

BE YOU

BUILD EFFICIENTLY YOUR OWN UNDERSTANDING



Funded by
the European Union

B.E.Y.O.U. GUIDE

FOR YOUTH AND YOUTH WORKERS





BUILD EFFICIENTLY YOUR OWN UNDERSTANDING

<https://projectbeyou.eu/>

Erasmus+ Programme – Strategic Partnership

Project No: **2023-2-RO01-KA220-YOU-000183045**

Project coordinated by: **SMART EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS Association**

59 Calea Severinului Street, Bl.1, Ap.1, TÂRGU JIU, ROMÂNIA

Partners



<https://www.sep-ngo.eu/>



<https://dorea.org/>



<https://www.wellbeinglab.org/>
<https://www.larpifiers.com/>

<https://europe4youth.eu/>

*The image of the cover page and those from the second chapter, for which the sources were not specified, were created with AI.

"Funded by the European Union. However, the views and opinions expressed belong exclusively to the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the European Union or the ANPCDEFP. Neither the European Union nor the ANPCDEFP can be held responsible for them"

What's this guide all about?

B.E.Y.O.U. – Build Efficiently Your Own Understanding isn't just a guide. It's more like a friendly companion that helps you explore who you are, find your voice, and make the most of your time (without boring you to sleep). We made it especially for young people like you—and for youth workers who want to support their growth in a fun and meaningful way.

What's inside?

Three super-useful chapters (short and sweet, we promise!) that are easy to read and full of real-life ideas:

🌟 Chapter 1 (created by WELLBEING LAB)– Self-confidence & Face-to-face Communication

This one's all about you—how to believe in yourself, speak up without hiding behind filters, and build real connections. Oh, and we haven't forgotten how you feel because your well-being matters as much as your voice.

🕒 Chapter 2 (created by SEP) – Time Management

It's not about boring schedules and endless to-do lists. It's about making space for what truly matters—school, friends, passions, and yes, rest too (sleep is sacred!).

🤝 Chapter 3 (created by EUROPE4YOUTH)– Collaboration & Teamwork

Because no one thrives alone, here, you'll discover how to work with others, listen actively, build ideas together, and become the kind of teammate everyone wants on their crew.

🧩 And the best part?

Each chapter can be downloaded and used independently—perfect for youth workers, teachers, or curious teens. You'll find everything (and more) on the project platform:

👉 <https://projectbeyou.eu/about/>

Table of Contents

<i>What's this guide all about?</i>	3
<i>CHAPTER I: "I COMMUNICATE BETTER BECAUSE I BELIEVE IN MYSELF"</i>	7
<i>INTRODUCTION</i>	8
<i>PART I. SELF-CONFIDENCE: ME: self-awareness, self-compassion - MY COCOON</i>	16
I. PURPOSE (SPIRIT)	16
I.1. Self-compassion	16
I.2. Purpose-Ikigai	19
II. THE HEART (EMOTIONS) - Emotional well-being and relationships	23
II.1. Meditation as a tool for self confidence (Gabor Mate)	23
II.2. Brene Brown: Atlas of the heart (wholeheartedness): emotions (wheel of emotions).....	25
III. BODY	28
III.1. Body awareness and Breathwork	28
III.2. YOGA AND VOICE PRACTICES.....	35
IV. MIND (UNDERSTANDING)	37
IV.1. Mindfulness as a Tool for Self-Awareness	37
IV.2. 12 Areas of Life Balance (Inspired by LifeBook by John Butcher)	38
IV.3. Identity, belonging and authenticity.....	40
<i>PART II. FACE TO FACE COMMUNICATION: ME-WE: GOING INTO THE WORLD</i>	47
I. Non-violent communication - Active Listening (Rosenberg)	47
1. Expressing ourselves honestly	48
2. Receiving emphatically.....	53
II. Power of non-verbal communication	55
<i>RESOURCES AND SUGGESTED READINGS</i>	60
<i>WORKSHOP OUTLINES OF CHAPTER I</i>	62
<i>I. WORKSHOP ON SELF-CONFIDENCE</i>	63
<i>II. WORKSHOP ON FACE-TO-FACE COMMUNICATION</i>	74
<i>CHAPTER II: "TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE"</i>	81
<i>1. Generation Z and its relationship with time</i>	82
1.1. Who is Generation Z?	82
1.2. How does Generation Z perceive time?	83
1.3. How does technology influence time management for Generation Z?.....	84
1.4. Why is time management important to you?	86
1.5. How time management influences your success at school and in your career.....	87
1.6. Time management: What can we learn from each other?.....	88
<i>2. Your time is precious: learn to protect yourself from "time thieves"</i>	90
<i>3. Setting priorities – the key to success in time management</i>	96
3.1. Prioritization tools	98
3.1.1. Peer Benchmarking	98

3.1.2.	Action Priorities Matrix	98
3.1.3.	The Eisenhower Matrix.....	100
3.1.4.	TheMoSCoW Methode	103
3.1.5.	ABC Rule	106
4.	<i>Agenda of the day</i>	109
4.1.	Time blocking, the method that saves your day.....	110
4.2.	Stages of the elaboration of the Agenda	112
5.	<i>How to tame your time</i>	117
5.1.	Parkinson's Law: Why do you do everything at the last minute?	117
5.2.	Pomodoro Technique	118
6.	<i>Conclusions</i>	123
7.	<i>Bibliographic references</i>	127
	PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES FOR YOUTH	130
	INTRODUCTION FOR PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES	131
1.	<i>MODULE I</i>	132
1.1.	Sequence 1. Identify and eliminate "time thieves"	132
1.2.	Sequence 2. Set priorities	136
2.	<i>MODULE II</i>	155
2.1.	Sequence 1. Elaboration of the day's agenda	155
2.2.	Sequence 2. Efficient use of working time	161
	CHAPTER III: "I Collaborate and Integrate"	166
1.	<i>Will Being Good at Teamwork Get Me Hired? – Competences of the 21st Century</i>	167
2.	<i>Yeah, But Where Can I Learn It? - How To Improve Your Competences</i>	169
3.	<i>Teamwork – How Does It Actually Work?</i>	173
4.	<i>Are You a Good Teamworker? Check Yourself!</i>	177
5.	<i>Group Development Models – How to Understand Others?</i>	181
5.1	Tuckman's Stages of Group Development.....	182
5.2	Lencioni Model	187
5.3	Grpi Model	194
5.4	Disc Model	197
6.	<i>Is There A Pilot On Board? - Role Of The Leader</i>	199
7.	<i>How to Handle Mobbing and Bullying in the Team</i>	201
8.	<i>Conflicts in the Team and Conflict Resolution</i>	204
	WORKSHOP SCENARIOS	208
	Intro: The Structure of the Workshop	209
	Part I: Understanding Group Development	209

Part II: Me as a Team Worker 218

Part III: Lencioni Teamwork Model..... 229

Part IV: Mobbing Within a Team..... 235

Part V: Energizers 238

CHAPTER I: "I COMMUNICATE BETTER BECAUSE I BELIEVE IN MYSELF"

**METHODS TO INCREASE SELF-CONFIDENCE
AND FACE-TO-FACE COMMUNICATION SKILLS
FOR GENERATION Z**

Theoretical part and workshop outlines

(created by WELLBEING LAB)

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the first chapter of the BE YOU Guide, a comprehensive resource designed to empower individuals on their journey towards self-discovery, self-confidence, and purposeful living. In an increasingly fast-paced and interconnected world, understanding who we are and what drives us has never been more essential. This guide offers a structured approach to exploring your inner self, aligning with your core values, and cultivating practices that enhance your overall well-being.

Whether you are at the beginning of your self-exploration journey or looking to deepen your understanding of yourself, this guide provides practical tools, exercises, and insights to support and inspire you every step of the way.

Purpose of this chapter

The first chapter of the BE YOU Guide aims to:

- **Facilitate Self-Discovery:** Provide frameworks and exercises that help you explore and understand your true self, including your passions, strengths, and aspirations.
- **Build Self-Confidence:** Equip you with strategies and practices to enhance your belief in your abilities and worth.
- **Cultivate Purpose:** Assist you in identifying and connecting with your life's purpose, leading to more meaningful and fulfilling experiences.
- **Enhance Well-being:** Introduce mindfulness and relaxation techniques to promote mental, emotional, and physical health.
- **Foster Connection:** Encourage deeper connections with others through shared experiences and reflective practices.

Key Definitions

Understanding the core concepts discussed in this guide is essential for maximising its benefits. Below are definitions of key terms that will be explored throughout the guide.

1. Self-Discovery

Self-Discovery is the process of gaining insight into your own character, values, beliefs, and desires. It involves exploring your inner world to understand what truly motivates and fulfils you. Through self-discovery, individuals can make more informed and authentic choices

that align with their true selves.

Importance: Engaging in self-discovery allows you to live more authentically, make decisions that resonate with your true desires, and fosters personal growth and satisfaction.

2. Self-Confidence

Self-Confidence refers to the belief in one's abilities, qualities, and judgement. It is the trust you have in yourself to handle various situations and challenges effectively. Self-confidence influences how you perceive yourself and how you are perceived by others.

Importance: High self-confidence empowers you to take on new challenges, pursue your goals, and recover from setbacks. It contributes to better performance, healthier relationships, and overall well-being.

3. Purpose

Purpose is the sense of meaning and direction that guides your actions and decisions. It is the overarching intention that drives you towards fulfilling and impactful goals. Discovering your purpose involves identifying what is most important to you and how you can contribute uniquely to the world.

Importance: Living with a clear purpose enhances motivation, resilience, and satisfaction. It helps prioritise actions and align daily activities with long-term goals, leading to a more meaningful and enriched life.

4. Core Values

Core Values are fundamental beliefs and principles that guide your behaviour and decision-making. They represent what is most important to you and serve as a personal compass in various aspects of life.

Importance: Recognizing and aligning with your core values ensures consistency and integrity in your actions. It aids in making choices that are true to yourself and fosters a sense of fulfilment and authenticity.

5. Mindfulness

Mindfulness is the practice of being fully present and engaged in the current moment, aware of your thoughts, feelings, and surroundings without judgement. It involves intentional focus and acceptance of the present experience.

Importance: Practising mindfulness reduces stress, enhances emotional regulation, improves focus, and promotes mental clarity. It contributes to better decision-making and a deeper appreciation of everyday experiences.

6. Well-being

Well-being encompasses the holistic experience of health and happiness, including physical, mental, emotional, and social aspects. It involves maintaining a balanced and satisfying state of being through healthy practices and fulfilling relationships.

Importance: Prioritising well-being leads to increased resilience, productivity, and life satisfaction. It supports overall health and enables individuals to thrive in various life domains.

Guide Structure

The BE YOU Guide is structured into several interactive sections and exercises, each designed to delve deeper into the facets of self-discovery and personal development.

1. Workshop on Self-Confidence

- **Objective:** To explore and strengthen your self-confidence through reflective and interactive exercises.
- **Key Activities:**
 - *Back-to-Back Sharing Exercise:* A powerful practice to uncover personal passions and aspirations by sharing and listening in a supportive setting.
 - *Commitment Statements:* Defining actionable steps to integrate newfound insights into daily life.

2. Values Exploration

- **Objective:** To identify and align with your core values, ensuring your actions and decisions reflect what is truly important to you.
- **Key Activities:**
 - *Values Identification Exercise:* Reflecting and prioritising personal values.
 - *Alignment Assessment:* Evaluating how well your current lifestyle reflects these values and identifying areas for adjustment.

3. Mindfulness and Relaxation Practices

- **Objective:** To introduce techniques that promote mental clarity, stress reduction, and

emotional balance.

- Key Activities:
 - *Body Scan Meditation*: A guided practice to enhance bodily awareness and relaxation.
 - *Breathing Exercises*: Simple techniques to centre the mind and alleviate 71 tension during daily routines.

4. Purpose Discovery

- Objective: To help you articulate and connect with your life’s purpose, providing direction and motivation.
- Key Activities:
 - *Ikigai Exploration*: Utilising the Japanese concept of Ikigai to find the intersection between what you love, what you are good at, what the world needs, and what can be rewarding.
 - *Future Visioning*: Envisioning and planning steps towards living a purpose-driven life.

5. Reflection and Integration

- Objective: To consolidate learning and plan for ongoing personal development.
- Key Activities:
 - *Reflective Journaling*: Documenting experiences and insights gained throughout the guide.
 - *Action Planning*: Creating a personalised roadmap for continued growth and self-discovery.

How to Use This Guide

- Engage Actively: Approach each section with openness and willingness to explore and reflect deeply.
- Take Your Time: Progress through the exercises at your own pace, allowing sufficient time for reflection and integration.
- Be Honest: Practise honesty with yourself during reflections and discussions to maximise personal growth.
- Stay Open-Minded: Embrace new concepts and techniques, even if they are unfamiliar or challenging.
- Seek Support: If possible, work through some exercises with a partner or group to

enrich the experience through shared insights.

- **Revisit Regularly:** Return to exercises and reflections periodically to assess growth and realign with your evolving self.

Conclusion

The journey of self-discovery and personal growth is ongoing and deeply rewarding. The BE YOU Guide serves as a companion and resource on this journey, offering structured and evidence-based practices to help you uncover and embrace your true self. By engaging with this guide, you are taking meaningful steps towards greater self-awareness, confidence, purpose, and well-being.

Embark on this journey with curiosity and compassion for yourself, knowing that every step you take brings you closer to living authentically and fully.

Welcome to the journey of being you.

GUIDING VALUES



***Source:** the image was created by Well-being LAB. The four areas of the wheel are based on ChangemakerXchange methodology for its internal global facilitators pool, which one of the co-founders of Well-being LAB is a part of.*

When we consider well-being, we approach it from a holistic perspective, where the interconnectedness of the four areas - Mind, Body, Heart, and Purpose - becomes the centrepiece. This means that each aspect of our well-being is deeply linked to others, and true well-being or what others would call “wholebeing” arises when all four areas are nurtured together. The goal here isn’t to achieve perfect balance in all areas, but to ensure that no aspect of our well-being is neglected. It’s about maintaining awareness and care for each area, so that we can live healthier, happier, and more meaningful lives.

When we talk about well-being, the word “balance” often comes up - questions like “how can we balance our personal and professional lives?” or “Is that kind of balance even possible?” arise. However, we believe that the goal shouldn’t be to reach perfect balance across all areas of life, but to embrace the constant movement and change in our experiences and finding an equilibrium in the areas that matter for us, that makes us thrive.

You can ask yourself this: - whenever you strive for perfection, does it make you fulfilled or does it add more stress? What sacrifices are you making to reach that level of perfection? And do you feel more at ease when you push for perfection in everything, or when you allow things to flow naturally?

As our personal and professional lives become increasingly interconnected and the line between them grows ever thinner, striving for a perfect balance between the two can feel unrealistic and extremely stressful. Instead of chasing that imaginary balance, we can shift our focus to ensuring that all four areas contributing to our well-being - Mind, Body, Heart, and Purpose - are nourished, with none of them being neglected. This helps us maintain a more holistic sense of well-being and potentially can eliminate a lot of stress and pressure from our lives.

This doesn’t mean that we will always be able to dedicate equal time to each area every week. There will be times, like during exam periods, when focusing more on one area - such as studying for exams - will be necessary, which might leave less time for other areas like working out and taking care of our body or relationships, like going out and meeting a good friend for a cup of coffee. And that’s okay. The key here is to recognize that this is temporary. The exam period soon will be over and once you get through that busy period, you can shift your focus back and give extra time, attention, and care to the areas you might have neglected. It’s all about adjusting to the constant flow, movement and changes of life and ensuring that, over time, each area of well-being gets the nourishment it needs.

Imagine that your well-being is a scale with four areas, each represented by a different weight or dial.

