



BRIDGES

Bring & Develop Good Education Systems

Factory Learning Labs (FLL) Trainer's Guidebook



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Annex 2 to Deliverable D3.2 – Factory Learning Labs Operating as Simulated Companies Realized

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1. Introduction & Purpose of This Guidebook

1.1 Purpose

This guidebook has been produced to support trainers in putting the Factory Learning Labs (FLL) methodology into practice. The FLL toolkit — introduced in Deliverable D3.2 — already provides the structural building blocks of the simulation-based approach: scenario templates, role cards, trainer guidelines, and reflection and evaluation tools. What this guidebook adds is the “how”: step-by-step instructions for preparing a session, running it in the classroom or online, debriefing it well, and adapting it to the needs of learners from disadvantaged or underrepresented backgrounds.

Its aim is to build trainer confidence, ensure consistent delivery across the BRIDGES partner institutions, and help every simulation deliver its full educational value — whether run face-to-face, in a blended format, or fully online.

The guidebook is written for trainers and facilitators delivering the Pre-Apprenticeship Programme (PaP) within BRIDGES, and it complements — rather than replaces — Section 3 (“Role of the Trainer: Functions and Guidance”) and Section 4 (“Components and Delivery Structure of the FLL”) of Deliverable D3.2, which set out the institutional rationale for the FLL. This guidebook is the operational companion: keep it close at hand before, during, and after every session.

1.2 How to Use This Guidebook

- New to the FLL? Read Sections 2–4 first, to understand the materials and the session flow before running your first simulation.
- Preparing a session? Go straight to Section 3 (Trainer Preparation) and the Pre-Session Checklist in Section 11.1.
- Running a session? Keep the Quick Guide table in Section 4.1 open as a step-by-step prompt sheet.
- Debriefing? Sections 5.1–5.4 provide checklists, prompts, and structures for reflection.
- Delivering online? Sections 7.1–7.4 cover platforms, tools, and trainer tips for digital and blended delivery.
- Looking for a specific scenario, role card, or form? Section 11.3 lists exactly where to find each one.

2. Core Materials of the FLH Toolkit

The FLL provides a ready-to-use package that trainers can apply directly or adapt to their own institutional context. It rests on four components, each serving a distinct purpose within the learning cycle.

2.1 Scenario Templates

Each scenario sets out a realistic workplace storyline drawn from the tourism sector — hotel reception, travel agency consultation, event planning, complaint handling, and more. The template defines the learning objectives, context, roles, required materials, timing, and the competences targeted, so that simulations stay consistent across institutions while remaining adaptable to local names, venues, and cultural references. The full library of 12 ready-to-use scenarios is provided in Annex 1 of D3.2.

2.2 Role Cards

Role cards give each learner a specific character — receptionist, guest, tour operator, event organiser — with a short background, clear objectives, expected behaviours and, where useful, sample phrases. They give learners enough structure to feel confident while leaving room for improvisation, and they build empathy by asking learners to adopt another person's perspective and priorities. Role cards are available in printable and digital formats; the complete set is provided in Annex 3 of D3.2.

2.3 Trainer Guidelines — This Guidebook

This document is the trainer guidelines component of the FLL toolkit. It provides step-by-step instructions for preparing, facilitating, and debriefing every scenario, along with practical advice for handling common challenges — passive learners, escalating conflict, time pressure, uneven digital literacy — so that sessions run smoothly and inclusively regardless of format.

2.4 Reflection & Evaluation Tools

Checklists, learner prompts, and peer feedback forms connect the role-play back to the competences it is meant to build. They are introduced in Section 5 of this guide and provided in full in Annex 4 (Learner Reflection Prompts) and Annex 5 (Evaluation & Feedback Form Samples) of D3.2.

3. Trainer Preparation

The success of an FLL activity depends heavily on what happens before the learners arrive. Careful preparation ensures the simulation is not only immersive, but pedagogically on-target. Before starting any activity, work through the following five steps.

Step 1 – Select the Scenario

Choose the scenario that matches the learning module in progress — a check-in or complaint-handling scenario for customer service, a meeting or event-planning scenario for teamwork and leadership. Aligning the scenario with the specific competences of the PaP ensures the activity reinforces, rather than duplicates, classroom content.

Step 2 – Adapt the Context to Learners' Realities

Localise names, venues, and cultural references — swap a generic hotel for a well-known local one, and reference familiar attractions, foods, or customs. This small step makes the activity feel relevant and helps learners connect the simulation to their own environment.

