

## 6.4 APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM (CASE STUDIES: BOSCH AND DEUTSCHE BANK)

### ? FOCUS QUESTION:

- How does a society prepare its youth to join the workforce?

**STANDARD #5** INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS AND INSTITUTIONS.

**STANDARD #7** PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION AND CONSUMPTION.

### LESSON OVERVIEW:

By reading interviews with both supervisors and apprentices in two major German corporations, Deutsche Bank and Bosch, and viewing a brief film and a PowerPoint presentation, students will learn about the unique vocational training system that operates in Germany.

### TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Education in Germany is the responsibility of each of the individual sixteen federal states (the *Länder*), with federal coordination of issues of national interest – such as vocational education. Germany provides many opportunities for vocational education at the upper secondary level. Interested students can attend full-time vocational schools or be part of the two-track or “dual system” that combines classroom learning with apprenticeship training for specific job tracks in specific firms or consortia



of companies. The emphasis on vocational education thus provides companies with well-trained students whose skills match their needs. An added benefit is a low national youth-unemployment rate as apprentices are counted as part of the labor force.

In the dual system, public schools are responsible for the classroom component. The classroom curriculum is set by the individual states. According to Germany's Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB), there are currently 344 officially recognized training profiles, or *Ausbildungsberufe*, in which stu-

dents can seek training in the dual system. This system contrasts with that in the United States where vocational training is largely the domain of post-secondary schools. Once accepted into an apprenticeship program, students divide their time into practical training (3-4 days per week) and theoretical, classroom training, often in a nearby vocational school. The training lasts for between 2 and 3 ½ years. Companies provide the financing for the practical training while the state is responsible for the classroom. The result is a workforce that is highly skilled and easily integrated into employment as permanent positions become available.

In 2008, about 500,000 firms offered apprenticeship programs out of the approximately 2.06 million registered employers. Depending on the overall economic situation in Germany and the world, the number of positions offered vs. the number of students seeking apprenticeships varies.

**TIME:****(2-3) 45 minute class periods****INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES:**

- *The Apprentice: Germany's Answer to Jobless Youth* Article (**Handout 6.4.1 on Instructional Resource Disc**)
- Deutsche Bank Dual Vocational Training PowerPoint (**PowerPoint 6.4.2 on Instructional Resource Disc**)
- *Vocational Education and Training in Germany – Assuring the Future* [Short Film]. Retrieved from the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training: <http://www.bibb.de/en/wlk32526.htm>.
- Interviews with Supervisors and Apprentices at *Deutsche Bank* and *Bosch* (**Handout 6.4.3 on Instructional Resource Disc**)
- Vocational Training Venn Diagram (**Handout 6.4.4 on Instructional Resource Disc**)

**PROCEDURE:****DAY 1:**

**Anticipatory Set:** The teacher should ask the students if they have any thoughts about their vocational plans and the preparation they would need to achieve these goals. The teacher may want to enlist the involvement of a guidance counselor in a brief discussion of career education. The students should generate a list of vocational choices and the pathway to each.

After completing the Anticipatory Set, the teacher should explain that in Germany, career education is structured quite differently than in the United States. The students should read then aloud the short article, *The Apprentice: Germany's Answer to Jobless Youth* (**Handout 6.4.1 on Instructional Resource Disc**) as an introduction to the German model.

The teacher may use a combination of the Deutsche Bank Dual Vocational Training PowerPoint (**PowerPoint 6.4.2 on Instructional Resource Disc**) and the 12-minute film *Vocational Education and Training in Germany – Assuring the Future* to present the different pathways that students may select in their vocational/occupational education. The PowerPoint (**PowerPoint 6.4.2 on Instructional Resource Disc**) graphically presents the dual system and provides a brief case study of Deutsche Bank's program. The film presents the basic elements of the German VET system such as collaboration with government and industry, the "two learning venues" principle, and qualifications that are recognized nation-wide.

For homework, the teacher should divide the class into two groups and assign each group the *Interviews with Supervisors and Apprentices at Deutsche Bank and Bosch* Handout (**Handout 6.4.3 on Instructional Resource Disc**) and instruct the students to take notes in preparation of the class discussion in the next class.

**DAY 2:**

The teacher should ask each group to describe the characteristics of the Apprentice System in Germany and the United States and he/she should write these on the board. At the end of the discussion, the students should identify the similarities and differences between the two. The teacher should distribute the Vocational Training Venn Diagram (**Handout 6.4.4 on Instructional Resource Disc**) to be completed during this exercise.

**WHOLE GROUP REFLECTION:**

- The teacher should facilitate a discussion about the merits and shortcomings of the German Vocational Education Training program (Apprentice System) and whether this would appeal to Americans if such a system were adopted in the United States. Information about German-US cooperation in this area can be found at the website of Germany's Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB), <http://www.bibb.de/en/wlk8621.htm>. American partners include the US Departments of Labor and Education as well as the American Association of Community Colleges.



**MODIFICATION:**

- Rather than a class discussion on the topic, the teacher may assign the students to write an essay in which they reflect on the German Vocational Education Training program and whether this would appeal to Americans if such a system were adopted in the United States.

**EXTENSION:**

- As part of a career education project, the students should research an American company or occupation and the educational preparation and training which are required for employment and compare and contrast this system with either that of Bosch or Deutsche Bank.

**Sources**

Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung (n.d.) Retrieved August 2012 from <http://www.bibb.de/de/wlk59743.htm>