Are all four areas being nourished, or is one area receiving more attention than the others?

Now, let's explore each area of well-being and see what that means to us and our lives.

1. **Mind:** This area represents mental health and cognitive well-being. On this scale, you might adjust this dial by engaging in activities that unlock your creative potential, stimulate your intellect and learning, manage and reduce stress. It's not just about being free from mental illness or burnout, but about actively nourishing your mind, so that you can thrive and flourish at ease.
2. **Body:** This dial reflects physical health. It's about cultivating a loving relationship with our bodies by adopting healthy eating habits, staying physically active and getting enough rest. It's not just about being free from physical illness, but about nourishing your body to keep it strong, healthy and vital in the long run.
3. **Heart:** This area covers emotional health and relationships. You might balance this dial by nurturing and building compassionate and supportive relationships with others, yourself and the world around you. It's not about avoiding difficult feelings and emotions, but learning how to embrace, process and integrate the full spectrum of human emotions.
4. **Purpose:** This dial symbolises our quest for meaning, our innate human desire to connect with our authentic selves and something greater than us. It represents that part of us seeking a deeper sense of fulfilment and belonging, and finding a reason to wake up each morning with joy. In Japan, this is known as **'Ikigai'**, a concept that encourages discovering what truly matters to you in life and pursuing it with passion and joy.

As mentioned earlier, the goal with this scale isn't to keep each dial at the same level all the time. Instead, it's about making sure none of the dials is completely neglected. During various phases of life, you may need to shift your focus and adjust the dials to align with your current needs and priorities. Balancing these dials helps maintain overall well-being, ensuring that each area gets the attention it needs when it's most important.

In this chapter, we will delve deeper into each area of well-being and explore how they can

enhance our self-confidence, and help us live healthier, more fulfilled, and happier lives. We will also share our favourite suggestions and tools that we use personally to nurture our Mind, Body, Heart and Purpose.

PART I. SELF-CONFIDENCE: *ME: self-awareness, self-compassion - MY COCOON*

I. PURPOSE (SPIRIT)

I.1. Self-compassion

The relationship we have with ourselves is a crucial and essential element of wellbeing. It shapes the way we interact with the world and others. Research shows that high levels of self-compassion are connected to increased feelings of happiness, optimism, curiosity and connectedness, as well as decreased anxiety, depression, rumination and fear of failure. But what is compassion and how can we develop it in our lives, but also give it to ourselves?

The word compassion comes from latin, the term refers to how we're with (com) suffering (passion). It helps us connect with the others in a non-judgemental way, to be with them through their suffering, but not trying to save them or solve their problems, but trust their abilities and resources for doing so. **Also it helps us realise that suffering, failure, and imperfection is part of the shared human experience, and that are valuable lessons to learn from these challenging experiences.**

Compassion is a virtue, a quality that brings us together in a heart-to-heart connection. There are **three main elements of compassion: mindfulness, common humanity, and kindness** (Neff, K. 2023). There is a universality in our human experience, both when it comes to beautiful or difficult moments, and becoming aware of this principle of our shared humanity helps us to develop compassion, to not feel isolated or different, to not feel we are the only ones going through a certain situation, but it is shared, it is lived in different ways or at different times by all humans. This can help us tap into the feeling of belonging and interconnectedness.

Compassion is a valuable resource, turning it towards ourselves can improve the quality of our life, but also can facilitate the access to our internal resources. As Neff (2023) states “self-compassion refers to being supportive toward oneself when experiencing suffering or pain—be it caused by personal mistakes and inadequacies or external life challenges”. **It has 6 components: self-kindness versus self-judgement, common humanity versus isolation, and mindfulness versus over-identification** (Neff, K. 2023).

- **Self-kindness** means putting an end to the self-criticism and meeting ourselves with

- genuine care, for example - stopping for one moment to acknowledge “this (what I am going through) is really hard, how can I best take care of myself in these moments? What do I need?”. It is a way of being emotionally available for ourselves.
- The **common humanity** principle helps us connect with others, rather than feeling isolated. When we do something “wrong”, or struggle, we tend to isolate and feel ashamed, thus separating ourselves more from the others and the emotional support that we could get.
 - **Mindfulness** is the approach that helps us get closer to our own pain, to become aware of it, from an objective perspective. Mindfulness is a type of balanced awareness that neither avoids nor exaggerates the discomfort of our present-moment experience (Shapiro et al. 2006). We need this awareness to be able to deal with our struggles and go beyond them. Avoiding our emotions and pain, won’t solve the problem, it only postpones it.

It is said, we are our worst enemy, we can be or tend to be much more judgemental and harsh with ourselves than with others. We tend to set unrealistic expectations and are prone to have a more negative evaluation of ourselves. These tendencies are rooted in past experiences, but also in the erroneous self-perception developed when we were kids - children in the beginning of their lives tend to believe that what happens in the world, how their parents feel and so on is because of them and their parents reactions is a direct reflection of the their worth and value. To believe, as a child, that “it is my fault, it is because of me”, is in fact a survival mechanism that gives space for hope to be present, when, in fact, one has barely any control over the situation. If whatever happens at home or at school, for example, it is because of me, then I can do something to prevent it, to make things better, to make my parents happy, to make a situation stop, to get the attention I need, etc.. For example, the narrative “if someone is mean to me, must be because I deserve it” is a very common false belief present in our psyche, that influences our self-perception and further development.

Healing our relationship with ourselves, becomes an essential step towards wellbeing, towards developing self-confidence and tapping into our authenticity and true potential.

Simple practices can help us reflect on our relationship with ourselves, and see the aspects of it that we would like to change in order to bring more self-compassion to it. NVC (non-violent communication, see second part of the document) is a powerful tool used in developing self-compassion. It helps us restructure the evaluation of ourselves and reframe

the language we use. We want to have a positive contribution to the world, thus mistakes can make us be very critical of ourselves, promoting self-hatred, rather than self-understanding. It is critical to know how to evaluate events and conditions in ways that help us learn and make ongoing choices that serve us. Self-hatred does not promote learning, on the contrary it promotes aggression, anxiety and depression.

We can use NVC principles to heal our inner dialogue. For example, we can transform our negative statements into compassionate observations and requests. Instead of using harsh criticism, we can reframe our thoughts in a way that acknowledges the efforts we have made and encourage growth instead of guilt and shame.

Practice: Self-compassion break (Neff, K. 2023)

Bring to mind a situation that is challenging, allow yourself to feel the stress or suffering brought by that event. Remember the 3 principles of compassion: mindfulness, common humanity and kindness.

- Mindfulness - acknowledge the difficulty you are in and say to yourself - “This is really challenging”, “this hurts”, or “this is a moment of suffering”
- Common humanity - remember that “Suffering is a part of life”, “other people feel this way”
- Kindness - ask yourself “What do I need to hear right now to express kindness to myself?” or say to yourself “May I learn to accept myself as I am”, “May I forgive myself”, “May I be patient with myself”

Use this practice any time you need, throughout the day, or while reflecting or journaling, make it a usual practice, to learn to develop a different narrative and inner dialogue.

Practice 2: Treat yourself as your best friend

- Start by thinking of your closest friend who goes through a difficult situation and feels really bad about themselves. How would you respond to your friend in this situation

(especially when you're at your best)? Write down your thoughts and the tone of voice in which you typically talk to your friend.
- Think about times when you struggle and feel bad about yourself. How do you speak to yourself? What type of thoughts and words do you use? What is the tone of voice? Write down your reflections.

- Read both texts, do you notice any difference? If yes, ask yourself why? What factors or fears come into play that lead you to treat yourself and others so differently? What makes you deserve a different treatment than your friend?
- Write a new text, imagining that you are your best friend, and you respond to yourself in the same way as to your friend. What changed? How would this approach change in the way you feel? What would happen if you treated yourself as if you were your best friend?

The journey to self-discovery and authenticity can bring us face to face with many aspects of ourselves, and maybe we won't like all of them, but it is necessary to look at them with love and compassion, to become aware of who we are, what we need, what is our purpose and what we want to give to the world we live in. It is crucial as well to learn to motivate ourselves, to be emotionally available, to have patience and be kind, as life is full of uncertainty and unexpected turns, which can be perceived as challenging, but still have a potential to support personal growth.

I.2. Purpose-Ikigai

According to the Japanese, everyone has their own Ikigai. Some have already discovered it, while others are still searching for it. Our Ikigai lies dormant within us, waiting to be awakened. People living on Okinawa Island, Japan, where the highest number of centenarians are found, believe that our Ikigai is the reason we get up in the morning. This concept is also associated with longevity and overall happiness and well-being. It encourages people to live a life aligned with our true passions and values.

Ikigai combines the ideas of "iki" (life) and "gai" (worth or value), translating to "a reason for being." It's the idea of having a purpose that makes life worthwhile and brings joy.

It's said that when we connect with, embody, and express our purpose—or what some might call our "calling in life"—it helps us live more meaningful lives, allowing us to connect with ourselves and others on a deeper level. Researchers Héctor García and Francesc Miralles have also found that it increases the likelihood of living a longer, healthier life.

However, we understand that searching for your purpose can feel quite stressful, especially if you're unsure about what you want to do with your life or are at a crossroads and feeling lost. And if we put a lot of pressure on ourselves to find that one true purpose, it can become even overwhelming.

Over the past decade, we have worked with thousands of youth globally, supporting them and following their journey in the quest for meaning. We have witnessed their beautiful inspiration, energy, and motivation as they seek to discover their passions and create lives aligned with their heart's desires. We have also discovered how different stages and experiences in life can lead us to different passions and how our purpose can change. Therefore, to lift the pressure of our shoulders, bring more flow and ease into our lives, when we talk about purpose, we look at it from the perspective that some people might have one purpose in their lives, while for others their purpose can change over the years.

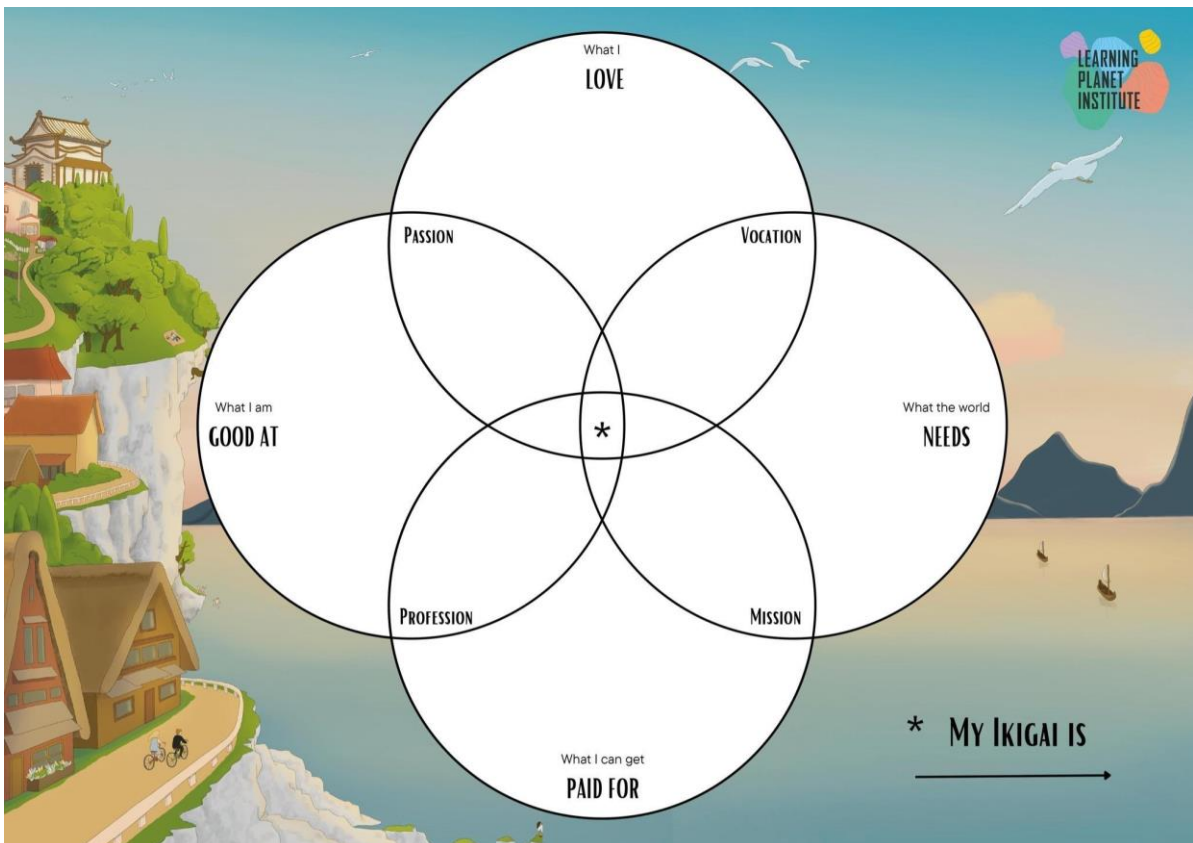
What matters most, regardless of what stage of life you find yourself in, is to pursue what brings you joy and fulfilment. What we believe is equally important is to remind ourselves that we are all interconnected with each other and the natural world. And as long as we bring empathy and compassion to our actions, support one another, and nurture the well-being of all living beings, we have the potential and power to create a more harmonious life for ourselves, those around us, and the environment. So, where do we begin?

Ikigai lies at the intersection of four key elements:

1. **What You Love (Passion):** Activities that bring you joy and fulfilment. What makes you excited? Which activities make you lose track of time? Is there a specific topic you find yourself drawn to and wanting to explore it deeper?
2. **What You Are Good At (Profession):** Skills and talents you excel in. What are you naturally good at? What seems easy for you? What type of activities do you feel gives you energy and satisfaction?
3. **What the World Needs (Mission):** How you can contribute to others or society. Thinking about what's happening in your community, city, or country, what do you think needs to change or improve? What have you overcome and learnt in your life? How can you use your experience and learnings to help others who perhaps are struggling with the same issues?
4. **What You Can Be Paid For (Vocation):** Activities or skills that provide financial stability. Think about people you know, who you respect and admire related to the cause you are interested in. How do they earn their living? What kind of work do you love doing from which you could make a living from? What skills or talents do you have that are needed for others?

Finding your ikigai means discovering where these elements overlap in your life. When they align, they lead to a fulfilling and meaningful life, where you wake up with a sense of purpose and joy each day.

Now take some time to write down your reflections. Below you can find the Ikigai diagram. You can print it if you wish so, draw your own diagram in your journal or on your laptop.



Source: Learning planet institute

Once you have finished filling in your Ikigai diagram, to explore your purpose further, we invite you to do a very simple, yet profound exercise. The exercise is called ‘‘Back2back’’ and to do it, you will need to invite a friend or a colleague with whom you feel comfortable doing this exercise as it can’t be done on your own. The exercise can help you become more aware and understand even better what drives you in life, and what you love doing. To prepare yourself, try to find a space where you and your friend won’t be interrupted for the next 30-60 min and will both feel comfortable. You will need a sheet of paper, pen and a timer to track the time.

To start with, sit with your friend back to back, you can choose to sit on the ground or on

the chairs. The most important thing is that you sit back to back, feeling the closeness of your friend, but not facing each other. Why is that important? When we face each other, our facial expressions might unconsciously influence us and at times even block us from truly sharing what's on our hearts vs when we sit back to back, we feel the presence of our friend, knowing that he or she is listening to us, but his or her body language won't influence us. Instead, sitting back to back helps us reach the spaces in ourselves and our hearts, which we are not able to reach or simply don't have time for in our daily life.