Step 3 – Choose the Delivery Mode

The FLL offers three delivery modes, described in full in Sections 6–7 of this guide:

- Physical – face-to-face role-play with props.
- Blended – part in the classroom, part supported by digital tools.
- Digital/Virtual – a fully online simulation using video conferencing or virtual spaces.

Choose the mode that best matches your learners' digital competences and your institution's resources.

Step 4 – Set Up the Materials

Print or share role cards, and prepare props or their digital equivalents — booking forms, receipts, maps, key cards. For online sessions, prepare digital equivalents such as editable PDFs, shared documents, or virtual whiteboards, and have backups ready (see Section 8).

Step 5 – Brief the Learners

Explain the learning objectives before starting, and stress that mistakes are part of the learning process, not a failure. A short, clear briefing — two to three minutes — sets the tone for a role-play that feels safe to experiment in.

4. Running the Scenario

The flow below is consistent across all FLL scenarios, whatever the topic or delivery mode. Keep this table open during the session as a quick-reference prompt sheet.

4.1 Quick Guide Table

Step	What the Trainer Does	Key Tips & Reminders
1. Introduce the Scenario	Present the storyline and context. Explain the challenge learners must solve. Set expectations for professional and respectful behaviour.	Keep it short and clear (2–3 minutes). Stress that mistakes are part of learning. Link the scenario to real workplace situations.
2. Distribute Roles	Give each learner their role card. Physical: hand out printed cards secretly. Digital: send roles privately via chat, email, or breakout rooms.	Ensure roles are confidential. Check each learner understands their role before starting.
3. Facilitate the Role-Play	Allow learners to act freely. Observe quietly using the trainer checklist. Add complexity if needed (an extra request, a new guest).	Intervene only if learners are stuck. Take notes on behaviours for later feedback. Keep the flow realistic and workplace-like.
4. End the Activity	Stop the role-play after the agreed time (20–25 minutes). Summarise what happened and acknowledge learners' effort.	End while energy is still high. Don't let it drag on — aim for closure.
5. Debrief & Reflect	Ask each role to share their perspective. Highlight good practices and areas for improvement. Encourage group discussion and peer feedback.	Use open questions: "What worked? What was hardest?" Focus feedback on behaviours, not personalities. Link outcomes back to learning objectives.

4.2 Notes on the Flow

This five-step structure holds regardless of scenario topic or delivery mode — only the tools change. A physical session uses printed cards and props; a digital session substitutes breakout rooms and shared documents. What stays constant is the rhythm: introduce, distribute, facilitate, close and — always — debrief. Section 5 expands on that final, most important step.

5. Reflection and Assessment

Reflection and assessment are at the heart of the FLL. They transform role-play into meaningful learning by helping participants understand not just what they did, but why they did it and how they can improve next time. For trainers, these tools provide structured ways to observe, evaluate, and support learner growth; for learners, they build self-awareness, confidence, and the ability to connect classroom practice with workplace realities.

5.1 Trainer Observation Checklists

Use a structured checklist to observe learner behaviour during the scenario. This keeps observation objective and consistent, and prevents key behaviours being missed in a busy role-play.

What to observe:

- **Politeness and professionalism** — did the learner greet guests politely and keep a respectful tone under pressure?
- **Empathy and emotional intelligence** — did they acknowledge emotions and show understanding toward angry or confused guests?
- **Prioritisation and organisation** — did they handle multiple demands logically (e.g. urgent guest first)?
- **Clarity of communication** — was their language clear, simple, and adapted to the guest's level of understanding?
- **Teamwork and collaboration** — did they cooperate with other roles (manager, colleagues, team members)?
- **Problem-solving** — did they propose realistic solutions within the hotel's policies and resources?

How to use: fill in quick notes or ticks during the role-play; use the observations as the basis for debriefing; focus on behaviours, not personal judgement (write “used a calm tone with an angry guest” rather than “good communicator”).

5.2 Learner Reflection Prompts

Provide two to three open-ended prompts after every session — written individually, discussed orally in pairs, or answered as a group. A sample set:

- What was the most difficult part of the scenario for you?
- How did you feel when guests or clients became impatient or angry?
- What strategies did you use to stay calm?
- How did you adapt your communication to different people?
- What would you do differently if this situation happened in real life?

The complete bank of general and scenario-specific reflection prompts — organised by focus area — is provided in Annex 4 of D3.2; Section 11.2 of this guide maps those focus areas onto the FLL scenario library.

5.3 Peer Feedback

While some learners role-play, others observe — using a simple checklist (e.g. “Was the receptionist polite? Did they calm the guest? Did they offer a solution?”). At the end, each observer shares one positive comment and one suggestion for improvement, moderated by the trainer to keep feedback respectful and constructive. This doubles engagement during the activity and helps observers evaluate professional behaviour critically.

