices of additional after sales services after the installation of the program | |

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| | C Training | |
| Activity | C.1 Transfer of know-how about management, administration, technologies and techniques related to the sector through short, problem orientated training courses | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfer of know-how about management, administration, technologies and techniques related to the sector through short, problem orientated training courses | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New ideas, experiences and techniques to change and improve the company and the production | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal for a training course should come from the Nucleus as a result of an identified problem. This leads to a higher probability that the entrepreneurs will participate. If they are asked by the counsellor or others “Do you want a training in xyz?” they will always answer “Yes!” (because they are polite people and cannot say “No” to a training course that they might not want or need). But this “Yes” often does not mean that they will really participate • Calculate the costs of the training course per participant (honorary, travel and accommodation costs of the trainer, material, rent of a training room, eventually electricity and water) and let the Nucleus decide again whether it wants the course. • Eventually let the interested participants pay a first instalment of the training fee in order to increase the possibility that the necessary number of entrepreneurs will participate • The appropriate number of participants is <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – for a more technical and practical course in a workshop between 6 and 12, never more than 15 – for a training course about administration and management between 10 and 20, never more than 25 • Possible trainers: instructors from technical schools and similar institutions, specialists / experts from bigger companies, free lance trainers • Take care that the trainer has practical experiences (and not only theoretical ones) about the sector. If possible try to find a trainer who is or was working as an entrepreneur – he has more credibility than for example a public servant • Collect the questions, doubts and expectations of the entrepreneurs about the training program and discuss the list with the trainer. This eases the definition of the content of the training, the number of necessary hours and the evaluation of the entrepreneur’s level of know-how • Take care if the trainer wants to sell you a ready training course: Trainers tend to do what they know to do. But this does not mean that this meets the needs of the entrepreneurs. Instead negotiate with the trainer that he / she designs the course for this specific Nucleus and sector (no examples from the big industry and other sectors but examples suited to the context of the participating entrepreneurs) • Interview the trainer about his teaching method! Most entrepreneurs do not learn with their ears but with their eyes and their hands (“What I hear, I forget! What I see, I understand! What I do, I learn!” (Confucius). This means: Visualisation, practical demonstrations, and practical experiments. • In case of doubts look for another trainer: It is better to postpone the training than to run a bad training course • Check the training location whether it is appropriate for the training course • Consider to conduct a follow up visit together with the trainer to visit all participants at their workshops after the training in order to consult them in applying the new knowledge within their companies (higher costs) • In case of the use of visualisation equipment check its functionality – organisational problems can disturb the training to a great degree | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite the participants – if possible in written form – with all relevant information (when, where, what, short presentation of the qualification of the trainer, costs, items to be brought along by the participants, etc.) • Referring to the maximum number of participants, if possible, invite other entrepreneurs of the sector in order to recruit them as Nucleus members • Consider to participate in the training in order to learn more about the sector • At the end of each training session a short evaluation of the day should be done in order to give a feed back to the trainer and the participants about the level of satisfaction of the participants (for example with smileys ☺ ☹ ☹) • At the end of the training course an evaluation should be done in a written form • During the next Nucleus meeting initiate another evaluation: What was good? What was not good? What do I apply now in my company? What can be done to improve the training course | |
| Activity | C.2 Practical training by a Nucleus member | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Nucleus member transfers his special knowledge to the other entrepreneurs • Breaking the isolation of the entrepreneurs • Stimulation of solidarity and the feeling that they have much in common • To show that the total of the participants have more know-how than they imagine and that everyone has access to this at a very low costs | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening of the cohesion of the Nucleus • After the first entrepreneur opens his door others will follow • The participants observe that they have much in common (goals, difficulties) | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Nucleus members need some mutual trust before they are ready to start such an activity. Therefore, do not stimulate it during the inception of a Nucleus and do not force its implementation • Talk to a possible candidate who – as you know – has a certain know-how, which is interesting for the others, before you present this proposal to the Nucleus • Before the actual event, visit the locality where the activity will happen and check for disturbing factors (For how many people is the room sufficient? Is the temperature acceptable? Is it too noisy from the street traffic?) Help the owner to prepare everything for the event • A practical training session in a workshop around a machine can be well observed normally only by 8 to 10 persons – when there are more, the ones standing in the background cannot follow. In addition, a discussion with the participation of all is very difficult. In case of a Nucleus with more participants consider splitting the Nucleus in subgroups of 8 participants and combine with the training entrepreneur to repeat the event for all subgroups. This can be done on the same day or on different days • Check with the training entrepreneur how he wants to conduct the training and presentation. How much time will it take? What is the chronological order of each step? • The participants have to contribute for the costs of the training (raw material and consumption material, drinks, refreshments, etc.) The training Nucleus entrepreneur should not be left with the feeling that he invested his know-how as well as finances • Participate in the training in order to learn something about the technology of the sector | |
| Activity | C.3 Subjects for training activities (all sectors) | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following is a list of some topics, which can be introduced as proposals for training | |