When you have prepared yourself and the space in which you are, you can choose who will be the listener and who will be the speaker. There will be two rounds, so both of you will take the roles of both at some point, - the speaker and the listener. You just have to decide who wants to start the first round as a speaker. The listener's role is simply to listen with absolute presence and write down everything that she or he hear the speaking telling, while the speaker needs to speak for 7 min answering one simple question:

Imagine that tomorrow you wake up in the morning and you are told that from this moment onwards you have to choose one thing, which you would do for the rest of your life and why. What would you do for the rest of your life and why?

And that's it. That's the only question you need to answer in those 7 minutes. We invite you to not overthink it or question why this specific question and not the other. By the end of the exercise you will find your own meaning and reasoning for it. You might even be surprised by your discoveries. Enjoy the process and take it as it comes. One step at a time.

You might also wonder why 7 minutes? We have tested this exercise with different timings and discovered that 7 minutes is that perfect sweet spot - not too short and not too long. At some point in those 7 minutes, there might be the time of silence. It might feel that you don't have anything else to say. Allow the silence to be and keep on going. What we discovered is that the silent moment is the moment of transition when we unconsciously switch - from speaking from the mind to speaking from the heart. Some real gems from the deepest corners of ourselves might come out from those silent moments. What the listener can do at the silent moment is to ask the same question again: what would you do for the rest of your life and why?

After 7 minutes are over, you switch the roles - the speaker becomes the listener and the listener becomes the speaker.

Once you both have spoken, you can now face each other and exchange the papers where each of you have been writing about the other. You can choose to read the paper yourself, however, it can be even more powerful, if the person who was listening to you, reads what he or she heard you saying. It's your choice to decide how you want to approach the process.

Below we are providing you with some reflection questions, which you can use after you have finished sharing what you heard each other saying.

Was there something very difficult about this activity? Was it easier to be the listener or the speaker? Was there anything that surprised you? Did you learn something new about yourself or your partner? What steps can you take to get closer to your purpose?

Now what's left to do is to enjoy the journey and exploration of your purpose and passions in life. We hope that these exercises will help you get closer to understanding what drives you in life, what you love doing the most and what brings to your life flow, health, well-being and happiness.

As Georgie Elliot said: **“It is never too late to be what you might have been”**

II. THE HEART (EMOTIONS) - Emotional well-being and relationships

“To be beautiful means to be yourself. You don't need to be accepted by others. You need to accept yourself” - Thich Nhat Hanh

II.1. Meditation as a tool for self confidence (Gabor Mate)

Self-confidence is a key element in how we express ourselves and connect with others. It shapes the way we communicate our thoughts, emotions, and needs. When we feel confident, we're more likely to engage in conversations that are authentic, clear, and impactful. But how do we cultivate that inner confidence, especially when faced with self-doubt or fear? Dr. Gabor Maté, a renowned expert in trauma, stress, and mental health, suggests that meditation can be a powerful practice to develop self-confidence from within.

Meditation, as Dr. Maté teaches, is not just about relaxation or clearing the mind. It is a practice that allows us to connect deeply with ourselves, to become aware of the thoughts and emotions that often undermine our self-belief. We all carry negative patterns of self-talk—those voices that say, “I'm not good enough” or “What if I fail?” Over time, these

narratives can erode our confidence. However, through meditation, we can learn to observe these thoughts without getting caught up in them. This mindful awareness helps us see that our thoughts are just that—thoughts, not truths.

By regularly practising meditation, we begin to cultivate a sense of inner calm and self-acceptance. We stop identifying with the internal critic and start developing a more compassionate relationship with ourselves. This is essential because how we communicate with others is deeply influenced by how we communicate with ourselves. If our internal dialogue is filled with harsh judgments or fears, it becomes much harder to express ourselves confidently in the external world. Meditation gives us the space to pause, to be with ourselves in a non-judgmental way, and to reframe our thoughts with kindness and patience.

As we meditate, we become more aware of our breath, our body, and our emotions in the present moment. This awareness helps ground us, making us less reactive and more thoughtful in our interactions. Instead of second-guessing ourselves or worrying about how others will perceive us, we become more focused on the message we want to share. Meditation strengthens our ability to communicate from a place of authenticity and self-assurance, allowing us to express our ideas with clarity and conviction.

Moreover, as Dr. Maté highlights, meditation helps us build resilience in the face of discomfort. Whether it's public speaking, difficult conversations, or standing up for ourselves, these moments often trigger stress and anxiety. Through meditation, we learn to sit with discomfort, acknowledging it without letting it control us. This emotional resilience directly translates into better communication. When we believe in ourselves, we can navigate challenging conversations with ease, staying calm and clear even when emotions run high.

In essence, meditation creates a powerful shift from self-doubt to self-belief. It reminds us that we are not defined by our fears, past mistakes, or negative self-talk. Instead, it allows us to embrace our full potential and communicate with confidence, knowing that our voice matters.

Practice: Self-Confidence Meditation

Here is a simple meditation practice that can help strengthen your self-confidence and enhance your communication skills:

1. Find a Quiet Space: Sit comfortably in a quiet place, where you won't be disturbed

- for at least 10 minutes. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths.
2. **Focus on Your Breath:** Begin to focus on your breath, noticing the sensation of the air entering and leaving your body. Let your breathing become slow and steady.
 3. **Observe Your Thoughts:** As you sit quietly, notice any thoughts that come up, especially those related to self-doubt or fear. Instead of engaging with these thoughts, simply observe them as they arise and let them pass like clouds in the sky.
 4. **Affirmations for Confidence:** After a few minutes, bring your focus to affirming statements like, “I am enough,” “My voice is valuable,” or “I communicate with clarity and confidence.” Silently repeat these affirmations, allowing them to sink in.
 5. **Visualise Success:** Picture yourself in a situation where you feel confident, whether it’s speaking in a meeting, having an important conversation, or sharing your ideas with others. Visualise yourself handling the situation with ease and assurance.
 6. **Return to Your Breath:** After a few minutes of affirmations and visualisation, return your attention to your breath. Gently bring your awareness back to the present moment before opening your eyes.

Use this practice whenever you need to centre yourself before a conversation, presentation, or any situation that challenges your confidence. Over time, you will notice a shift in how you approach communication, grounded in a deeper belief in yourself.

Through meditation, we gain the tools to believe in ourselves more fully, which allows us to communicate more effectively, authentically, and with greater impact. By trusting our voice and understanding our worth, we naturally improve the quality of our relationships and interactions with others.

II.2. Brene Brown: Atlas of the heart (wholeheartedness): emotions (wheel of emotions)

When we think and talk about the well-being of our heart, the first thing that comes to mind is emotions and our emotional well-being. We all experience a wide range of emotions on a daily basis. It’s what makes us human—the ability to feel so deeply. Emotions are powerful and can greatly influence our choices and behaviours. When we connect with our emotions in a healthy way, they can bring us wisdom and inspiration. However, if we struggle to express our emotions, try to push away difficult feelings, or become overwhelmed by the intensity of emotions we experience, it can lead to significant suffering.

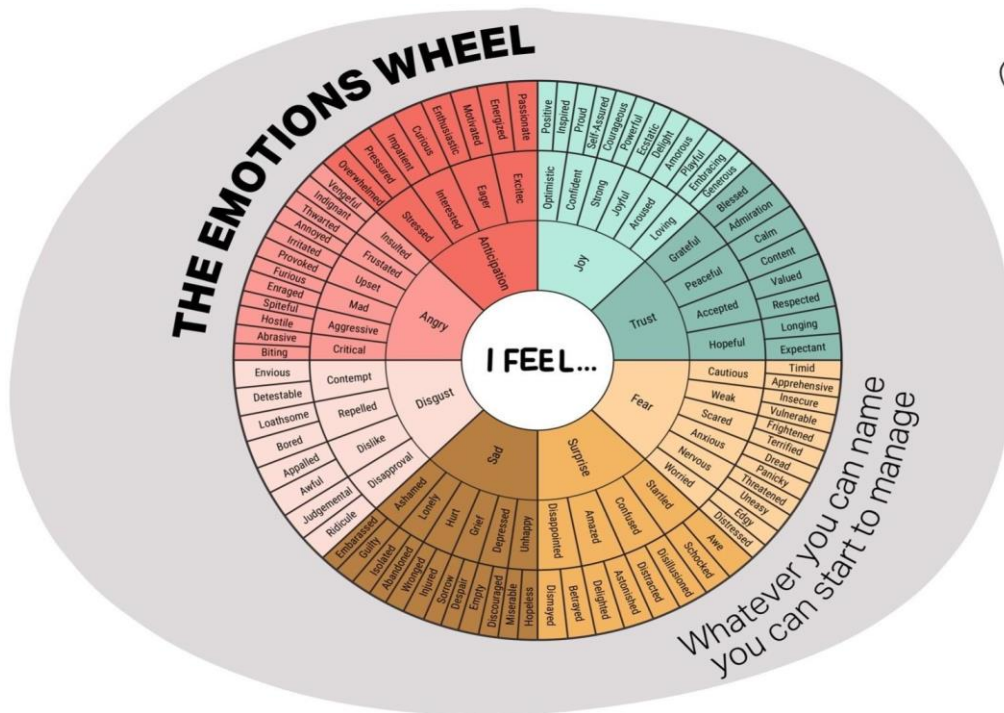
In her research on emotions, Brené Brown says that understanding and acknowledging how our feelings, thoughts and behaviours work together, helps us connect on a deeper level with ourselves and others around us. She emphasises that embracing and accepting all of our emotions, even the most difficult ones like anger, sadness, and heartbreak, enables us to embrace our authentic selves, build resilience, and live a wholehearted life.

In addition to that, the research and work of Gabor Maté, a renowned Canadian physician and author shows that suppressing our emotions can have serious consequences, including making us physically and mentally unwell. Maté emphasises that unprocessed emotions can manifest as stress, anxiety, and even physical illness, highlighting the importance of acknowledging and addressing our emotional experiences for overall health and well-being.

So if we know that learning to express, regulate, and accept our emotions can significantly impact our lives, where should we begin?

A good starting point is to recognize that we experience a wide range of emotions every day and learn how to name them. As Brené Brown puts it, “Language shows us that naming an experience doesn’t give the experience more power, it gives us the power of understanding and meaning.”

Below we are providing you with a Wheel of Emotions, which was created by the Recipes of Wellbeing, inspired by Dr Robert Plutchik’s petal model. This wheel consists of 8 primary emotions (joy, trust, fear, surprise, sadness, disgust, anger, and anticipation) and many more subtle emotions. It gives us the opportunity to expand our emotional vocabulary and recognize that there are far more emotions than we might have imagined. You can use this wheel for yourself to better understand and name your own emotions whenever needed. You can also use it in your personal relationships and with your colleagues to better understand what others are experiencing, check the group's mood, or address conflicts. Allowing people to express and name their emotions can increase empathy and compassion, which can ease conflicts and help resolve them more smoothly. We’ll explore this in more detail in the second section of this chapter.



Source: Recipes for Wellbeing

Now that we have a better awareness of our emotions and can name them more easily, the question remains: How can we truly accept and embrace the most painful emotions, such as anger, sadness, hurt, and grief? The truth is there is no quick fix for dealing with deep sadness or heartbreak, and no amount of knowledge or skills can make these feelings and experiences less painful. However, the insights and tools we share can lead to a sense of empowerment, giving you control over how you react, feel, and act. Paradoxically, accepting, surrendering and embracing the most difficult human emotions can also lead to a deeper sense of love, belonging, gratitude and connection - with yourself and others.

From Buddhist teachings in Thailand, we learnt that recognizing the impermanence and constant change of everything, including our emotions, can give us relief and help us navigate life’s experiences with greater ease. Have you ever had days when you felt deep sadness in one moment, and the next moment it shifted to laughter or even joy later in the day?

We certainly had those days and many more days like this are ahead of us. Do you see what we mean by impermanence of things and constant flow in life?

If you want to explore how many emotions you experience in a single day, try this simple

yet effective exercise:

Throughout the day, whenever you notice an emotion, acknowledge it out loud to yourself three times. For example, if you feel joyful, say out loud three times ‘I feel joyful. I feel joyful. I feel joyful’. Repeat this process for every emotion you experience during the day. Now, we know it might seem strange or silly at first, you might even question what’s the point of all this and that’s okay. This exercise shows you how quickly your emotions can change and how many different feelings you experience in a single day. You might find it truly surprising. This simple practice of recognising the impermanence of emotions can also make it easier to accept and embrace all our feelings. Try it. There is nothing to lose, isn’t it?

Brene Brown says that when we learn how to accept our emotions, we get closer to understanding how others might feel and connecting to ourselves and others with an open heart. And that in itself makes this journey worthwhile.

III. BODY

III.1. Body awareness and Breathwork

“The body is the shore on the ocean of being” - Sufi (anonymous)

As human beings, we live and experience this world through our bodies. To be able to see, to feel, to taste, to experience, to interact with others, to connect, to act and to create are possible only through the body. Crucial to our well-being and health is the connection with this unique body that we inhabit for a limited period of time. How do I feel, how does my body feel? What do I think and feel about the Self-system that I have built? are some questions that even if we don’t consciously think about them, still affect our inner state. As long as we can develop a positive perception of our self-system, the way we interact with others and the way we relate to life will be utterly changed. Nowadays, many young people struggle with low self-esteem, a weak sense of self, or a negative self-definition, but the way towards well-being, mental health, emotional stability, maturity, and conscious and authentic engagement with others, requires a restructuring of our Self-system, as John Churchill points out, “to the extent that when we look at ourselves we see a piece of artwork”.

All starts with the body as contemporary neuroscience tells us: **our sense of self is anchored**

in the connection with our bodies (Kolk van der, B. 2015). To know oneself requires the ability to feel and interpret our physical sensations, and from this understanding, we can navigate safely and enhancingly through life. As Bessel van der Kolk states in his book “The Body Keeps the Score”: “You can be fully in charge of your life only if you can acknowledge the reality of your body, in all its visceral dimensions.” Our bodies store all our experiences, past ones, recent ones, present ones, even those we can’t recall mentally. All that we have experienced stays in the memory of our body and creates a general physiological state, a certain sensitivity to specific stimuli, a level of tension or relaxation, a sense of safety or danger, a particular longing and search for connection or on the contrary a tendency to isolate and withdraw. All our emotions are in fact translated into chemical reactions in our bodies and are controlled by the complex cooperation of neurotransmitters and hormones. Charles Darwin (1998) writes about mammalian emotions (thus humans too) as being rooted in biology, and he sees them as an essential source of motivation towards initiating action. The Latin word for emotions is “emovere” - meaning to move out, therefore our emotions give action and direction to whatever we do, primarily through our face and body. The facial expressions and physical movements reflect our mental state and intention to others.

At the core of reclaiming our sense of self is **Awareness**. The body awareness puts us in contact with our inner world. The simple fact of observing whatever we experience be it stress, frustration, or nervousness, helps us shift our perspective, thus opening up the space for new behavioural possibilities, instead of our usual automatic reactions. From an early age we develop a personal way of relating and interacting with the world, as time passes we develop behavioural and thinking patterns (most of them are developed as survival strategies,), which makes us react in an automatic pre-defined way in the present moment. **Instead of acting we are reacting, instead of creating we are avoiding.** Growing up and becoming adults means learning to be responsible. Gabor Mate (2019) sees it as the “ability to respond with awareness to the circumstances of our lives, rather than just reacting.” For him, this is a way to be in charge of our lives, and he goes further saying that **“true responsibility starts with self-awareness”**.

