

Meeting with A&O fund Graphic Media the Netherlands

On Friday 15 December 2017 Rense van der Heide had a meeting with Mr Richard Leloux, managing director of the A&O fund Graphic Media in the Netherlands.

The A&O-fund is the training and labour market fund of the social partners in the graphic media industry. It supports specific actions with regards to coaching and training of companies and supporting funding of these activities.

The main issue of the get together were the latest developments of the Print-Media industry and the perspective of the near and far future of the industry in relation with the objectives of Thrive! Of course the A&O-fund had been informed about the project at the initial stages of development.

The Print-Media sector is in a difficult situation at this very moment and, to be honest, has been in an unfavourable position for quite some time. Digitisation of the main printing processes within the sector have caused an enormous decrease in the demand for analogue printed materials. This effect is still going on and will never end of course.

For the companies still surviving in this segment of the industry there is no other way than to search for new customers, new ways of 'surviving' and then in a more sustainable manner.

The detailed issues with regards to the entrepreneurial profiles and especially that of the starter and female entrepreneur were interesting for the A&O-fund. The way Thrive! Will come to the description of these profiles, the tools going along with that and the learning materials that will be produced are of interest. Of course these materials will be available for the companies in the sector A&O caters for.

The way matters are approached at this moment by the project would serve the needs of a large amount of the remaining printing companies. However, the management of these companies have to be willing and able to come to firm decisions on how they want their company to survive for the next 5 years in order to have the chance to become a company with a solid basis and be sustainable for the future.

The tools and findings of Thrive! should one of the resources they could turn to to help them go through these processes needed to be part of the future.

Rense van der Heide
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