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| | <p>activities. Others can be identified. Special subjects for different sectors are given below</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business administration for small enterprises: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Accountancy – Financing – Income and other taxes – Management strategies – Leadership • Staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Motivation – Salary schemes – Employment contracts – Payment of social security and income taxes – Training and development of staff • Marketing • Customers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Treatment of customers – Customer / consumer rights – laws for the protection of customer • Storekeeping • Participation in trade fairs and exhibitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Goals, costs and profit, design of a stand, organisation | |
| Activity | C.4 Calculation of costs and prices | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification of the importance of this topic • Upgrading of know-how and stimulation of its application in the companies | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The entrepreneur perceives the importance of these items: “No proper calculation of costs and prices, no proper profit!” • The entrepreneur becomes more aware of his financial situation in comparison to his / her competitors | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before the training: Collect the questions and doubts of the entrepreneurs about the item and send the list to the instructor. This eases the evaluation of the entrepreneur’s level of know-how • The training course should have a minimum of 15 hours • The instructor should have practical experiences (and not only theoretical ones) in the sector • The training course has to be designed especially for this sector (concrete examples and sector specific cost / price structures and size of the companies, no examples from other sectors and big companies) • Eventually: Combine with the instructor to do individual consulting / counselling in the participating companies in order to support the entrepreneurs in the application of the content of the training course within their companies | |
| Activity | C.5 Selection and recruitment of staff | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stimulation of a reflection and discussion: “Who is responsible for the low performance of my workers?” • Presentation of instruments, techniques and criteria which help to select and recruit the “right” and “better” workers | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More competence of the entrepreneurs in the selection and recruitment of staff • Enforcement of the feeling that “for the problems of my company with its staff I as the owner am responsible – and not the workers” | |
| For the | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrepreneurs like to complain and “cry” about their workers: “They have no | |

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| <p>Counsellor: What to do & What not to do</p> | <p>training, know nothing, do not want to work, want too much money” – a very destructive discussion which does not improve anything and leads to nothing. It is possible to surprise and irritate the entrepreneurs with a simple question: “Why did you contract only bad workers? Why did you never contract good workers?” The answer is often, that nobody defined the objectives of a working place and criteria for the selection of the right person for the job</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss before in-group: “What do we expect from the training course?” This helps to identify the key questions • Explain before to the trainer the specific problems and needs of the Nucleus members and insist that he / she presents only examples of this sector • Counsellor: Participate in the training course, it can be useful in different situations • Consider to combine the training with a short consulting activity in every company in order to show and explain, for example, how to elaborate specific job descriptions | |
| <p>Activity</p> | <p>C.6 Short debate / speech / presentation during a Nucleus meeting</p> | <p>To Contents</p> |
| <p>Objectives</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeding the entrepreneurs with information about adequate use of certain equipment or materials, about new products, management skills, changes of laws etc. • Presentation of new ideas, discussion of alternatives to existing procedures or new techniques • Sensitization concerning the importance of certain subjects • Motivation – if necessary – for further activities (visit, training course, etc.) | |
| <p>Possible Results</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Nucleus develops interest in a certain subject • Intensification of the relationship between the Nucleus and training institutes, consultants, suppliers, etc. | |
| <p>For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This activity often serves to sensitise Nucleus members in subjects which he /she do not perceive as important and relevant in his / her day-to-day work • When the initiative for such an activity comes from the counsellor – “I found something, what could be interesting for you.” –, he / she proves that he / she is thinking in terms of the interest of the Nucleus participants. Result: Increasing reputation and recognition of the counsellor • For this activity always consider the “big” fields of a company: Management, human resources, finances, costs, production, technology, techniques, stock keeping, sales • Take care that the meeting of the Nucleus does not turn into a sales activity of services and products • Take care that this activity takes only up to a maximum of 50% of the time of a Nucleus meeting | |
| <p>Activity</p> | <p>C.7 Technical training for employees of the Nucleus companies by Nucleus members</p> | <p>To Contents</p> |
| <p>Objectives</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training of apprentices and other employees through Nucleus professionals, who know the situation and needs of the Nucleus companies and the local conditions • Training of the staff and improvements of the companies at low costs • Demonstration how the Nucleus entrepreneurs can improve the level of their employees in a relatively easy manner using their own means, experiences and knowledge | |
| <p>Possible Results</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Nucleus entrepreneurs define the objective and the content of the training course. This guaranties that the employees learn what they need in their daily practical work (and not other, eventually “useless” things) • The entrepreneurs perceive the effects of investments in their staff, and “human | |