Of course, there are difficult emotions and feelings that most people would prefer not to experience, and would choose to avoid, but there are also experiences that are overwhelming. In these situations, our bodies are very wise and immediately **activate survival strategies (such as dissociation, numbing, and freezing among others) that**

help us stay alive. The cost of these strategies is dire in the long term. For example, numbing decreases the awareness of our inner landscape and experiences, and with this, we also lose the sense of being fully sensually alive. On the other hand, trying to avoid feelings or sensations in our bodies makes us more prone to feeling overwhelmed by them; understanding what and why we feel a certain way can help us be able to choose how we want to act, instead of just giving in to the intense previously ingrained behavioural patterns. **Mindfulness is an essential tool to help us pay attention to our inner experience, to our bodily sensations, and recognize the transitory nature of our feelings,** noticing the flow of our emotions and thus increasing our control over them.

Befriending our inner world

Recent research in neuroscience shows “that the only way we can change the way we feel is by becoming aware of our inner experience and learning to befriend what is going inside ourselves.” (Kolk, van der B. 2015). It is a process of reestablishing ownership of our body and mind - of our self, as Kolk says “only by getting in touch with your body, by connecting viscerally with yourself, can you regain a sense of who you are, your priorities and values”.

There are multiple practices and exercises one can do to become aware of what one feels, to allow the feelings to be without being overwhelmed, ashamed or frustrated, but the essential steps are the following:

1. Finding ways to stay calm and focused
2. Learning to keep that calm as you face images, thoughts, or sensations that trigger past memories
3. Being aware of the present moment, in a state of aliveness and meaningful engagement with others
4. Being fully honest with yourself.

We have the capacity to deal with very difficult and intense emotions, but what helps the most is to remain conscious that what we experience is constantly shifting. It happens often that when we experience a difficult emotion, we have the impression that it will stay with us forever, we forget that it is transitory. Remembering that all we experience is in a flow, thoughts, emotions, and feelings, come and go, they are transitory, and we can welcome them in as guests, knowing that they are only visiting, as Rumi says in his beautiful poem *The Guest House*:

This being human is a guest house. Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,

some momentary

awareness comes as

an unexpected

visitor.

Welcome and

entertain them all!

Even if they're a

crowd of sorrows,

who violently sweep

your house

empty of its furniture,

still, treat each guest honourably.

He may be

clearing you

out for some

new delight.

The dark thought, the

shame, the malice, meet

them at the door laughing,

and invite them in.

Be grateful for

*whoever comes,
because each has
been sent
as a guide from beyond.*

Jalaluddin Rumi

To be able to see our difficult experiences and emotions as “guides from beyond” who have gifts in the form of teachings for us, is a sign of maturity and wisdom, being humble and ready to learn from life, as to become the best version of ourselves.

Practice:

- Start by allowing your mind to focus on the sensations you have in your body, and notice how these sensations can respond to slight changes in your breathing rhythm, in your body posture or shifts in thinking.
- Once you have observed them, you can start labelling them - “When I feel sad, I feel heaviness in my chest”
- Focus on that sensation and breathe deeply - noticing what changes in the sensation as you breathe

Practising mindfulness calms down the sympathetic nervous system, so that you are less likely to be thrown into fight-or-flight mode. As Peter Levine (1997) says: “**The past doesn't matter when we learn how to be present, every moment becomes new and creative**” highlighting the power of befriending our emotions and all the experiences we carry inside our bodies.

Vagus nerve and Breathwork

Somatic Experiencing and trauma work mention two different approaches to regulating the nervous system: top-down and bottom-up. Top-down regulation “involves strengthening the capacity of the watchtower to monitor your body’s sensations”, practices such as mindfulness and yoga are extremely useful in this case. The bottom-up regulation “involves

recalibrating the autonomic nervous system” (Kolk, B. van der 2015). Breath, movement and touch give access to our autonomic nervous system.

The breath is one of the most powerful tools we have. The way we breathe is the way we live. The breath directly influences our inner state, but it goes both ways - how we feel impacts our breathing, and through our breathing, we can influence how we feel. Every emotion comes with a particular way of breathing. Even the tiniest mood change is reflected in your breathing. When we are stressed or agitated we tend to breathe faster and more shallowly, which activates the Sympathetic Nervous System (SN) (in charge of increasing our state of alertness or activating the “fight or flight response”), when we are relaxed, calm and feel safe, we tend to breathe deeper and slower, which activates the Parasympathetic Nervous System (PSN) (in charge of “rest and digest”). SN and PSN are part of the Autonomic Nervous System. As stated before, the relationship between breathing and our emotional state goes both ways - one influences the other and vice-versa. It has been shown that breathing changes in response to changes in emotions, such as sadness, fear, happiness, and anger. Even more, by consciously changing the way we breathe we can influence the way we feel. But why? There is a simple explanation and it has to do with a nerve which spreads in our body - stretching from the head to the stomach, connecting most of the major organs between the brain and colon, like a system of roots or cable - **the vagus nerve**, which is also the longest nerve in the body.

The vagus nerve has been described as “largely responsible for the mind-body connection,” for its role as a mediator between thinking and feeling. Around 80% of its fibres are afferent, meaning that they go from the body to the brain. This allows us to regulate our nervous system by the way we breathe, chant or move. This knowledge has been used for centuries in the Chinese and Hindu cultures, which have developed multiple practices to benefit from this body-mind connection. For example, the Hindu tradition has a wide variety of breathing practices called pranayama, and even more, they use chanting as a healing practice.

How does it work?

The vagus nerve is connected to the diaphragm, it stretches from the neck to the abdomen. When we inhale deeply, into the belly, using the diaphragm, we activate the vagus nerve, in charge of turning off the “fight or flight” response, thus reducing the state of alertness or stress in the body. We could say that the vagus nerve listens and responds to the way we breathe, sending these messages to the brain and the heart. When we breathe slowly, the

oxygen demands of the heart muscle are reduced, and our heart rate drops. If we breathe fast it must mean that we are in danger or we need more oxygen and energy, thus the heart rate increases, and we feel excited, or anxious. The vagus nerve is activating the parasympathetic nervous system - the rest and digest response. If we breathe in a deep way, we can stimulate this nerve which will banish the effects of the sympathetic nervous system.

Important to remember that what triggers the relaxation response is the exhalation.

Our emotions, body and mind can't be separated, as shown by research in psychoneuroimmunology (the science studying the interaction between the mind and the body). Gabor Mate says in his book "When the Body Says No": that "there is no body that is not mind, no mind that is not body", highlighting the importance of addressing human beings from a holistic perspective, and studying the mind-body interaction to understand health and well-being.

To be human, alive, and confident with a positive self-definition means to reclaim our bodies and our sense of self. This process is possible but it requires awareness. For example, as neuroscientists have shown - the only way to access our emotional brain is through self-awareness ("by activating the medial prefrontal cortex, the part of the brain that notices what is going on inside us and thus allows us to feel what we're feeling" LeDoux, J. (Kolk, b. van der, 2015)). This helps us learn how to cope with our emotions, how to become aware of our inner landscape, and how to create new possibilities for ourselves, thus developing the ability to master the complexity of our inner experience, in order to take charge and full responsibility for ourselves and our lives.

Reclaiming the reality of our bodies gives us a sense of empowerment and security, an awareness that we can feel safe only in our bodies, but even more, our sense of self is rooted in our bodies. **It turns out that when you pay attention to yourself: the default state activates the brain areas that work together to create your sense of "self"** (Bessel, van der K. 2015).

Practice Breathwork

Find a comfortable position, with feet on the ground, hands resting on your knees or lap, and close your eyes. The focus during this short and simple breathing practice is on the movements of your belly while counting the breath.

Inhale and exhale 3 times through your nose, taking the biggest breaths you have taken the

whole day.

Inhale count to 5, the air goes through the nostrils in the belly and then up the chest. Notice the movements of your belly. Hold the breath, counting to 5. Exhale from the chest downwards to the belly, counting to 5, noticing how the belly is dropping towards the spine. Hold, counting to 5. Repeat this technique for several minutes.

*If counting to 5 is too difficult, you can start with 4 seconds, if it is too easy you can increase it to 6.

III.2. YOGA AND VOICE PRACTICES

Yoga: Building Physical and Mental Strength

Yoga is a powerful practice that goes beyond just stretching or exercise. It's about building a connection between your body and mind, helping you develop both physical strength and mental clarity. For Generation Z, who often face the pressures of fast-paced digital lives, yoga can be a great way to pause, breathe, and regain control over your inner world.

Here's how yoga can help boost your self-confidence:

1. **Physical Postures (Asanas):** Practising yoga poses can help you become more aware of your body and its capabilities. As you gain flexibility, strength, and balance, you'll also develop a sense of accomplishment and self-assurance. Try starting with poses like Warrior II for strength, Tree Pose for balance, and Child's Pose for relaxation. These not only improve your physical health but also make you feel more grounded and confident in your body.
2. **Breath Control (Pranayama):** Learning to control your breath can have a huge impact on how you handle stress and anxiety. Techniques like deep belly breathing or alternate nostril breathing can calm your nervous system and help you feel more in control. Practising breathwork daily can reduce feelings of anxiety and increase your focus, making you feel more confident in tackling challenges.
3. **Mindfulness through Movement:** As you move through yoga poses, focus on how your body feels and how your breath guides your movement. This mindfulness practice can help you stay present, reduce negative self-talk, and build a positive

relationship with yourself. Over time, this practice helps you become more attuned to your needs and more confident in your decisions.

Voice Practices: Expressing Yourself with Confidence

Your voice is a powerful tool for self-expression, and learning to use it effectively can significantly boost your self-confidence. For many in Generation Z, who communicate more through screens than face-to-face, voice practices can help you reconnect with the power of spoken words and develop greater confidence in expressing yourself.

Here's how to use voice practices to build self-confidence:

1. **Vocal Toning:** Vocal toning involves making simple sounds, like humming or chanting vowels, to explore how your voice feels and resonates within your body. This practice can help you become more comfortable with the sound of your own voice, which is a key step in building self-confidence. Try humming for a few minutes each day to get used to hearing and feeling your voice.
2. **Expressive Voice Work:** Don't be afraid to use your voice in different ways—whether it's singing, speaking up in class, or simply practising your speech in front of a mirror. The more you use your voice, the more comfortable and confident you'll become. Start small, like reading out loud to yourself, and gradually challenge yourself to speak more in social situations.
3. **Voice Meditation:** Combine meditation with simple vocal sounds, like humming or repeating a positive affirmation, to help calm your mind and focus your thoughts. This practice not only helps you manage stress but also encourages a positive mindset, which is crucial for building self-confidence. Set aside a few minutes each day to practise voice meditation, focusing on the sound of your voice and the feelings it evokes.

Practical Tips for Getting Started

- **Start Small:** You don't need to dive into complex yoga routines or vocal exercises right away. Start with simple poses or basic vocal sounds, and gradually increase the time and complexity as you become more comfortable.
- **Consistency is Key:** Like any practice, consistency matters. Try to incorporate yoga and voice practices into your daily routine, even if it's just for a few minutes. Over time, you'll notice the benefits in your self-confidence and overall well-being.
- **Find a Community:** Practising with others, whether it's in a yoga class or a voice

workshop, can help you stay motivated and feel supported. It's also a great way to build social confidence and make new friends.

- **Focus on Progress, Not Perfection:** Remember, the goal is to build confidence, not to achieve perfection. Celebrate small wins and be patient with yourself as you grow.

By integrating yoga and voice practices into your life, you can develop a stronger sense of self-confidence and a deeper connection with your own voice and body. These practices can help you navigate the challenges of modern life with greater ease, resilience, and self-assurance.

IV. MIND (UNDERSTANDING)

IV.1. Mindfulness as a Tool for Self-Awareness

The mind, our centre for understanding, is where we process information, make decisions, and interpret the world around us. However, it is also where distractions, anxieties, and misconceptions can take root, clouding our judgement and distancing us from our true selves. To navigate this complexity, mindfulness emerges as a powerful tool for cultivating self-awareness and clarity.

Mindfulness, at its core, is the practice of being fully present in the moment, observing our thoughts, feelings, and surroundings without judgement. This heightened state of awareness allows us to see our mental processes more clearly, enabling us to recognize patterns, biases, and habits that may be influencing our behaviour unconsciously.

Engaging in mindfulness practice helps in developing self-awareness in several ways:

1. **Observing Thoughts:** By regularly practising mindfulness, we can observe our thoughts as they arise, without immediately reacting to them. This helps in identifying recurring patterns of thought, particularly negative or self-defeating ones, that can undermine our self-confidence and skew our perception of reality.
2. **Reducing Mental Clutter:** Mindfulness teaches us to focus on the present moment, reducing the mental clutter that often overwhelms our minds. This clarity allows us to distinguish between useful thoughts and distractions, leading to more focused and deliberate decision-making.
3. **Emotional Regulation:** Mindfulness is closely tied to emotional regulation. By

observing our thoughts and feelings without judgement, we create space between stimulus and response. This space empowers us to choose how we react to our emotions, rather than being driven by them impulsively.

4. **Cultivating Inner Peace:** As we become more mindful, we begin to experience a sense of inner peace that comes from being present. This tranquillity nurtures self-confidence, as it is rooted in a deep understanding and acceptance of oneself, rather than external validation.

By incorporating mindfulness into daily life, we build a foundation of self-awareness that supports personal growth and emotional resilience. This self-awareness is crucial for understanding who we are, what we need, and how we can live more authentically and confidently.

IV.2. 12 Areas of Life Balance (Inspired by LifeBook by John Butcher)

Achieving a well-rounded and fulfilling life requires more than just mindfulness—it also demands a comprehensive approach to understanding and balancing the various facets of life. The LifeBook framework, developed by John Butcher, is a holistic tool that guides individuals through the process of evaluating and improving 12 key areas of life. Each area represents a vital component of our overall well-being and contributes to our sense of purpose, happiness, and fulfilment.

Here is an overview of the 12 areas of life balance:

1. **Health and Fitness:** This area focuses on your physical well-being, including your diet, exercise, and overall health. A strong, healthy body is the foundation for a vibrant life, enabling you to pursue your goals with energy and vitality.
2. **Intellectual Life:** Your intellectual life is about continuous learning and mental growth. It involves engaging in activities that challenge your mind, expand your knowledge, and foster creativity.
3. **Emotional Life:** This area covers your emotional well-being and the quality of your emotional experiences. It's about understanding, managing, and expressing your emotions in a healthy way, which is closely linked to mindfulness and emotional intelligence.
4. **Character:** Character encompasses your values, ethics, and integrity. It involves living in alignment with your core principles and consistently striving to become a

- better version of yourself.
5. **Spiritual Life:** Spirituality relates to your connection with something greater than yourself, whether that is a religious faith, nature, or a personal sense of purpose. It's about finding meaning in life and experiencing inner peace.
 6. **Love Relationship:** This area addresses your intimate relationship with a partner. It's about creating and maintaining a loving, supportive, and mutually fulfilling relationship.
 7. **Parenting:** Parenting focuses on your relationship with your children and your role as a parent. It's about guiding, supporting, and nurturing your children to help them grow into happy, healthy, and independent individuals.
 8. **Social Life:** Your social life includes your relationships with friends, family, and community. It's about building and maintaining meaningful connections and feeling a sense of belonging.
 9. **Financial Life:** This area concerns your financial health and how you manage your resources. It involves not only earning and saving but also using money in a way that supports your overall life goals and happiness.
 10. **Career:** Your career is about your professional life and the work you do. It's about finding fulfilment in your job, aligning it with your passions and strengths, and achieving your professional goals.
 11. **Quality of Life:** Quality of life refers to the lifestyle you create, including your environment, experiences, and material possessions. It's about living in a way that reflects your values and brings joy to your everyday life.
 12. **Life Vision:** Your life vision is the overarching purpose and direction of your life. It's about having a clear vision for your future and ensuring that all other areas of your life are aligned with that vision.

Integrating Mindfulness and Life Balance

By combining the practice of mindfulness with the structured approach of the LifeBook, you can achieve a deep understanding of your life as a whole. Mindfulness helps you become aware of your current state in each of these areas, while the LifeBook framework provides a roadmap for assessing and improving them.