5.4 Group Reflection

Group reflection consolidates individual and peer learning into a shared understanding, and should always link back to real workplace realities in tourism and hospitality. Structure it in four moves:

1. Feelings — “How did this scenario feel?” (stressful, fun, challenging)
2. Behaviours — “What worked well? What didn’t?”
3. Competences — “How does this relate to real hotel or travel-agency work?”
4. Improvements — “What could we do better next time?”

Trainer tips: encourage quieter learners to speak; validate all contributions (“that’s a good point”); summarise key lessons at the end and highlight the transfer to real life.

5.5 Summary Table

Tool	How to Use It	Purpose	Example in Practice
Trainer Observation Checklist	Fill in during role-play; tick behaviours such as politeness, empathy, clarity, teamwork, prioritisation.	Provides objective evidence for feedback.	“Stayed calm when guest shouted; delayed solving billing error.”
Learner Reflection Prompts	Ask 2–3 guiding questions after the activity (written or oral).	Develops self-awareness and deeper learning.	“I found it hardest to stay polite when interrupted. Next time I will use short but firm sentences.”
Peer Feedback	Observers use a simplified checklist; share one strength and one improvement.	Encourages active observation and constructive critique.	“You explained the Wi-Fi clearly. Next time, speak slower for tourists.”
Group Reflection	Trainer facilitates a whole-class discussion (feelings → behaviours → competences → improvements).	Consolidates learning and links it to the workplace.	“In real hotels, teamwork is key during complaints — we must back each other up.”

6. Physical Delivery

Physical delivery lets learners fully immerse themselves and practise professional behaviour in a simulated real-world environment. Three elements make it work.

- **Arrange the room** to resemble the setting — a desk and chairs for a reception counter, paired tables for a travel agency, a roundtable for a meeting.
- **Use simple, low-cost props** — booking forms, maps, menus, bills, receipts, brochures, paper key cards or name tags — to provide the “cues” that support imagination and engagement, without needing perfect replicas.
- **Hand out role cards clearly and privately**, and encourage learners to play their roles as realistically as possible — polite greetings, professional body language, workplace vocabulary.

The more realistic the behaviour, the stronger the learning impact.

7. Digital and Virtual Delivery

When face-to-face delivery is not possible, FLL scenarios adapt to online or hybrid learning. The goal is to preserve interaction, realism, and engagement while making smart, proportionate use of digital tools.

7.1 Video Conferencing (Zoom, MS Teams, Google Meet)

- **Breakout rooms** — divide learners into smaller groups for different role-plays (e.g. one room for “Reception Desk”, another for “Tourist Couple”), reducing pressure and keeping simulations manageable.
- **Private role distribution** — share role cards privately via chat, email, or direct message.
- **Trainer role** — visit breakout rooms as facilitator, observing interactions and noting behaviours for feedback.

Tip: test breakout rooms before the session, and assign co-hosts to help manage larger groups.

7.2 Collaborative Tools (Padlet, Miro, Google Docs)

These platforms act as the “props” of a digital simulation, replacing physical booking forms or brochures.

- **Padlet** — a wall where learners post documents (bookings, complaints, itineraries) in real time.
- **Miro** — digital whiteboards for planning activities, with sticky notes for ideas, complaints, or logistics.
- **Google Docs / Slides** — shared, editable templates of booking forms or sales pitches.

Tip: set clear rules on who edits what (e.g. “only the receptionist edits the booking sheet”).

7.3 Immersive Virtual Environments

Platform	Best Used For	Notes
GatherTown	Hotel check-in, event-planning meetings, crisis simulations	Learners move avatars around a virtual lobby or agency; conversations start naturally as avatars get close.

Platform	Best Used For	Notes
FrameVR.io / Mozilla Hubs	Intercultural meetings, presentations	3D meeting rooms; trainers can upload props (booking forms, maps) onto virtual walls.
Virbela / ENGAGE VR	Job-interview simulations, large team events	Full virtual campuses with lobbies and auditoriums; best suited to institutions with VR capacity.

Tip: start simple — Zoom plus Padlet or Miro — before moving to immersive platforms. For learners new to digital tools, too much complexity too soon can be overwhelming.

7.4 Trainer Tips for Digital/Virtual Delivery

5. Keep instructions clear — online, learners get lost easily, so explain the flow step by step.
6. Do a tech check — test breakout rooms, documents, or virtual spaces before the session.
7. Encourage role immersion — even online, remind learners to use professional greetings, expressions, and tone.
8. Balance interaction — rotate speaking roles so quieter learners also engage.
9. Debrief in plenary — always bring everyone back together to reflect and link the activity to workplace realities.

