

HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE

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Students today expect to learn things they can later apply and use when starting their first job. The authors are constantly searching for new ways to improve their ESP courses, to make them more interesting, interactive, attractive and practical for the students. With the increasing need for soft skills, the authors offer their students hands-on experience that will become useful in their future professional lives. The tasks that students are assigned in the ESP courses are designed and prepared so that they can help students gain the skills that are required in their later employment. Based on the discussions with business professionals, the authors have identified the areas of expertise that are necessary for students of either business or medical studies. Presentation and communication skills, as well as innovative and well-prepared CVs, have been most crucial. Presentation skills are obtained via training, followed by presenting imaginary companies at a student conference or poster session. Students are asked to give a speech in front of their colleagues and to accept and express comments or criticism. The Mahara platform is used for the creation of pages of these student companies. Thanks to ICT, students participate in video conferences with their colleagues from foreign universities, where they try to find solutions for cross-cultural issues. It encourages them to work in teams, to enforce their ideas and to reach compromises. Finally, new attitudes towards CVs are proposed to students, including CV avatars and Mahara profile pages. The authors will be outlining the above mentioned activities and providing an insight into the way the activities are utilized at the University of Pardubice, Czech Republic.

Keywords: LSP, presenting, CV, Mahara, videoconference

Biographical Notes

Zuzana Bezdickova is an English teacher – LSP in the Language Centre of the University of Pardubice. She graduated from the Institute of Foreign Languages at University in Pardubice, majoring in English. Since 1998 she has been involved in foreign language teaching, translation and interpretation. At the University of Pardubice she teaches English in ESP courses with focus on economics and chemistry. Within the UNICOM project she cooperates in the key activities that focus on lifelong learning, innovation and e-course design. She co-organizes courses for the university staff and students with a focus on presentation skills. Zuzana Bezdickova also participates in the preparation of online courses and testing within the LMS Moodle and Mahara for students of the University of Pardubice and oral testing of students under the ERASMUS program. She is interested in e-learning and the use of information technology in language teaching.

Drahomira Ciberova has been a member of the Language Centre of the University of Pardubice since 2008. She graduated from the Institute of Foreign Languages at University of Pardubice, majoring in teaching English. Since 1998 she has been involved in foreign language teaching, translation and interpretation. Her main sphere of activity is English for specific purposes, with a focus on economics, information technology and chemistry. She is interested in e-learning and the use of ICT in language teaching. Within the UNICOM project she cooperates in the key activities that focus on lifelong learning, innovation and e-course design. Drahomira Ciberova is also a member of a team preparing online courses and assessment tests within LMS Moodle and Mahara for students of the University of Pardubice and testing of students under the ERASMUS program.