As you work through each area, mindfulness ensures that you approach your self-assessment with honesty and clarity, free from the distortions of ego or external pressure. This combination of self-awareness and strategic planning is essential for creating a balanced,

fulfilling life where all aspects of your being—physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual—are in harmony.

By paying attention to each of these areas and using mindfulness to stay present and focused, you can create a life that is not only successful but deeply satisfying and true to who you are.

IV.3. Identity, belonging and authenticity

One of our biggest challenges in life is to embody our true Self, to be our most authentic Self, and especially for Generation Z as they find themselves at the age where they desire to know themselves, to find their place in the world, but also to be liked and appreciated. As humans, we have two core needs - **the need to belong and the need for authenticity**. To juggle between these two needs, or even more to meet both of them is an art.

The first part of life is governed by the need to belong - since this one will ensure our survival. Most of the time, at an early age, one will sacrifice authenticity in order to belong. This happens almost unconsciously, as belonging is essential for our survival. As a child, we can not survive without our caregivers, we come into this world in a state of dependency, which characterises the first part of our lives. Initially, we express ourselves authentically, but based on the feedback and reactions from our caregivers and environment, we learn very fast which parts of our personality are accepted, which parts are less desired, and which parts are too much for others. As a consequence, out of our desire to belong, to be loved, and to be accepted, we will sacrifice the parts that are more challenging or less liked. Unfortunately, even though loving and having good intentions, our parents can inhibit our authenticity, because of their past experiences, childhood and personal traumas. Some of our emotions might be too difficult for them to manage, as they struggle to cope with and accept their own emotions. But **before the age of 7, nearly all of our personality structure is formed**, and as John Churchill (2024) says - it is all relational. We become who we are based on our relations, our interaction with others, their reactions towards us, and their approval or disapproval. **The second part of our life is designated to reclaim our authentic Self.**

Many youth from Generation Z can find themselves in front of this threshold - letting go of the comfort of old identities developed mostly to belong, and stepping into the unknown of their authenticity, which of course, poses a threat to their previous life system and social structures. They are at a place in their lives, where the need for authenticity becomes

stronger. As one goes down this path, old inner protectors and survival strategies will kick in, and one can find oneself overwhelmed by fear, anxiety, criticism, shame, and so on. These are signs that we are going on a new path, trying out something different, but older parts of our psyche which have the function to protect us (Bill Plotkin (2013) calls them subpersonalities) will fight against it, as they still believe being authentic is a threat to our wellbeing.

Nevertheless, the art is to embrace authenticity and belong to the greater web of life. As Bill Plotkin (2021) says “Authenticity is a piece of cake if you don’t mind alienating others and possibly being friendless. And social acceptance is a snap if you’re okay with being an impostor, willing to act in whatever ways are necessary to be accepted.” But finding a balance between the two is not an easy job. One needs courage, confidence, empathy, awareness, compassion and guidance.

Growing up, from a teen to a young adult is a process through which one learns more about the place they want to take in the world, who they are, what they bring and how can they enrich this world. The challenge comes from our consumerism, conformist, fear-infused society - in which important is to fit in, to look good, and to respect the norm, thus one can lose contact with one's own values, needs, desires, attitudes, and beliefs. Unfortunately, little guidance is there in childhood or teen years. But authenticity and belonging remain perhaps the most widespread longings of our times. Bill Plotkin (2021) translates the people's yearning for “greater meaning or purpose in their lives” as “the opportunity to participate meaningfully in the world. They want to feel more real and more in communion with the web of life. They want their lives to make a difference”. The aforementioned author distinguishes between three different types of belonging:

- **psychological belonging** - knowing who you are, personal authenticity,
- **social belonging** - acceptance in a peer group or community
- **ecological belonging** - communion with the more-than-human world

The tasks of the growing-up process are to cultivate authenticity (I know who I am and I can express and embody this identity in my social life) and to belong and be socially accepted. Bill Plotkin (2021) gives us clear steps to how to cultivate belonging and authenticity*: Asking questions like: What is worth striving for? What genuinely brings me alive? What has heart for me and what doesn't? Who are my people? What principles will I fight to uphold? To whom and what will I be faithful? What is necessary for a decent life? What is the meaning of human existence? What, to me, is God? Death?

- Learning to distinguish between authenticity (your own) and self-deception.
- Cultivating emotional skills. This includes the capacity for the full somatic experience of your emotions; the skill of insight into their meaning and significance; and the ability to compassionately express and act on your emotions in a way that honours both yourself and any others involved.
- Learning the art of conflict resolution.
- Developing the ability to define yourself culturally and to co-create your social world.

- Cultivating dexterity and sensitivity in sex and sexual relationships.
- Developing the ability to take care of yourself and earn a living.
- The practice of human-nature reciprocity and ecological responsibility for the well-being of the greater Earth community.

*This 8 steps are taken from his book “The Journey of Soul Initiation: A Field Guide for Visionaries, Evolutionaries, and Revolutionaries” (2021)

Attachment

Authenticity and belonging are deeply connected to our attachment. As social beings, we cannot develop independently of the world we live in. From our closest relationships to our community, culture and society, all have an influence on our character’s development, on the values we introject, the life perspective we develop and so on. Working with our attachment style means addressing our relationships: me in relation with others, with the world and with myself.

How I communicate, how I relate, and the place I take in the world is essentially connected with the sense of Self, a sense of authenticity, and acceptance. The self-concept is developed with the help of our caregivers from an early age. As previously mentioned, most of our character is developed by the age of 7, and all starts with - the first relationship we have – the primary caretaker (usually the mother) and the baby. The baby learns to feel oneself through the mother - and as Bessel van der Kolk (2015) says the way a mother holds her child underlies “the ability to feel the body as the place where the psyche lives”. **Based on the qualities of this primary interaction different types of attachments can be developed: anxious, avoidant, disorganised, and secure.**

The attachment style plays out in our relationship throughout life. The way we communicate,

express our emotions and needs, the trust and safety we can experience are based on our attachment style. **Regardless of what attachment style we have, we can work to heal it and develop a secure attachment.** The more we can embody and internalise safety, the more authentic we can be, the more we can develop further in life and we can create healthier and nourishing relationships. A secure attachment combined with the cultivation of competency builds an internal locus of control, the key factor in healthy coping throughout life.

John Churchill (2024) describes attachment as being formed of 4 qualities.

- **The first quality is safety** - feeling physically safe. This is internalised as a deep sense of security, when as babies we were held by someone, for example, one of the caretakers being physically present and holding us in their arms.
- **The second quality is attunement.** For example, if a parent is physically holding the child, but emotionally they are absent, checking their phone or being mentally and emotionally somewhere else, then attunement doesn't happen. Attunement is defined as the capacity to feel into someone else's nervous system, to be felt by someone else and to be feeling someone else. The experience of feeling felt means taking the other person's nervous system inside of you. In the case of children, the parents' nervous system is used to organise and regulate the nervous system of the child. When a child doesn't have this experience, it can be difficult to develop the ability to organise their internal landscape.
- **The third quality is feeling valued.** This is experienced and internalised when, for example, the child is in the playground and looking behind and sees the parents looking after them with love and interest, in awe at the miracle this child is. The child feels seen but also cherished - in those moments we internalise the feeling of being valued and cherished.
- **The fourth quality is developing a sense of self,** a capacity to ask questions to yourself about yourself. This is modelled by parents, since the children can't do it on their own. For example, the parents notice the interests of the child and ask the child - "what do you want to do? What do you like? I see you want to play/to be a musician etc". The parents mirror and encourage the child to explore what she likes and is curious about. This behaviour can be translated as "a deep caring from the adult to help instil inside of the child the GPS system" (Churchill, J. 2024) through which we learn to navigate in life following what is in alignment with ourselves. Without this

help, the child can't ask themselves "What do I think about this? What do I want" and so on.

Healing our attachment wounds

Imagination is a powerful tool in our lives, it can enable us to go beyond what we know and create new possibilities, it is essential for making our hopes come true. It boosts our creativity, can alleviate our pain, helps heal wounds, restructure narrative and so on. Recent research shows that the brain can struggle to make the difference between what we imagine and reality. "The more vividly a person imagines something, the more likely it is that they believe it's real" (University College London researchers). Their study showed, as Dr. Dijkstra (Kolk, B. van der, 2015), said, "there is no categorical difference between imagination and reality; instead, it is a difference in degree, not in kind". Thus, our projections onto reality have as big influence on the brain as reality itself. Using our imagination we can reparent our inner child and develop a secure attachment style. For example, in meditation or visualisation, one can envision the ideal parent or guide, how they would act, what they would say, and how they would feel in their presence.

Using Bill Plotkin's model of the human psyche (2013) which has 4 directions - representing 4 facets of our psyche, we can learn to connect and embody the qualities of the North - defined as the **Nurturing Generative Adult**. The figure below shows the map of the psyche as described by Plotkin, but in this section, we will address only the Nurturing Generative Adult - the qualities of the North - as a foundational work for developing our ideal inner parents, those that have the resources and qualities to reparent our inner child. The NGA is "emphatic, compassionate, courageous, competent, knowledgeable, productive and able to provide genuine loving care and service to both ourselves and others. Through the NGA, we contribute our best and most creative parenting, leading, teaching, directing, producing and healing". It is the inner parent - the one that is emotionally grounded enough to take care of our young wounded parts.

MAP 1:
***Intrapersonal
view of the Self
and Subpersonalities***
(how we relate to ourselves)

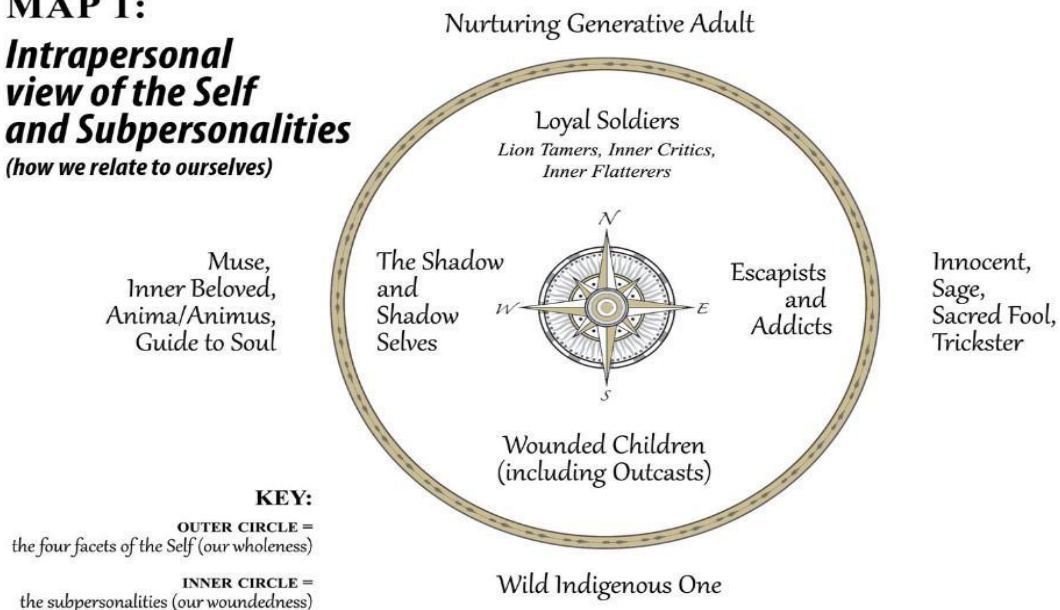


Image from Bill Plotkin (2013)- Wild Mind, page 21

Practice:

One way to connect and evoke the ideal inner parent is to recall examples or models that inspire these qualities to you. From there envision the ideal parent or guide - what would they be like, what would they say? Envision a situation where you see the healing mother, taking care of the kids - how does it feel when you watch her, how is she moving? How is she talking - familiarise yourself with that energy. A next step is to imagine you are in her presence - how does it feel to be close to her? Later we can engage in conversation, ask for support, or just imagine the idea of a parent holding our scared, sad or wounded parts.

John Churchil (2024) says that even if we have a developmental lack, our brain recognizes and responds to love, since it has been shaped by years of love, “if we can go through the past conditioning, the deep structure of our body is innately good and knows love”. Imagination allows us to internalise this new facet, this ideal parent and make it part of

ourselves, and this image we can invoke at any time we need and it will help restructure our attachment. In this way we can use our imagination to resource ourselves, any time we need, we can have the healing parent with us.

PART II. FACE TO FACE COMMUNICATION: ME-WE: GOING INTO THE WORLD

I. Non-violent communication - Active Listening (Rosenberg)

How are we as humans meant to relate to one another? What impact do we have on each other? Can our words nurture or damage our relationships? Can communication enrich the world we live in? Can we feel confident and satisfied when we move through life with compassion? Can others better meet us and our needs if we express them clearly and take responsibility for our emotions?

These are some questions that Non-violent Communication, developed by Dr. Marshall B. Rosenberg, answers through theory and practice. This method fosters intra and interpersonal relationships of compassion, collaboration and caring. It can be applied in various settings, from close relationships, to work conflicts, schools, and even interracial conflicts, and it serves as a valuable resource for communities facing violent conflicts and intense ethnic, religious, or political tensions.

Humans are social beings, and there is no human activity that does not depend on a relationship. No matter where one lives, from an early age until death one is surrounded by people and significant others, and his/her life is enriched by social interactions and human connections. Relationships are influencing one's satisfaction in life and well-being and even more, they are a key factor for peace and happiness in modern society. Relationships can be enhanced or hindered by language forms and communication. Unfortunately, many times our communication style impedes a true connection and the efforts to relate to one another with compassion are obstructed by a language that leads to defence, guilt, attack or humiliation. **Blaming, judging, criticising, and comparing, are the major obstacles of healthy and empathic communication.** Nevertheless, NVC gives us the tools to learn how to express ourselves and hear others. We all have built communication patterns, and often when we speak we are not fully aware of what we really want to say or how our words can impact the other, through NVC we learn to give conscious responses based on what we are perceiving, feeling and wanting.

NVC has two main parts:

1. Expressing ourselves honestly

2. Receiving with empathy what the other person is saying

Thus, it is both about learning to express myself and learning to listen and receive with empathy what the other person is telling me. As Rosenberg says: “we are led to express ourselves with honesty and clarity, while simultaneously paying others a respectful and empathic attention”.

NVC is a powerful tool for different reasons. Firstly, using it in our interactions - with ourselves, others or even in a group - helps us to stay grounded in our natural state of compassion. Therefore, it can be used from a personal level for example intimate relationship, to a professional level. Secondly, it does not require that the other person knows the NVC principles. If we continue to apply the principles, slowly the other person will eventually be able to join us in the process and mutual compassion will be possible.

1. Expressing ourselves honestly

“NVC fosters deep listening, respect, and empathy and engenders a mutual desire to give from the heart” (Rosenberg, M. 2015), using its principles we can connect with each other in a healthier and nourishing way, allowing for our compassion to be manifested. In expressing ourselves and listening to others we focus on four areas: what we are observing, feeling, and needing, and what we are requesting to enrich our lives.

- 1. Observations**
- 2. Feelings**
- 3. Needs**
- 4. Requests**

The first component: **Observing**

The Indian philosopher J. Krishnamurti said that observing without evaluating is the highest form of human intelligence. We tend to mix observation with evaluation or judgement. Observing means simply noticing what we are seeing, hearing, touching that is affecting our sense of wellbeing without making any kind of evaluation nor labelling it. For example: *I am seeing socks on the floor* (an observation) or *The room is messy because of the socks on the floor* (an evaluation). If we make an evaluation instead of an observation, the others won't

really hear what we are saying, they will most likely hear criticism and resist our message, maybe even become defensive.