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| | <p>capital”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The employees can get the feeling that they and their work are more valued | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start with the definition of relatively small, not big subjects for the training • Duration of the training: Between 4 and 8 hours: Enough time to train in something substantial but not so much that the training entrepreneur will perceive it as burden and eventually financial loss • If the training occurs in the workshop of the training entrepreneur make sure that it is appropriate for it (enough space, not too much noise, etc.) • The training entrepreneur should not receive remuneration for his / her work. But he / she has to be refunded all costs of the activity (raw material and consumption material, eventually food and beverages, etc.). These costs have to be financed by the entrepreneurs of the trained staff and paid either directly to the training entrepreneur or via the business association / chamber of the Nucleus • The counsellor has to analyse the didactical capacities (instruction / training methods) of the training entrepreneur and eventually accompany and support him / her (Take care: A lot of entrepreneurs know how to do something very well but they are not able to explain it to others!) | |
| Activity | C.8 Training by a supplier company | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suppliers of raw material and consumption material, tools, machines etc. sometimes are willing to offer special training in the usage of their products • Training of the entrepreneurs for low or eventually no costs | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The usage of the items / equipment in a proper way in their companies • The entrepreneurs gain new ideas about other products | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The suppliers can be producers of the products and services but also wholesale trader companies • Locality: In the supplier’s factory (including a visit of the installations), in one of the Nucleus’ members workshops or in the business association / chamber • Present to the trainer a collection of problems and interests concerning the item to be treated and explain to him / her, how the Nucleus works • Check whether the trainer is qualified for the training. In case of doubts elaborate and discuss the training session step by step with him / her. Eventually make clear that a good training can increase his / her sales to the Nucleus members, a bad training has the opposite effect • Eventually try to combine with the trainer to visit all participating Nucleus members’ workshops in order to offer them additional advice | |
| Activity | C.9 Training through a customer company | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer companies of the Nucleus members (production companies, wholesale traders, exporters) are sometimes willing to offer special training in the production of the bought items and services • Training of the entrepreneurs for low or eventually no costs | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The entrepreneurs learn more about the expectations of their customer companies concerning products, quality, design, prices, organisation etc. • More knowledge about the market situation | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See above • Example: The exporter of ornamental fish produces fish himself and in addition buys from other small producers. He / she might be interested to train his suppliers | |
| Activity | C.10 CEFE course for entrepreneur development | To Contents |

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| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEFE = Competency Based Economies through the formation of entrepreneurs, a special training methodology with simulations and games • Strengthening of the entrepreneurial spirit of the Nucleus participants |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The participant learns “how to learn”, how to elaborate and apply new solutions • The participant perceives himself / herself more as an entrepreneur |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEFE works with modules: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Personal entrepreneurial characteristics – Identification of business opportunities – Strategies for market promotion – Costs and prices – Financial analysis and business plan including production, organisational marketing and financial components • When organising such a training program for a Nucleus comprising of entrepreneurs of the same sector ensure that the training is sector specific • Organise a meeting between the training providers and the entrepreneurs prior to the beginning of the program to create awareness and to identify the special needs of the entrepreneurs so that they may be addressed during the training • Make sure that the entrepreneurs really want such training and that it is designed to meet the needs, which the entrepreneurs have in mind – and not the instructor • See more about the world wide CEFE network see www.CEFE.net |

