

EDUCACIÓN SOCIAL

# INSERCOOP UN MODELO EDUCATIVO PARA LA INSERCIÓN LABORAL



EDITORIAL UOC



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# Prologue

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Although Insercoop was founded in 1997, its origins must be placed long before this year. This is part of the story that is not normally known and I believe that it is appropriate to share it in order to understand why we have managed to get here.

In 1995 and 1996 two students of Social Education at the University of Barcelona - Alicia Burgués and Clémence Durand - faced the need to carry out their internships. At that time, the University did not have many partners to carry them out, so students had to pull strings on their own to find them according to their interests and facilitating the task for the university.

They suggested that they carry them out in a therapeutic centre that took care of recovered drug addicts in the outskirts of Barcelona where they had a personal contact who could help them get in. As the University demanded an internship plan, they decided to develop it with the managing director of the therapeutic community. In this meeting, they were asked how they wanted to approach the internship, the activities they wanted to carry out and how to develop them. They knew it had

to be something that the center was not doing at that time and realized that they lacked an insertion programme into the labor market once the rehabilitation process had been completed. They took the idea to the managing director who was not entirely convinced with the suggestion, as he believed the patients still had a long way to even consider a job placement. Alicia and Clémence insisted and he finally agreed to run a test programme on condition that the activity had to be voluntary and that if people did not attend, it would be dismissed.

With these in mind they began to work on a job search workshop. It was actually a subject they did not know about. They did some research about employment and were able to define some basic subjects such as the need to have a curriculum vitae or how to approach a job interview and designed different activities for the workshop.

When the day of the workshop arrived, they were very surprised to see an utterly full room. The professionals of the therapeutic centre were amazed at the response. After a brief presentation, they explained the activities, but the patients began to mention their lack of experience, their expectations, and their personal difficulties. Anecdotes and doubts arose and one thing led to another. The fact was that no matter how hard they tried to redirect the dialogue towards the activity prepared, they did not succeed. The hour and a half went through without being able to start what they had planned.

Reviewing the activity, they understood that this initial difficulty was due to their lack of experience and knowledge of the group. They made some adjustments in the activity and as they had had a great attendance success, they were able to reconvene

the workshop for the following week. The room was full again. As soon as the activity started the conversation was redirected again to the personal situation of the attendees without letting the activity be carried out.

This scene was repeated almost identically during the four or five following sessions. The bewilderment was huge. Not knowing how to start their dissertation they didn't know whether to rate the experience as a success or a failure. On the one hand, the workshops had been full, but on the other, they had not been able to carry out the planned activities.

It was then when, with the major help of Violeta Núñez - who at that time was one of their professors at the University - that they were able to see another aspect of what had happened in those sessions: talking about job placement was talking about the future. For those people talking about work was talking about a future in which they wanted to live. The discussions and debates in the workshops were the expression of that desire, and it was about being attentive to be able to channel it.

Alicia and Clémence understood how social education could be a fundamental tool to offer scenarios in which people were the leads of their own future.

They graduated and once out of college they spoke with Violeta to bring this little conceptual seed to life. The result was the founding of Insercoop as a social initiative entity with a clear commitment to promoting people.

Now, twenty years later, we can say that this book is the expression of this bet sustained over time. I want to thank all the

professionals who have participated during these years in the Insercoop project and especially those who have collaborated in this book, for their involvement and commitment.