In his book *Non-violent Communication*, Rosenberg gives us a table that helps us make the distinction between observation and evaluation. See the figure below for more details.

Communication	Example of observation with evaluation mixed in	Example of observation separate from evaluation
1. Use of verb <i>to be</i> without indication that the evaluator takes responsibility for the evaluation	You are too generous.	When I see you give all your lunch money to others, I think you are being too generous.
2. Use of verbs with evaluative connotations	Doug procrastinates.	Doug only studies for exams the night before.
3. Implication that one's inferences about another person's thoughts, feelings, intentions, or desires are the only ones possible	She won't get her work in.	I don't think she'll get her work in. <i>or</i> She said, "I won't get my work in."
4. Confusion of prediction with certainty	If you don't eat balanced meals, your health will be impaired.	If you don't eat balanced meals, I fear your health may be impaired.
5. Failure to be specific about referents	Immigrants don't take care of their property.	I have not seen the immigrant family living at 1679 Ross shovel the snow on their sidewalk.
6. Use of words denoting ability without indicating that an evaluation is being made	Hank Smith is a poor soccer player.	Hank Smith has not scored a goal in twenty games.
7. Use of adverbs and adjectives in ways that do not indicate an evaluation has been made	Jim is ugly.	Jim's looks don't appeal to me.

Image from Rosenberg, M. (2015) Non-violent Communication, chapter 3.

! Important: Distinguish observation from evaluation!

The second component: **Expressing feelings**

Building self-awareness is a key component for an accurate expression of our feelings. First of all, I have to be able to identify what I am feeling in order to be able to express it out loud in a clear and compassionate way. Thus, meditation, self-reflection, and developing the felt

sense are necessary steps. Also, equally helpful is to build a vocabulary of feelings. Many of us have the tendency to say “I feel that...(I am not good enough)..”. Whenever the word *feel* is followed by *that*, we are not expressing a feeling, but rather an opinion or a thought.

In the following example: “I feel that you don’t listen to me”, “I feel like you don’t care”. The feeling is not expressed and the listener will most likely hear criticism and become defensive. Thus the message has not reached the listener, and both parties will feel frustrated and misunderstood.

! Important: Distinguish between feelings and thoughts!

The third component: **Acknowledging the needs as the root of our feelings**

It is important to learn to see the behaviours of others as a stimulus, but never the cause of our feelings. No one has power over our emotions, except us, they are subjective reactions based on what we choose to receive from what others say or do, what meaning we give to their words and actions as well as our needs and expectations at that moment. Our emotions are in our hands, and becoming aware of the thoughts behind them can help us understand our reactions but also work with them and choose what we want to express - from our mature conscious self.

In the same way, what the other person is saying or doing is a reflection of their emotions and needs, and not of our behaviour. NVC show that, in front of a negative message - we have four options as to how to receive it:

- **Blaming ourselves** - we can take their comments personally, hearing blame and criticism which will lead to feelings of guilt, shame, or sadness and it will affect our self-esteem. It means we accept their judgement and blame ourselves.
- **Blaming the other** - leads to anger and defensive behaviour
- **Sensing our needs and emotions** - we can notice the feelings of hurt that come from our efforts to be recognized, approved, liked etc.
- **Sensing others’ needs and emotions** - it is not the same as taking responsibility for their emotions, but rather trying to hear what they are trying to say, and what are their unexpressed needs and emotions.

Some common language patterns are enabling us to avoid taking responsibility for our emotions. For example, we tend to say *I feel hurt because you didn’t remember my birthday.*

or *You make me angry*. Using these types of expressions we place the responsibility of our emotions on the other person's words and actions. Using NVC principles, a more accurate and healthier way of expressing ourselves would be: *I feel angry that you didn't make any plans for my birthday because I need to feel celebrated and see that I am important to you.*

Depending on how we express ourselves the other person might be more or less receptive to our message. When people hear criticism they will invest their energy in defending themselves and attacking back. Thus your emotions and needs will not be heard and received. When we focus on ourselves expressing our feelings and needs, rather than pointing at their behaviour, the other will be more receptive to hearing and answering with compassion.

Rosenberg has noted that when people begin speaking of their needs, rather than blaming and criticising each other, it increases the possibility of having both parties' needs met. One reason is that we share more or less the same needs, we as humans have basic universal needs shared by our humanity:

- Autonomy
- Celebration
- Integrity
- Interdependence
- Play
- Spiritual communion
- Physical nurturance

Another important point made by Marshall Rosenberg (2015): **“If we don't value our needs, others may not either”**, other people will treat us the way we allow them to and the way we treat ourselves. It is our responsibility to take care of and value our needs, as well as setting the boundaries that are adequate for us. There is no right or wrong, nor general, it is based on the person.

! Important: Connect your feeling with your need: “I feel ... because I need ...”

The fourth component: **The request**

After having expressed our emotions and needs in a certain situation, we can continue by making a clear request that would enrich our lives and meet our needs. It is recommended to leave behind ideas such as “but they should know how I feel and what I need”, “I should

not have to tell them” etc. Each of us is a unique individual, and even though we share the same universal needs and emotions, we have our own specific way of expressing our emotions or of having our needs met. Therefore, if we want to make sure the other person will better understand us and if we want to avoid disappointment and further frustration, it is our responsibility to say very clearly and as specifically as possible what we want - in the form of a request. It is recommended to use **positive action language** - say what you want, not what you don't want. Make a request as concrete as possible, and avoid vague, abstract or ambiguous phrasing.

For example: *Could you listen to me when I speak to you?*

For you “to be listened” might mean that the other person will reply or will ask questions, for others it might mean that the other person is having eye contact and focuses only on the person speaking and so on. In this case, just saying “listen to me” is not specific enough, and maybe the way in which the other person is listening doesn't meet your understanding of active listening. Therefore making requests in concrete, clear and positive language can show what you really want and increases the possibility of having your needs met.

Of course, daring to say what we really want and need can be frightening, as the other person can say no. And they can, it is part of their freedom. But a question to ask ourselves is “Would I really want another person to do something for me that they do not want to do?”, for many of us the answer would be no. We want others to respond to our request as long as it is in alignment with themselves and as long as they truly want to.

! Important: Distinguish between requests and demands.

A demand doesn't accept a no, it can lead to judgements and criticism or guilt-tripping if it is not complied with. It also infringes the freedom of the other person, who can feel they only have two options - to submit or to rebel. On the contrary, a request accepts a no, it is an invitation, and the other is free to answer as it is adequate for them. If the request is not followed by emotions and needs, it may sound like a demand.

“The objective of NVC is not to change people and their behaviour in order to get our way; it is to establish relationships based on honesty and empathy that will eventually fulfil everyone's needs.” M. Rosenberg (2015)

NVC in action

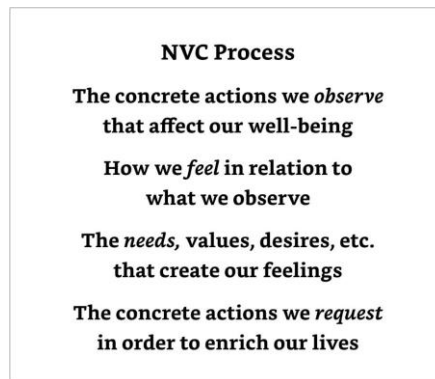


Image from Rosenberg, M. (2015) Non-violent communication, chapter 1.

The process

We start by observing what is happening in a situation: what is being said and done that is either nurturing or not for our life? Express these observations without introducing any judgement or evaluation. Just say what you see, hear, what you observe, regardless of what you think about it. The second step is to identify how we feel: what is happening in my body in that situation? What emotions, sensations, and feelings move inside me? and then put these emotions and feelings into words. A third step is to express the needs connected to these emotions. The last step is to share our request: what do I want that would enrich my life? in a concrete, positive and clear way.

For the practice to be applied with success, it requires a good level of self-awareness and contact with one's emotions and needs, as well as high empathic abilities and compassion.

2. Receiving emphatically

The second main part of NVC is focused on how we meet the other person, and how we listen and receive with empathy what is being said or what is not being said. The Chinese philosopher Chuang-Tzu says that empathy requires listening with the whole being: “The hearing that is only in the ears is one thing. The hearing of the understanding is another. But the hearing of the spirit is not limited to any one faculty, to the ear, or to the mind. Hence it demands the emptiness of all the faculties. And when the faculties are empty, then the whole being listens. There is then a direct grasp of what is right there before you that can never be heard with the ear or understood with the mind.”

Empathy asks of us to put aside our judgement and criticism and listen with an open heart. It doesn't require giving advice or reassurance, nor finding solutions or solving their problems. Instead, it means focusing our full attention on the other person, giving them the time and space to express what they need and to feel understood, this is captured by the Buddhist saying: "Don't just do something, stand there."

When we learn to listen empathically we can use the NVC principles and only hear what the person is: observing, feeling, needing and requesting. Even when they don't say clearly what they feel and need, we can learn to hear that and mirror it back to them through questions. For example, the person says: *I am unhappy because you never call me.* Using NVC, we can notice the needs are not expressed, instead the emotions are a consequence of the behaviour.

Tools: Paraphrasing

Using paraphrasing we can ask for clarification and help the person say what they need: *Are you feeling unhappy because you would need me to show you you are important to me by calling more regularly?* or *Do you want me to call you every day?*

It is helpful to express firstly our own feelings and needs when we ask for clarification. For example, instead of saying "What did I do that makes you feel this way?" to say "I'm frustrated because I'd like to understand clearly what you are referring to. Would you be willing to tell me what I've done that leads you to see me in this way?"

Reflect back messages emotionally charged.

Listen for emotions and needs - as we develop self-awareness and are more connected to our emotions and needs, it will become easier to identify the emotions and needs of others. We can use our abilities to mirror their emotions and needs even though they are not directly expressed. When we do this, we do it in the form of a question or reflection: *It sounds to me like you feel frustrated, and you would like to be treated with respect.* We can always share how we feel when we do not know how to show the right support to the other person: *I am concerned about you, and I would like to know how to best support you. Could you tell me what I can say or do to help you feel.....* As Bessel (2015) says "Emotional intelligence starts with labelling your own feelings and attuning to the emotions of the people around you".

Through the fundamental aspects of NVC, learning to express themselves honestly and receive empathically, to create a deep connection as the basis of any relationship

II. Power of non-verbal communication

Non-verbal communication plays a significant role in how we express ourselves and connect with others. In fact, studies show that a large portion of communication is non-verbal, meaning the way we say things often has more impact than the words themselves. For Generation Z, who have grown up in a digital world, mastering non-verbal communication is crucial for building deeper, more meaningful face-to-face relationships. Drawing insights from Mindvalley's resources on communication and personal growth, let's explore how to harness the power of non-verbal cues to boost your confidence and improve your social interactions.

3. Body Language: Speaking Without Words

Body language is the most prominent aspect of non-verbal communication. From your posture to your gestures, your body conveys confidence, openness, and interest—or, conversely, insecurity and disinterest. Learning to use your body language intentionally can help you communicate more effectively.

Key Principles of Body Language:

- **Posture:** Standing or sitting tall with your shoulders back and head held high signals confidence and self-assurance. Slouching or hunching can give off the impression of uncertainty or low energy.
- **Open gestures:** Keeping your arms open and uncrossed indicates that you are approachable and receptive. Crossing your arms or closing off your body can make you appear defensive or closed-off.
- **Eye contact:** Making direct but natural eye contact helps establish trust and shows that you are fully present in the conversation. Avoiding eye contact can make you seem disengaged or insecure.
- **Smiling:** A genuine smile can disarm tension, make you appear friendlier, and put others at ease. Smiling also triggers positive emotions in yourself, helping to reduce nervousness.

Actionable Tips:

- **Mirror practice:** Practise standing or sitting with good posture in front of a mirror to become more aware of how you carry yourself. Notice how different postures make you feel more or less confident.
- **Record your interactions:** If possible, record yourself during a casual conversation or presentation to review your body language and identify areas for improvement.

4. Facial Expressions: Your Emotions on Display

Your face is often the first thing people notice, and it's incredibly expressive. Whether you're smiling, frowning, or raising your eyebrows, your facial expressions communicate emotions and attitudes without saying a word.

Mindvalley Insights on Emotional Awareness: Facial expressions are closely tied to emotional awareness. According to Mindvalley's teachings, becoming aware of your emotions allows you to control how they are displayed on your face. This emotional regulation can help you remain calm and composed, even in high-pressure situations.

How to Use Facial Expressions Effectively:

- **Be aware of your default expression:** Many people have a "resting face" that may unintentionally convey boredom or frustration. Practice maintaining a neutral or slightly positive expression when you're not actively speaking.
- **Match your expressions to your words:** Ensure that your facial expressions are aligned with your message. Smiling while delivering positive news or showing concern when discussing serious topics makes your communication more authentic.

Actionable Tips:

- **Observe others:** Watch videos of public speakers or leaders you admire and pay attention to how they use their facial expressions to enhance their message.
- **Facial exercises:** Try facial exercises to relax tense muscles, which can help you appear more at ease and open during interactions.

5. Gestures: Enhancing Verbal Communication

Gestures, such as hand movements, can complement and emphasise your verbal communication. In fact, using gestures while speaking has been shown to improve clarity and engagement in conversations. Mindvalley emphasises that deliberate and purposeful

gestures not only make you appear more dynamic but also help you articulate your thoughts more clearly.

Effective Use of Gestures:

- Use natural gestures: Let your hands move naturally as you speak, but avoid over-exaggerated or fidgety gestures that can be distracting.
- Complement your words: Gestures should enhance what you're saying, not contradict it. For example, using a wide-arm gesture when describing something large helps your audience visualise your message.
- Avoid nervous habits: Fidgeting with your hair, jewellery, or hands can signal nervousness or lack of confidence. Becoming aware of these habits will help you eliminate them from your communication style.

Actionable Tips:

- Practice speaking with gestures: Record yourself while giving a short presentation or explaining something to see how you use your hands. If they're stiff or inactive, try adding more gestures that naturally align with your words.
- Stay mindful of nervous tics: If you tend to fidget, consciously work on keeping your hands calm during interactions.

6. Tone of Voice: Conveying Emotion and Authority

Your tone of voice can dramatically influence how your message is received. A calm, steady voice can make you appear confident and in control, while a shaky or monotone voice might undermine your authority. Mindvalley's lessons on communication highlight that your voice can carry both emotional energy and intention, making it an essential part of non-verbal communication.

Mastering Tone of Voice:

- Pitch and pace: Varying your pitch and pace helps keep your listener engaged and adds emphasis to key points. Speaking too quickly can signal anxiety, while speaking too slowly may lose your audience's interest.

- Volume control: Speaking too softly can make you seem unsure, while speaking too loudly may come across as aggressive. Find a balanced volume that conveys confidence without overwhelming your listener.
- Pause for effect: Pausing briefly after making an important point allows the message to sink in and gives you time to gather your thoughts, demonstrating poise and control.

Actionable Tips:

- Record and review your voice: Listen to how your voice sounds in different scenarios, such as when you're excited, nervous, or relaxed. Identify areas where you can add more variation in tone or improve clarity.
- Practice breathing exercises: Proper breath control helps you maintain a steady tone and reduces nervousness. Deep breathing from your diaphragm supports a stronger, more confident voice.

7. Space and Proximity: Respecting Boundaries

How close you stand or sit to someone during a conversation communicates a lot about your comfort level and relationship with that person. Mindvalley's communication experts emphasise the importance of understanding personal boundaries and cultural differences when it comes to proximity.

Using Space Effectively:

- Respect personal space: Standing too close to someone can make them feel uncomfortable or overwhelmed. Be mindful of how much space the other person needs, and adjust accordingly.
- Use space to assert authority: In professional settings, standing tall and grounded in your space can signal leadership and authority, while shrinking or retreating may convey insecurity.