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| | D Visits, apprenticeships and technical missions | |
| Activity | D.1 Visit to a Nucleus of the same type of Nucleus of another business association / chamber | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Nucleus learns from another Nucleus of the same sector: Exchange of experience • Comparison of the activities and performance between Nuclei • Creation of networks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) between Nuclei and b) their entrepreneurs • Eventually first step of the creation of a Regional Nucleus | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Nucleus perceives where it is in comparison to others. Benchmarking: “Are we better / faster / more active than they – or not!”) • New ideas and motivation for Nucleus and company activities • Further informal contacts between entrepreneurs of different localities, eventually new business relations | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The visit should include a visit to individual enterprises. The program can consist of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Meeting of both Nuclei, presentation and discussion of problems, solutions, activities, plans, etc – Eventually: presentation / training by a specialist – Visit to individual enterprises of the Nucleus members (if SME companies are visited the visiting group should have less than 5 members) – Social event (party, dinner, etc.) – Agreement upon further common activities • In case of relatively new Nuclei the activity serves more for the motivation and stimulation of other activities • In case of a mature Nuclei the activity serves more for the development of networks | |
| Activity | D.2 Visit to a supplier of machines, equipment, raw materials, etc. | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement of the knowledge of the participants about their suppliers • Improvement of the relationship between Nucleus members and suppliers in order to perceive, that the suppliers are an important source of know-how • Study of the production of used raw materials and equipment • Learning of new technologies, production processes and better machines and equipment | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normally, the Nucleus returns more motivated after having perceived a lot of activities which the Nucleus could start • Can be the first step of lobby in direction of the supplier, when the Nucleus presents also its wishes and needs – the supplier has more respect for his / her customers when they appear in a group | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be one of the first external activities of a Nucleus because the majority of its participants presumably never entered into a supplier’s factory before • It has to be differentiated between a producing supplier and a wholesale supplier • The visit has to be well prepared together with the supplier – consider negotiating things with him before in his factory • Consider to propose including a small training element in the program | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include a social activity into the program • During the next Nucleus meeting the visit should be evaluated: What was good, what was not so good? What did we learn? What are we going to change in our companies? What other activities do we want to do now? • Examples: Bakers visit a mill, auto mechanics a car factory, a wholesale supplier of spare parts, carpenters a sawmill, a supplier of machines and equipment | |
| Activity | D.3 Visit to local, regional, national and international trade fairs and exhibitions | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposure of the entrepreneurs to new technologies, techniques, tools, equipment and raw material • Linkage of the entrepreneurs directly with suppliers and purchasers • Enabling of an activity which the entrepreneur presumably does not / cannot start alone | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mission strengthens the cohesion of the Nucleus • Stimulation of changes in the enterprises • Improvement of the relation to suppliers / purchasers, which can be followed up by more lobby activities | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare the technical part of the mission very well: Transport, accommodation, food, printed program, times, costs and price, etc. Organisational failures can turn the whole event into something negative • Try to get as much information as possible about the fair before the visit – where are which stands, the most interesting stands, meeting points, etc. • Initiate a discussion in the Nucleus: What do we want to see in-group? • Eventually: Form subgroups, which receive different tasks to resolve: Which companies offer a specific product, tool, etc.? Which new technologies are used for certain work? • The main messages: a) Four or more eyes see more, ears hear more, than if someone walks alone in the fair. b) A group of three and more Nucleus members develop more courage to enter into a stand and to start a discussion with the exhibitor than an entrepreneur alone. c) The visit of a fair is more effective when having clear goals about what to see, about what to be informed than by only walking around and looking here and there and finding something interesting only by chance • If the entrepreneurs or the whole Nucleus have an idea of participating in a fair or exhibition as exhibitor in future: Give them the task of evaluating the different stands (lay-out, general impression, behaviour of the representatives of the company in the stand, clarity of the message, etc.) and let them elect the best stand. • Search personally at the fair for interesting things for the Nucleus, especially about things that they themselves might not research about • During the first meeting after the fair organise an evaluation: What did we get? What new thing did we detect? Which new subjects do we have to discuss in the Nucleus? Etc. | |