Note: D3.2 §2.3 also flags lightweight digital-support options (e.g. Delightex Edu and similar tools) as optional, complementary aids — never a requirement for running a session.

8. Supporting Learners in Using the Tools

For many learners the FLL will be their first experience of simulation-based training — particularly online. Support begins before the role-play starts and continues through the debrief.

- **Give a short, practical technical introduction** before starting — how to use breakout rooms, access role cards sent via chat, or navigate a shared board — covering only what learners need for this specific activity.
- **Write role cards in plain, simple, inclusive language**, free of jargon or unfamiliar cultural references; sample phrases help shy or inexperienced learners get started.
- **For digital sessions, test all tools in advance and prepare backups** — role cards saved as PDFs to send by email or messaging if the platform fails, or a plan to drop back to simple video conferencing if an immersive environment or the Wi-Fi lets you down.
- **Encourage improvisation.** The goal is not a perfect script but the unpredictability of a real workplace — remind learners that mistakes are part of the process and that what matters is how they react, adapt, and communicate.

9. The Role of the Trainer: Facilitator, Not Performer

Trainers are facilitators, not performers. Within the FLL, their role is to:

- Prepare the environment.
- Assign roles fairly and inclusively.
- Observe and guide without dominating.
- Manage the time and flow of the activity.
- Lead the reflection and connect the lessons back to the workplace.

This guidebook focuses on the practical “how” of that role; for the fuller institutional picture — capacity-building for trainers, and the FLL’s place within the Pre-Apprenticeship Programme — see Section 3 of Deliverable D3.2.

10. Key Principles for Success

- **Keep it real** — scenarios must reflect actual workplace situations, not abstract exercises.
- **Keep it simple** — clear roles, short instructions, realistic but low-cost props.
- **Keep it flexible** — adapt to your learners’ needs, resources, and context rather than following a template rigidly.
- **Keep it inclusive** — ensure equal participation, gender balance, and sensitivity to cultural and learning needs.
- **Keep it reflective** — learning happens in the debrief as much as in the role-play itself, so never skip Section 5.

11. Quick-Reference Toolkit

11.1 Pre-Session Checklist

- ☐ Scenario selected and matched to the learning module
- ☐ Names, venues, and cultural references localised
- ☐ Delivery mode confirmed (physical / blended / digital)
- ☐ Role cards printed or shared; props or digital equivalents ready
- ☐ Observation checklist and reflection prompts printed or open
- ☐ For digital sessions: platform tested, breakout rooms set, backup plan ready
- ☐ Learners briefed on objectives and the “mistakes are part of learning” message

11.2 Matching Scenarios to Reflection Focus Areas

Annex 4 of D3.2 groups its reflection prompts by focus area; the table below matches each focus area to the best-suited scenario(s) from the Annex 1 scenario library, so trainers can move directly from a session to the right debrief questions.

Reflection Focus Area (Annex 4)	Best-Matched Scenario(s) (Annex 1)
Customer Service & Front Desk	1 – Hotel Reception: Check-in and Customer Welcome
Conflict Management	2 – Handling Customer Complaints; 4 – Mediating a Dispute; 11 – Handling a Guest Complaint (Service Failure Recovery)
Intercultural Communication	6 – Intercultural Misunderstanding: Helping International Guests
Digital Communication	7 – Online Booking & Digital Communication; 12 – Digital Promotion and Online Presence
Crisis Management	8 – Emergency at the Hotel: Crisis Management Simulation
Sales & Marketing	3 – Designing a Holiday Package; 10 – Marketing & Sales Pitch
Job Interviews	9 – Job Interview Simulation
General Reflection Prompts (no dedicated focus area)	5 – Team Meeting: Planning a Hotel Event

11.3 Related Annexes & Links

Resource	Where to Find It
Full scenario library (12 scenarios)	Annex 1 – FLL Scenarios (D3.2)
This Trainer's Guidebook	Annex 2 – FLL Trainer's Guidebook (this document)
Printable / digital role cards	Annex 3 – Role-Playing Cards (D3.2)
Full learner reflection prompt bank	Annex 4 – Learner Reflection Prompts (D3.2)
Trainer evaluation, self-assessment & peer feedback forms	Annex 5 – Evaluation & Feedback Form Samples (D3.2)
Online hub / downloadable materials	https://bridges.projectlibrary.eu/factory-learning-hub/

Keep this guidebook, the role cards, and the reflection tools together as a single working set — the FLL is designed to be picked up and used, not filed away.