Actionable Tips:

- Notice space in interactions: Pay attention to how much space you naturally give others and how they react. Adjust your distance based on the situation and relationship.

Practice grounding techniques: Grounding yourself by standing with your feet shoulder-

width apart helps you feel stable and centred, projecting confidence in your interactions.

Conclusion: Harnessing Non-Verbal Communication for Confidence

Non-verbal communication is a powerful tool that can enhance your confidence and improve your ability to connect with others. By mastering your body language, facial expressions, gestures, tone of voice, and spatial awareness, you can become a more effective communicator in any situation. As Mindvalley's resources suggest, these non-verbal skills are key to unlocking your full potential and expressing yourself authentically. Practise them consistently, and you'll notice a significant improvement in how you present yourself and interact with others.

RESOURCES AND SUGGESTED READINGS

Books

1. Brown, B. (2021): *Atlas of the Heart: Mapping Meaningful Connection and the Language of Human Experience*. Random House.
2. Darwin, C. (1998): *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*. London: Oxford University Press.
3. Garcia, H. & Miralles, F. (2016): *Ikigai: The Japanese Secret to a Long and Happy Life*. Tuttle Publishing.
4. Kolk, B. van der (2015): *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*. Penguin Books Ltd.
5. Levin, P. (1997): *Waking the Tiger: Healing Trauma: The Innate Capacity to Transform Overwhelming Experiences*. North Atlantic Books.
6. Mate, G. (2019): *When the Body Says No: The Cost of Hidden Stress*. Vermilion.
7. Mate, G. (2019): *Scattered Minds: The Origins and Healing of Attention Deficit Disorder*. Vermilion.
8. Neff, K. D. (2023): *Self-Compassion: Theory, Method, Research, and Intervention*. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 74:193-217.
9. Plotkin, B. (2003): *Soulcraft: Crossing into the Mysteries of Nature and Psyche*. New World Library.
10. Plotkin, B. (2008): *Nature and the Human Soul: Cultivating Wholeness and Community in a Fragmented World*. New World Library.
11. Plotkin, B. (2013): *Wild Mind: A Field Guide to the Human Psyche*. New World Library.
12. Plotkin, B. (2021): *The Journey of Soul Initiation*. New World Library.
13. Rosenberg, M. B., & Chopra, D. (2015): *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life*. 3rd edition. PuddleDancer Press.
14. Rumi, M. (1997): *The Essential Rumi*. Castle Books.

Articles

15. Shapiro, S. L., Carlson, L. E., Astin, J. A., & Freedman, B. (2006): Mechanisms of mindfulness. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 62(3), 373–386. doi: 10.1002/jclp.20237. PMID: 16385481.

Web Links

16. Wheel of Emotions: [The Wheel of Emotions](#)
17. Ikigai Diagram: [Ikigai Poster Printout](#)
18. *Lifebook* by John and Missy Butcher: [Mindvalley Lifebook Online](#)
19. Self-development program for learning meditation and mindfulness by World Peace Initiative Foundation: [World Peace Initiative Foundation](#)
20. SriMa School of Transformational Yoga: [SriMa Transformational Yoga](#)
21. *Speak and Inspire* by Lisa Nichols: [Mindvalley Speak and Inspire](#)
22. Dr. John Churchill - *Attunement as World Medicine* podcast, 9 March 2024, on *Emerge: Making Sense of What Is Next*.
23. Dr. John Churchill - *How to Wake Up and Show Up for a Planet That Needs You*, 14 May 2024, on *Know Thyself*.

WORKSHOP OUTLINES OF CHAPTER I

I. WORKSHOP ON SELF-CONFIDENCE

Materials needed:

A4 paper, pens, speaker for music, colourful pens and markers

Step 1 - Framing the session (5 min)

Introduce yourself and give an overview of the session. You can tell the participants that during this workshop, we will explore and strengthen our self-confidence by better understanding our values, what drives us in life. The workshop will be interactive, participatory and reflective.

Step 2 - Values exercise (20 min)

Begin by explaining to the participants that they will be engaging in a short exercise to reflect on their core values in life. First, they will complete the exercise individually, followed by a group debrief. Invite everyone to take out paper and a pen. Ask them to spend the next 5 minutes reflecting on the most important values in their lives. They should write down their top five values, ranking them from 1 (most important) to 5 (still important, but less so than the first).

While they write, you can play gentle, relaxing music in the background. Once everyone has finished, ask them to look at their list and consider whether these values are reflected in their everyday lives. You might provide examples to guide their reflection: For instance, if someone listed family as a top value, they could ask themselves whether they spend as much time with their family as they'd like, or if work often takes priority. If personal space is a value, they might consider whether they carve out time each day to do something they love, or if they tend to put it off.

Give participants another 5 minutes to reflect on these questions and write down their thoughts.

Afterward, invite the group to share their reflections. If the group is small (5-10 people), you can have everyone share in a large circle. For larger groups, suggest pairing up or forming

trios to discuss their reflections. Offer some guiding questions:

- Are your values aligned with and expressed in your everyday life?
- Would you like to make any small changes if they aren't?
- How do you feel after completing this exercise?

Step 3 - Identity exercise (90 min)

Explain that the exercise is designed to help participants explore and understand their personal and cultural identity. Share examples from your own life to illustrate how various aspects of your identity have influenced your decisions and shaped who you are. This personal sharing helps to create a trusting environment and sets the stage for the participants' own exploration.

Facilitator's Note: It is highly recommended that you complete this exercise yourself before facilitating it for others. By doing so, you'll gain a deeper understanding of the process, which will enable you to guide participants through a more impactful and meaningful journey.

1. Drawing Your Identity "Flower" (30 min)

After framing the exercise, invite participants to create a visual representation of their identity by drawing a personal "flower" with their name in the centre. Each petal should represent an element that defines their identity. Encourage participants to include as many petals as they feel necessary to fully explore the different facets of their identity.

Explain that if they don't resonate with the idea of a flower, they can choose another symbol that they feel represents them better, such as a hot air balloon, geometric figure, river, or tree. The goal is for participants to create a symbol that is personally meaningful.

Tell participants to write a word or sentence on each petal (or equivalent) that represents a part of their identity. Examples include roles (e.g., social entrepreneur, student etc.), relationships (e.g., daughter, son), aspects of their background (e.g., citizenship, education), interests (e.g., hobbies, religion, language), and values (e.g., love).

Give participants 30 minutes to work individually on this task, letting them know they will have time to share their reflections with others afterward.

Facilitators Note: Below you can see an example of categories that might be a part of people's identity. You can share them with participants as an example or choose your own

Proposed list of Categories:

religion	origin
gender	sexual orientation
profession	age
social status	hobby, leisure time
family	friends
citizenship	nationality
Education	sports
non-profit activities	political interest/ orientation
neighbourhood, home	language
minorities	music and other fine arts

examples.

Source: Anna Lindh Intercultural Citizenship Education Handbook

2. Guided Reflection (10 min)

After participants have drawn their flower or chosen symbol, guide them through a deeper reflection process. Introduce a series of questions to help them explore their identity further. These questions can be displayed on a screen or written out where participants can easily refer to them:

- Who or what shaped your identity? Was it shaped by you, or were there significant influences from family, friends, school, or the society you grew up in?
- Are there any parts of your identity that you no longer need or wish to carry with you through life?
- How might your identity change in ten years? Would it look the same in a different context?
- What factors influence how you define your identity?
- Can you identify any beliefs that are directly linked to specific parts of your identity?

Participants should continue to reflect individually during this time, while you circulate the room to offer support if needed.

3. Peer Sharing (20 min)

Once participants have had time to reflect, invite them to pair up and share their findings with a partner. Emphasise that they should share only what they feel comfortable discussing, allowing for an open yet respectful exchange. Provide 20 minutes for this peer sharing session, ensuring that each person has time to speak and listen.

4. Group Debriefing and Discussion (30 min)

Bring the group together in a circle for a collective debriefing session. Facilitate a discussion using the following guiding questions:

- Was there anything particularly challenging about this activity?
- Did you realise during this exercise that you overlooked certain groups or aspects of your identity? What might be the reason for this?
- What connections do you see between identity, values, and behaviour?
- Is it a natural process to seek belonging within a group? Do we always strive for this? Why or why not?
- What elements contribute to forming a group identity and a sense of belonging? How do these elements influence the way we perceive others and different groups?

Encourage participants to share their thoughts and insights, fostering a deeper understanding of how identity shapes both individual and collective experiences.

Note: this exercise was adopted from Anna Lindh Intercultural Citizenship Education Handbook

Step 4, - Coffee break (15-30 min)

Step 5 – Breathing exercise (10-20 min)

1. Introduction:

- Begin by introducing the purpose of the activity to participants: *“We’re going to do a simple breathing exercise that will help us slow down, calm our bodies and minds, and create some space for relaxation.”*
- Invite participants to sit comfortably, either on the ground with their backs straight or in a chair if they prefer.

2. Explanation and Demonstration:

- Before starting the exercise, explain the steps clearly to the participants: *“We will breathe in for a count of 8, hold the breath for a count of 8, and then breathe out for a count of 8.”*
- Demonstrate the breathing pattern a couple of times so participants can see how it’s done.

Facilitators Note: the breathing in for a count of 8, holding the breath for a count of 8 and breathing out for a count of 8 is a suggestion. We do recommend that you adjust the breathing in and out count based on what feels comfortable for you. It will be equally helpful for participants to calm down their minds, if you count to 6 or 4. We also suggest to mention to participants before the beginning of the exercise to follow up to the number they are comfortable with and keep it until the end of the exercise (for example, if they can hold their breath for 5 seconds, telling them to do 5 second inhale and 5 second exhale).

3. Guiding the Exercise:

- Invite participants to gently close their eyes and prepare to follow your guidance.
- Use the following script to guide them through the exercise: *“We are going to breathe in as I count to 8: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. Now, hold your breath for a count of 8: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. And breathe out, counting to 8: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.”*
- Repeat this sequence up to 10 times.

4. Post-Exercise Relaxation:

- After completing the breathing exercise, invite participants to keep their eyes closed and breathe naturally in their own rhythm.
- Encourage them to observe how their body feels for 2-3 minutes.

5. Bringing Participants Back:

- Gently guide participants back to the room by inviting them to slowly open their eyes, taking as much time as they need.

6. Debriefing:

- Conclude with a quick check-in, asking participants to share their experiences:
 - *“How did your body feel during the exercise?”*
 - *“Did you notice any particular sensations in your body?”*
 - *“Did you have many thoughts coming in?”*

- *“Was it challenging to calm your mind?”*
- *“How does your mind feel now?”*

This process helps participants connect with their bodies and minds, fostering a sense of relaxation and presence.

Step 6, - Back2back exercise (60 min)

After participants have reflected on the values exercise, it's time to move on to the "Back2Back" exercise. This activity is designed to help participants become more aware of what drives them in life, what they love doing, and possibly even what their purpose in life might be. Feel free to adapt the instructions to suit your style and the needs of your group.

Note: this exercise was tested with diverse groups of people all over Europe since 2017 and while it might seem extremely simple, the impact it has on people is truly profound. It works each time and brings out incredible a-ha moments in people.

Instructions for Facilitators:

1. Introduction: Begin by explaining the purpose of the exercise: *“For the next 30 minutes, you will work in pairs. We’ll be doing an exercise to help you explore what drives you in life, what you love, and perhaps even uncover your purpose.”*
2. Preparation:
 - Ask participants to pair up and find a comfortable, private space in the room.
 - Each pair will need a sheet of paper, a pen, and a timer.
 - Invite them to sit back-to-back, either on the ground or in chairs, ensuring they feel each other's presence without facing each other.
3. Explanation:
 - *“Sitting back-to-back is important because when we face each other, facial expressions can unconsciously influence our thoughts and sometimes block us from truly sharing what’s in our hearts. Sitting back-to-back allows you to feel the presence of your partner without their body language influencing you. This can help you access deeper parts of yourself that you might not explore in daily life.”*
4. Exercise Overview:
 - Once settled, participants should decide who will start as the speaker and who will be the listener.

- There will be two rounds, so each person will have a chance to speak and listen.
 - The listener’s role is to listen attentively and write down everything the speaker says.
 - The speaker will talk for 7 minutes, answering one question:
5. *“Imagine that tomorrow you wake up and are told that you must choose one thing to do for the rest of your life. What would it be, and why?”*
- *“Don’t overthink it. Simply respond to the question as it comes to you. By the end of the exercise, you may find your own meaning and reasoning behind it. Enjoy the process and take it one step at a time.”*
6. **Timing:**
- Explain why the exercise lasts 7 minutes:
- “We’ve tested this with different timings and found that 7 minutes is the sweet spot—not too short, not too long. During the 7 minutes, there may be moments of silence. Allow these moments to be; they often signal a transition from speaking from the mind to speaking from the heart. In these silent moments, the listener can gently prompt the speaker by asking the same question again.”*
7. **Switch Roles:**
- After 7 minutes, participants switch roles so that both have the opportunity to be the speaker and the listener.
8. **Reflection and Sharing (10 min):**
- Once both participants have spoken, they should face each other and exchange the papers where they’ve written about each other.
 - Encourage them to decide whether to read the paper themselves or have their partner read it to them, which can be a powerful experience.
9. **Guiding Reflection Questions for group debrief (10 min):**
- Provide these questions for participants to reflect on after the exercise:
 - Was anything challenging about this activity?
 - Was it easier to be the listener or the speaker?
 - Did anything surprise you?
 - Did you learn something new about yourself or your partner?
 - What steps can you take to get closer to your purpose?

10. Commitment statement (5 min)

After the group debriefing, invite participants to take an A4 sheet of paper and some colourful pens or markers. Explain that for the next 5 minutes, they will be working individually to create a commitment statement.

Tell them that this is the perfect moment to think about and write down one small step or commitment they can take in the next week or month to move closer to living and fulfilling the purpose they've just discovered.

Provide a few examples to inspire them:

- *“If your goal is to be a writer, a simple commitment could be, ‘I will write a small article or post on social media once per week.’”*
- *“If you want to be a photographer, your commitment might be, ‘I will go out once per week and take photos of my surroundings’ or ‘I will join a photography course in the upcoming month.’”*
- *“If you aim to start your own company, a small commitment could be, ‘In the upcoming month, I will create a step-by-step plan of everything I need to do to start my company.’”*

Encourage participants to think of their own specific commitments.

Solidifying the Commitment (10 Minutes) Group Sharing:

- If the group is small (up to 30 participants), gather everyone in a big circle. For larger groups, divide them into smaller circles.
- Explain that now each participant will stand up and share their commitment statement out loud with the group.

Importance of Verbalizing Commitment:

- Emphasise the significance of verbalising commitments: *“When we say our commitments out loud, it creates a sense of accountability to the group, which increases the likelihood of following through. Additionally, sharing our goals can open up opportunities for support from others in the room, who might be able to help us achieve our dreams and purpose.”*

Sharing:

- Invite participants to take turns standing up and sharing their commitment statements with the group.

- Encourage them to listen actively and support each other's commitments.

This process not only helps participants solidify their intentions but also fosters a supportive community environment where they can inspire and be inspired by one another.

Step 7 - Body scan meditation (20 min)

Purpose: To calm and relax the mind and body after a full day of activities. Preparation:

- Invite participants to sit comfortably, either on a chair or on the ground using a pillow or yoga mat. Emphasise the importance of maintaining a straight back for alertness, while ensuring they are comfortable enough to relax without falling asleep during the meditation.

Process:

Setting Up:

- Once everyone is seated comfortably with their backs straight, invite participants to gently close their eyes.
- Introduce the meditation with a calm and soothing tone. You can follow the script below or adjust it according to your style and intuition.