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| | E Counselling and consulting | |
| Activity | E.1 Definition of a sequence of visits by the Nucleus counsellor to the members | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning about the reality/ ground situation of the Nucleus members' companies • Demonstration of respect to the entrepreneur and showing him / her importance for the Nucleus and the chamber / association | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the first step to gain confidence and credibility from the entrepreneur: "I trust and accept only those who know and understand my situation, problems and thinking!" • The counsellor knowing the reality of his / her Nucleus entrepreneurs can develop a much better counselling performance in the Nucleus meetings and as executor of Nucleus decisions • The visits help the counsellor to learn more about the specific economy and technology of the sector | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elaborate an agenda for the sequence of visits to the companies together with the Nucleus members • Never enter into a company without preparation and knowing what you want to do there – otherwise you get stuck very fast in an embarrassing situation! • Instead: Elaborate a list of questions, which you want to ask. This can be about equipment, products, production, sales, employees, etc., etc. These questions can serve as a basis of a small survey and comparison of the Nucleus companies • Questions have a lot of different effects: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) They help to learn – who does not ask remains ignorant b) Who asks questions shows interest, is active, is positive – who does not ask questions shows disinterest, is passive, is negative c) They show that you understand something of the subject, the entrepreneurial life and thinking. Another person is perceived as sympathetic and amicable when they share common interests, opinions, values – the other one is like me! d) They can stimulate new ideas and changes when the entrepreneur is confronted with a question, he / she cannot answer and which is perceived as interesting and relevant. "Baker, how many new products did you develop and offer to your clients during the last six months?" If the answer is "None!" this can provoke a reflection about, why he / she did not do so, whether it is important for his / her business, and if yes, that he / she should start to develop new products very fast. <p>General strategy: It is better to ask people than to tell them what to do!</p> | |
| Activity | E.2 "Individual counselling" to Nucleus members by the counsellor | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Individual Counselling" means: An individual entrepreneur of the Nucleus is counselled by the counsellor ("Group Counselling" happens between the entrepreneurs and the counsellor in the Nucleus) • Discussion, stimulation of improvements of the company and identification of solutions for individual problems of the entrepreneur which are not addressed (or not to be addressed) during the Nucleus meeting | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The entrepreneur has a "partner" to discuss his / her individual problems and ideas – he / she does not remain alone and isolated • Eventually ideas for new subjects which should be addressed by the whole Nucleus | |
| For the | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The counsellor cannot know everything about business administration, technology, | |

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| <p>Counsellor: What to do & What not to do</p> | <p>etc. But when a question or problem arises, he / she should know, how and where to inform oneself. His / her task is, to research in the market for know-how sources and either to transfer the know-how to the entrepreneur or to link him / her with the know-how source</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Counselling can happen by phone, letter, visit to the workshop or by a visit of the entrepreneur to the counsellors office • The counsellor should write a short report about the individual counselling in order to document the work process and its results. This helps in future contacts with this entrepreneur and serves in addition as verification of his / her work for the superior • For the counsellor: When you enter into the entrepreneurs company, do not start a discussion of problems you identified. Instead, start with those the entrepreneur has in mind. Because of these problems he / she called you and they are the most important for him / her at the moment. Perhaps it will be possible to discuss also the problems you identified – perhaps not and you might leave the entrepreneur with few results. Do not bother too much – not everything has to be resolved in one day • For the entrepreneur: To call the counsellor does not cost anything. If he / she is not able to support you in the identification of solutions, you do not loose anything. Complain and try again. If he / she was able to help you, you win quite a lot | |
| <p>Activity</p> | <p>E.3 Evaluation of a Nucleus member enterprise through the other Nucleus members – entrepreneurs counsel entrepreneurs</p> | <p>To Contents</p> |
| <p>Objectives</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becoming acquainted with the internal reality of other enterprises of the sector • Evaluation of the enterprise and a collection of ideas how it could be improved through experienced entrepreneurs • Break of isolation | |
| <p>Possible Results</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening of the group cohesion • After the first entrepreneur has opened his / her doors and the evaluation was a success and helpful for the entrepreneur, the others will offer their enterprises • The entrepreneurs learn that they can learn from one another • The visited entrepreneur can improve his / her position in the Nucleus because of his / her openness and courage | |
| <p>For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not propose this activity to a newly formed Nucleus – it takes some time until there is sufficient trust • Start this activity in an enterprise which represents the medium level of the Nucleus companies – and not in the best nor in the weakest one • Consider the space in the company and the number of Nucleus members. It is impossible to execute such an evaluation of a small enterprise with 30 participants. In addition, when the Nucleus has more than 10 members it may take years until the last company will be evaluated causing frustrations. Alternative: Split the Nucleus in subgroups of up to a maximum of 8 members and let these subgroups evaluate one enterprise after the other. The goal should be, that all member companies are evaluated in a maximum time period of four months. Take care that you participate personally in all evaluations! This means, that they should always be executed at different times. Let the subgroups present the individual results during the normal Nucleus meetings • The counsellor together with some members should elaborate a small questionnaire about what should be evaluated and researched and how to mark it. The questionnaire has to include recommendations • The evaluation should start with a short presentation of the company: Year of foundation, development of the company and the entrepreneur, number of employees, target group / customers, important changes and innovations during the last year, | |

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| | <p>changes caused through the participation in the Nucleus, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The counsellor moderates a discussion: What do we like in this company – what should be improved – other observations – recommendations • The counsellor collects the anonymously filled questionnaires and tables the results. The tabled results are handed over to the entrepreneur • The entrepreneur shall elaborate an action plan in reference to the evaluation about what he / she is going to do during the coming 12 months. After this year each participant should present a short report about what he / she changed in his / her company due to the action plan • This activity can be repeated every two to three years |
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| | F Lobby activities | |
| Activity | F.1 Debate with a public institution, department | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase of knowledge about laws, rules, regulations and procedures in defined circumstances • To influence the department from bottom to top through information and proposals | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved relationship between the institution and the entrepreneurs • More ideas on how to cooperate and how to make better use of the institution • Support from the institution in future activities | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The invitation should be done by the Nucleus together with the association / chamber, showing that they are together – to ignore a small Nucleus of 10 entrepreneurs is easy, to ignore the association / chamber could cause problems for the institution • Consider to invite the chairperson, other board members and the CEO to this meeting in order to show to the representative of the institution that they deal not only with a small group of SMEs but with the whole association / chamber. The institution may take the statements of the Nucleus entrepreneurs more serious • The meeting should be well prepared by the Nucleus: What do we want? About what do we have doubts? Which proposals do we have? Are they realistic, this means, is the department in a position to attend to our requests? – Without preparation and with passive behaviour the representatives of the department will dominate the meeting and the result for the Nucleus' entrepreneurs tend to be zero • There are two types of public institutions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Those with service and support functions for the enterprises. Here the main questions are how to get better access to the services, how to improve the quality of the services, costs and prices, etc. b) Those with control functions, checking, whether the entrepreneurs act in accordance with laws and regulations. Here first it has to be found out whether the public servants have in general a positive and constructive attitude towards entrepreneurship or whether they see the entrepreneurs as “natural” enemies and / or good source to increase the private income. The latter case is difficult to handle and well devised strategies. • Examples: Bakery and similar Nuclei – health department or other controlling institutions; Sawmill and Carpentry Nuclei – forestry department; many producing sectors – environment protection departments; almost all sectors – tax and revenue and similar departments | |
| Activity | F.2 Marketing activities | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation as Nucleus in a local trade fare / exhibition with a stand | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reach the market in group with more impact than with an individual company • Demonstration of the sectors performance and strength to a wider public • Promotion of the sectors in a professional manner () • Stimulation of the entrepreneurs to develop new services / products • Better prospects for marketing and meeting potential buyers | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define the objective of the participation as Nucleus in a trade fare well in order to avoid misunderstanding and frustration: The success – or not – should be evaluated more under the aspect of improving the reputation of the sector and creating certain business contacts and less under the aspect of generating sales • The stand should be well designed – very often they are not. In case of doubts, contract a specialist for a workshop about the participation in trade fares – this can | |

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| | <p>result in “wonders”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In case of a greater number of Nucleus participants consider to buy 2 or more stands and design them as one big stand with more – inviting – open space • In case of the participation of different Nuclei in the fare all stands should have the same appearance in order to demonstrate, that they belong together • Divide the costs between the participants • Take care that the Nucleus stand is perceived as a result of the work of the chamber / association | |
| Activity | F.3 Marketing / advertisement through TV, journal or flyer by some Nucleus companies | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitation of the access to a larger market in order to reach more potential clients – alone the entrepreneur has less chances for this because of the costs involved • Decrease of marketing costs for individual entrepreneurs • Dissemination of information in a homogeneous form among the clients | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eventual increase of the demand for services and products • Increase of mutual trust in the group • In case of success other common activities can be easily initiated and carried out | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define together with the group which most important aspects have to be considered when a Nucleus company is circulating its offer of services • Show that the knowledge of the participants contributes towards developing better information related to the reality of the Nucleus companies • Look for financial support (as sponsors) from suppliers, which can result in a kind of partnership (Example: auto mechanics cooperate with a car producer, dealer or importer) • Circulate information about the possible quality of services related to the technical level of the participating enterprises. Or, in other words: Do not try to sell, what you do not have. Otherwise the enterprises frustrate their clients • Attention: Every participating entrepreneur has to analyse very carefully whether his / her target group / potential clients can be reached by the selected means of communication. Examples: a) A workshop is located in a relatively poor area and the inhabitants have low purchase power. In this case it is unlikely that they read the local journal regularly. Therefore, an advertisement in the journal is ineffective. b) All the clients live in a small area. In this case advertisement through TV is inefficient, because of its great catchment area. The distribution of a flyer to all households could cause much better results | |

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| | G For the Counsellor | |
| Activity | G.1 Collection of technical publications about the sector | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrading of the counsellors technical knowledge about the sector • Generating of new ideas concerning relevant subjects to be discussed in the Nucleus | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing of the counsellors know-how about the specific aspects of the sector • The counsellor can be gradually better accepted as partner / consultant / qualified / supplier of relevant know-how and ideas by the Nucleus members | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – technical and business administration books – articles in newspapers, magazines, periodicals – publications from private and public SME-support agencies, SME-projects, chamber / association federations and confederations – publications from suppliers and / or purchasing companies – trade fares – and many more • The counsellor shall present during each meeting one brief piece of information (verbal, copy, written) about the sector that is interesting for the entrepreneurs. Effects: a) The participant returns home with the feeling that he / she got something relevant for him / herself. b) The counsellor proves that he / she has the relevant subjects of the entrepreneurs in mind and that he / she observes the world through their eyes | |
| Activity | G.2 Internet sites | To Contents |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usage of the Internet as know-how source | |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See above • In case the majority of the Nucleus members do not have access to the Internet world the counsellor can help them obtain this information. Not all sites are of good quality. In addition, it is not easy to find interesting and relevant sites and information. Therefore, if the counsellor is good, he / she can easily gain respect, reputation and credibility among the Nucleus members | |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take care: without good English knowledge you are totally lost in the Internet • The most famous and apparently best / fastest search machine is actually (year 2004) www.google.com • During the meeting of the counsellors of the different chambers / associations in the region: Define who shall be responsible to look for relevant internet sites for specific sectors and to inform the other counsellors about them – it is not efficient if each counsellor searches for everything him- / herself • In case the association / chamber has an own site: Consider to include links to these specific sites • In case the counsellor wants to present some sites to the Nucleus “live” via a beamer / projector: Be very, very sure that you are not running the risk of power and telephone cuts and that the connection is fast. Otherwise it will be a boring and annoying event for the Nucleus – nothing is worse than technical problems at the wrong time! The alternative: Load the sites on your computer, make a test, whether you got what you wanted, and start the presentation from there | |
| Activity | G.3 Acquisition of videos about business administration and technologies of the sector | To Contents |

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| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitation of the access to means of training which the entrepreneur alone will not be able to acquire (no access, too costly, no certainty about the quality) • Offer to the entrepreneur means of training for his / her employees in the workshop • Decrease of the training costs of the enterprise employees |
| Possible Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of the importance of training, especially of employees – a small step towards becoming a more regular feature • Creation of awareness about innovations taking place related to each sector |
| For the Counsellor: What to do & What not to do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before the acquisition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) ask the counsellors of the other chambers / associations whether they already have videos about the sector and what they recommend b) create a small sub-group in the Nucleus (2 entrepreneurs and the counsellor) to start an evaluation of interesting videos with a view to eventually doing a pre-selection of those to be acquired. Take care: a lot of them are nice, sometimes funny, but the question is, whether they really serve the needs of the Nucleus members • Ask suppliers and other sources – see 8.1 – whether they have interesting videos • Alternative 1: The videos remain in the chamber / association which works like a video library. The acquisition costs are divided between the Nucleus members • Alternative 2: Each Nucleus member gets one video copy. Everyone pays the costs of the copy |

6 Annex : Forms

6.1 Report of a Nucleus Meeting

6.2 Report about activities of Nucleus between ... and ...

6.3 Checklist : Which Sector is Suited for the Foundation of a SME Nucleus?




| | | |
|-----------------------|---|------------------------|
| Chamber / Association | Report of Nucleus Meeting | Number ____ / 200 ____ |
| Nucleus | | Number of participants |
| Date | Time | Meeting place |
| Counsellor | Name of other participants (external counsellor / lecturer etc.) | Institution |
| Subject | Summary and results | |
| 1. | | |
| 2. | | |
| 3. | | |
| 4. | | |
| 5. | | |

| Subjects to be resolved / tasks / plans | Name of responsible | Date Limit |
|---|---------------------|------------|
| 1. | | |
| 2. | | |
| 3. | | |

Next meeting :
Date / Time / Place

| Name of participant | Name of enterprise |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |
| 6. | |
| 7. | |
| 8. | |
| 9. | |
| 10. | |
| 11. | |
| 12. | |
| 13. | |
| 14. | |
| 15. | |

Evaluation through participants :

| | | |
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|  |  |  |
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| | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Signature of counsellor | Signature of Nucleus speaker |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|

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|--|------|---|------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Chamber / Association | | Report about activities of Nucleus between | | | and | |
| Nucleus | | | | Date of foundation (1st meeting) | | |
| Name of speaker | | | | | | |
| Number of members | | | Number of males | | Number of females | |
| Number of meetings in office | | Number of meetings in companies | | Total number of meetings | | |
| Participants : Minimum | | Participants : Maximum | | Average number of participants | | |
| Activities of the Nucleus | | | | | | |
| | Date | Activity | | | | No. of participants |
| 1 | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | |
| 10 | | | | | | |
| Evaluation through counsellor: the Nucleus works | | | | | | |
| Optimally | | Well | Regularly | | Not very satisfactorily | Badly |
| Date, name and signature of the counsellor | | | | | | |

| Form : Checklist : Which Sector is Suited for the Foundation of a SME Nucleus? Credit a criterion with 0 to 4 points. 0 points means low, negative, does not exist, is not suitable. 4 points means high, positive, exists, is suitable. Be realistic in attributing the points. It is better to give a lower score than a too optimistic one. | Sector | Sector | Sector | Sector | Sector |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | Points | Points | Points | Points | Points |
| 1. Criterion : Leadership The sector does not have / has entrepreneurs with leadership capacities Do not start with a sector, which does not have some entrepreneurs with charisma and leadership capacities. Start with a sector, which has one, two or more entrepreneurs with a strong personality and leadership capacities. This is the most important criterion, which can be a “killer”! – A sector without entrepreneurs who have leadership capacities gets 0 point – A sector with many entrepreneurs who have leadership capacities gets 4 points Attention: If 2 or less points are scored, you may already stop the analysis at this point because the probability is high that it will not be possible to create a Nucleus successfully. | | | | | |
| 2. Criterion : Qualification The entrepreneurs and companies of the sector have high / medium / low qualifications Do not start with a sector which consists of very highly qualified and very low qualified entrepreneurs / companies but with a sector having entrepreneurs of medium qualification. – A sector with very highly or very low qualified companies gets 0 point – A sector with medium qualified companies gets 4 points | | | | | |
| 3. Criterion : Organisation : The sector is strong / weak Do not start with a “strong”, well-organised sector but with a “weak”, unorganised one. – A strong sector gets 0 point – A weak sector gets 4 points | | | | | |
| 4. Criterion : Structure : The sector is very homogeneous or heterogeneous / homogeneous or heterogeneous to a medium degree Do not start with a very homogeneous or very heterogeneous sector but with one, where there is a good balance between homogeneity and heterogeneity. – A very homogeneous or heterogeneous sector gets 0 point – A sector with a good balance between homogeneity and heterogeneity gets 4 points | | | | | |

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| <p>5. Criterion : Quantity :The sector consists of few – many SMEs</p> <p>Do not start with a sector, which has only a small number of SMEs, but with one with many SMEs in a defined catchment area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A sector with few SMEs gets 0 point - A sector with many SMEs gets 4 points | | | | | |
| <p>6. Criterion : Investments : In the sector, companies can improve with / without larger financial investments</p> <p>Do not start with a sector in which improvements in the SME companies require right at the beginning large financial investments. Instead, start with a sector in which improvements in the SME companies are possible through a lot of small technical, organisational and managerial changes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If bigger investments are required give 0 point - If a lot of small improvements are possible give 4 points | | | | | |
| <p>7. Criterion : Know-how Sources : External know-how sources and Business Development Service (BDS) providers do not exist / exist in the region for the sector</p> <p>Do not start with a sector for which there are no local or regional external qualified know-how sources and BDS providers. Instead, start with a sector for which such know-how sources and BDS providers are available.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If know-how sources and BDS providers do not exist or are of very low quality give 0 points - If various know-how sources and business providers of high quality exist locally and regionally give 4 points | | | | | |
| <p>8. Total of the points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 22 points and more (> 80%) : the prerequisites are good for a successful implementation of a Nucleus in this sector. Start with this sector. o Between 14 and 21 points (50% - 80%) : the prerequisites are medium for a successful implementation of a Nucleus in this sector. Further information and analysis might be useful. o 13 points and less (< 50%) : the prerequisites are bad for a successful implementation of a Nucleus in this sector. It is not recommended to start with this sector. | | | | | |
| <p>Date:</p> | <p>Name of the Evaluator:</p> | | | | |