Guided Meditation:

‘‘We are going to gently and softly close our eyes. We can take a couple of deep breaths in and out to start coming into this present moment, calming our minds and relaxing our body. We can take a couple of more deep breaths in and out. And we start breathing naturally in our own rhythm.

We are going to gently and softly start relaxing our head and our forehead. And we start relaxing our eyes and our eyeballs, feeling how the eyes after a whole working day start slowly being relaxed. While you are relaxing different parts of the body, try to bring your attention to that part of the body and feel how it is getting relaxed. When the body truly relaxes, it starts getting warmer, - warming us from the inside and spreading the warmth to all our body parts, our cells and inner organs.

We are going to relax our nose, our cheeks and our lips. While we are relaxing our lips, we can give a little smile to ourselves to prepare positively for the meditation. And all our bodies are slowly getting relaxed from the top of the head until the toes. Feel how the way of

relaxation is covering your whole body.

We are going to relax our neck and our shoulders. And once we relax our shoulders, we can feel how they gently fall down, while we are releasing the tension from our shoulders. We continue to relax our upper back and our lower back, remembering to breathe gently and slowly. If you have any thoughts coming in, imagine that your thoughts are like leaves on the tree and like the leaves are slowly falling down from the tree onto the ground, we are letting our thoughts fall down and go without focusing on them. We can come back to our thoughts later.

We continue to relax our arms, hands and fingers feeling the warmth in our hands and fingers. And just feel how this warmth is spreading throughout our whole body and warming us from the inside.

We continue to relax our chest and heart area, releasing all the feelings and emotions, which we might be holding inside our chest and heart area, freeing ourselves from those emotions and feelings, and feeling how all our body is slowly getting relaxed.

We continue to gently relax our belly. While we are relaxing our belly, we can feel how the belly is lifting with every breath we breathe in and out. And all our bodies are slowly getting relaxed, from the top of the head until the toes.

We gently relax our hips, knees and our legs and we can feel more and more relaxed. We relax our feet and toes and all our body is now relaxed. For a moment, we will continue breathing and bringing our attention to our breath in silence.

Note: stop talking for 3-5 min, so that participants can stay in silence and focus on their breath. After 3-5 min are over, continue the guidance.

We will now start slowly coming back from the meditation by gently wiggling our fingers, feet and toes, and moving our body softly and gently. Perhaps you want to stretch a little with your closed eyes. And whenever you feel ready, you can slowly gently and in your own time, open your eyes”.

Reflection:

After the meditation, invite participants to share their experiences. You can ask the following questions:

- How did it feel?
- Did the meditation feel long or short?
- Do you feel more relaxed now?
- How do you feel intellectually, physically, emotionally, and spiritually?

Note: Remind participants, especially those new to meditation, that it's normal if they didn't fully relax. With practice, it becomes easier to be present and achieve deeper relaxation.

Step 8 - Check- out (5 min)

Invite each participant to share 1 word, which defines what they are taking away with them and how they are leaving the session. If you have a group of over 30 participants, then you can simply ask a couple of participants in the room to share how they are feeling and what they are taking away with them.

Encourage participants to enjoy the journey of exploring their purpose and passions. Remind them that these exercises are tools to help them understand what drives them, what they love doing, and what brings flow, health, well-being, and happiness into their lives.

II. WORKSHOP ON FACE-TO-FACE COMMUNICATION

Objectives:

- learning to identify needs and emotions, and express them with clarity, in a way that promotes connection;
- develop skills for active listening;
- build a healthy communication style, learning to express oneself honestly and with kindness and listen with empathy;
- increase self-awareness, focus on speech patterns;
- create connection through non verbal practice, exploring interconnection and increasing the awareness of others, building empathy;
- An understanding of the universality of human needs and emotions, and the development of moral imagination (our ability to imagine ourselves in the shoes of others) and the sensitivity to imagine what it might be like to be that person;
- learn self-compassion practices

Non-violent communication practices based on focusing our consciousness on four areas: what we are observing, feeling, and needing, and what we are requesting to enrich our lives, as well as what the other is feeling, needing and requesting, regardless of how they are expressed;

Creating connection as the basis of conflict mediation and resolution - the participants will learn to play the mediator's role which is to create an environment in which the parties can connect, express their needs, understand each other's needs, and arrive at strategies to meet those needs;

Establish relationships based on honesty and empathy that will eventually fulfill everyone's need.

Step 1 - Introduce yourself and the topic of the workshop. (5 min)

“How are we as humans meant to relate to one another? What impact do we have on each other? Can our words nurture or damage our relationships? Can communication enrich the

world we live in? Can we feel confident and satisfied when we move through life with

compassion? Can others better meet us and our needs if we express them clearly and take responsibility for our emotions? These are some questions that Non-violent Communication, developed by Dr. Marshall B. Rosenberg, answers through theory and practice. This method fosters intra and interpersonal relationships of compassion, collaboration and caring. It can be applied in various settings, from close relationships, to work conflicts, schools, and even interracial conflicts. The objectives and basic steps of NVC will be presented. NVC helps us connect with each other and ourselves in a way that allows our natural compassion to flourish. It guides us to reframe the way we express ourselves and listen to others by focusing our consciousness on four areas: what we are observing, feeling, and needing, and what we are requesting to enrich our lives. NVC fosters deep listening, respect, and empathy and engenders a mutual desire to give from the heart.”

Set the guidelines for the group work: Confidentiality - meaning that what is shared in this group is confidential, and it stays here. Another rule is that nothing is mandatory and everything is accepted (of course, except any form of violence).

To be able to work with the NVC principles, one needs a good awareness of what is happening in their mind and body. Therefore you will start by guiding a meditation with the purpose of increasing their state of awareness and presence.

Step 2 - Developing awareness - 15 min

Introduce meditation - the purpose is to become more aware of the information we receive through our senses. They only need to observe, nothing more, to practice an objective observation.

1. Look - 1 min

Become aware of what you see: notice the richly varied and vivid impressions –shapes, colours, movement, dimensionality, the entire visible world.

2. Listen - 1 min

Become aware of what you hear: register the various sounds taken in by your ears – a diverse range of intensities, pitches, and tonal qualities, perhaps including the commonplace miracle of speech or the wonder of music.

3. Feel - 1 min

Become aware of what you touch: texture (smooth, rough, dry, sticky, or wet), weight (heavy, light, solid, or empty), pleasure, pain, heat and cold, and the rest. Also, note how your body feels right now and compare that to the many other ways it feels at other times, tired or energetic, stiff or limber, painful or pleasant, and so on.

4. Taste - 1 min

Become aware of what it is like to taste: taste a number of different foods and substances, or remember and vividly imagine their tastes.

5. Smell - 1 min

Become aware of what you smell: the odour of warm bodies, earth, incense, smoke, perfume, coffee, onions, alcohol, and the sea. Remember and imagine as many of them as you can.

6. Breathing - 1 min

Attend your breathing. A moment ago you probably were not consciously aware of your breathing even though you have inhaled and exhaled fifty times while doing this exercise. Hold your breath for a few seconds. Let it out. Now take a deep breath. Notice that being conscious of your breathing allows you to alter it deliberately.

7. Emotions - 1 min

Become aware of your feelings. Remember the difference between anger and joy, serenity and excitement, and as many other emotions as you care to feel. How real do emotions feel?

8. Thoughts - 1 min

Become aware of your thoughts. What have you been thinking while doing this exercise? What are you thinking right now? How real do thoughts seem?

9. "I" - 1 min

Become aware of the fact that your world always includes you. As William James noted, it is I see, I hear, I feel, I think that is the basic fact of experience. You are not what you see, hear, think, or feel; you have these experiences. Perhaps most essentially, you are who is aware. You are always at the centre of your multidimensional universe of experience, but you are not always consciously aware of yourself.

10. Keeping the awareness in movement - put an instrumental song - invite the participants to move through the room and guide them again to become aware of what they see, hear, feel, smell etc. (as in the previous sequence, but faster) while they move.

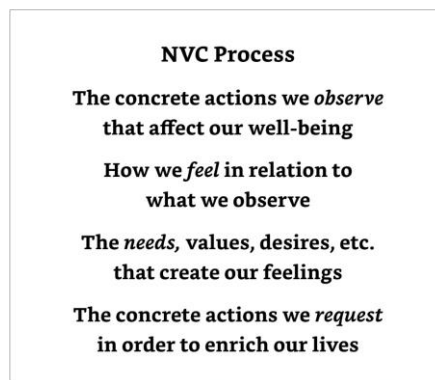
At the end - have a moment of sharing, inviting them to say some words about their experience.

Step 3 - NVC (30 min)

Materials needed - Flip chart Introduce the NVC process:

We start by observing what is happening in a situation: what is being said and done that is either nurturing or not for our life? Express these observations without introducing any judgement or evaluation. Just say what you see, hear, what you observe, regardless of what you think about it. The second step is to identify how we feel: what is happening in my body in that situation? What emotions, sensations, and feelings move inside me? and then put these emotions and feelings into words. A third step is to express the needs connected to these emotions. The last step is to share our request: what do I want that would enrich my life? in a concrete, positive and clear way.

Give examples.



Introducing the **golden rule** and writing it on the flip chart - **I feel(emotion).... when(behaviour)..... I need ...(need). Could you...(request)?**

Ask the participants to make pairs and choose one situation in their lives where they have conflict or tension and use the principles of NVC to try to address that situation. Person A - chooses a situation and gives a role to Person B. Person A uses NVC principles to express their needs, and feelings and make a request, and at the end, Person B answers. They change roles, and it is Person's B turn.

Reflection with the whole group - sharing their observations, insights, and experiences.

Step 4 - Connection exercise (25 min) **Materials needed - speaker and music**

Introduction: Explain the exercise: Being in interaction with others is a play of leading and listening, of connecting, following, inspiring and creating together. In this practice the participants will make pairs. Standing in front of each other, hands facing, one person will start (role A) and move their hands and body while the other person (role B) will mirror the movements, following as accurately as possible. Let them explore for 5 minutes, person A

leading, and person B following. When the song ends, ask them to switch roles. Person B will lead and person A will follow, for another song. At the end, the final 5 minutes (or the last song) the roles are not set anymore, they are invited to experiment with taking lead and following, creating a movement together.

Reflection

Invite the participants to share about their experience, first for 3 minutes in their pair, and at the end dedicate some minutes for sharing in the big group.

- Which role was more comfortable for them?
- What was difficult?
- How did they understand each other in the 3rd part of the exercise?

Step 5 - Active Listening (30 min)

Step 6 - Coffee break (15-30 min)

Materials needed - clock and a bell, flip chart (write the questions on it)

Introduce the activity: The second main part of NVC is focused on how we meet the other person, and how we listen and receive with empathy what is being said or what is not being said. Empathy asks of us to put aside our judgement and criticism and listen with an open heart. It doesn't require giving advice or reassurance, nor finding solutions or solving their problems. Instead, it means focusing our full attention on the other person, giving them the time and space to express what they need and to feel understood, this is captured by the Buddhist saying: "Don't just do something, stand there."

When we learn to listen empathically we can use the NVC principles and only hear what the person is: observing, feeling, needing and requesting.

The participants will form pairs again, one will share an event from their lives for 5 min, the other has to listen, carefully, without saying anything, without nodding, just being present and attentive. Then they switch roles. The trainer will keep a track of time and ring the bell when the allotted time has passed.

The second part of the exercise is, in the same pairs, one speaks, sharing an event from their life, for around 4 minutes, while the other person is listening, having in mind these 5 questions.

- What do I see?

- What do I hear?
- What do I feel?
- What do I imagine?
- What moves inside me?

After the story, write down the answers to these questions. After this change roles and repeat. The second person will share now for 4 minutes a story, without being interrupted. The other one is listening with the 5 questions in mind. Give the participants 5 minutes to share their experience and reflections.

The third part of the activity is to practise listening, focusing on what the person is saying. One is speaking, the other one is listening, trying to identify their feelings, needs and requests even if they are not present. Again in pairs, one will speak for 5 min, and the other will listen to the feelings, needs and requests. Change roles.

End with a moment of sharing in pairs, then a debriefing with the whole group.

- What differences did they notice in the quality of their attention?
- How was it to listen, to share a story without being interrupted?
- Which role was difficult?
- What did they struggle with?

Step 7 - Self compassion (30 min) Materials needed - papers and pens

Introduction: We all have parts of ourselves, behaviours, characteristics etc., that we don't like, that can make us think we are not good enough, or experience shame or guilt. It is the human condition to be imperfect, and feelings of failure and inadequacy are part of the experience of living a human life.

Invite the participants into a journaling practice. They will begin by thinking of features, events, mistakes that they struggle to accept, writing about an issue they have that tends to make them feel inadequate or bad about themselves. Give them 7 minutes to write freely about this topic, identifying the narrative and inner dialogue and emotions they experience. Prompt with some questions, if needed: what though they have, how do they feel, what is challenging? How do they feel about themselves?

For the second part, invite them to think of the person they love the most and imagine that this person is feeling bad with themselves, they struggle, they are judging and blaming themselves for their shortcomings or mistakes. Write down what they would tell them? How would they speak to their loved one? (5 min).

For the third part, invite the participants to read both texts and notice if there is any difference, and if yes, what is the difference and why is it there? What makes them deserve a different treatment than their loved one? (5 min).

For the last part (7 min), invite the participants to write a letter to themselves from the perspective of an imaginary friend, a friend full of unconditional love, care, affection, compassion, a friend can see all their strengths and weaknesses, including the aspect of themselves they have just been writing about. Invite them to fully feel what this friend feels for them, and write a letter from this loving friend focusing on the topic they have been writing about in the beginning, what would this friend say? How would the friend speak to them? What word of wisdom, love and care this friend has to offer? Try to infuse the letter with their compassion, with their affection and acceptance. Afterwards, take some moments to tap into the feeling of compassion, receiving this unconditional love from a friend, read the letter again and allow the body to fully feel and receive compassion.

Step 8 - Check- out (10 min)

Invite the participants to reflect on what they are taking home with them and ask some of them to share with the group. For the closing, ask each one of them to share one word that would reflect how they feel. If you have a group of over 30 participants, then you can simply ask a couple of participants in the room to share how they are feeling and what they are taking away with them.

CHAPTER II: “TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE”

(created by SEP)

1. Generation Z and its relationship with time

1.1. Who is Generation Z?

Generation Z that is, you, those born between the mid-90s and 2010, are nicknamed "Digital Generation" or "iGen." And rightly so – you've grown up with smartphones, social media, and the Internet at your fingertips ever since you were crawling. You are a generation that lives quickly, always connected and in step with technology. However, what makes you so unique? Let's find out!

- **Life in the digital age:** For you, technology is not just a tool but a way of life. Whether you're making TikToks, looking for inspiration on Pinterest, or solving problems on Google, the online environment is "home."

- **Online socializing:** Friends are just a message away and relationships are built through emojis, memes and shares. You are experts in transforming social networks into true platforms for personal expression.



- **Incredible adaptability:** New apps, trends or devices? No problem! You understand and learn everything faster than previous generations.

- **Independence and entrepreneurship:** Many of you dream of being your own bosses. Your start-up could start right in your room with a laptop and a brilliant idea.

- **Progressive values:** Inclusion, diversity and social justice are essential to you. You are actively involved in the issues that matter and you are not afraid to take a stand.

- **Focus challenges:** Yes, digital life also comes with challenges. Fun is just a swipe away and staying focused can sometimes be challenging.

- **Passion for diversity:** The world is a place full of colours and perspectives and you are the first to embrace it with open arms.

How do you manage your time?

If we were to summarize your relationship with time, we would say that technology plays a central role. But there are a few aspects that deserve attention:

- **Online time:** Spend hours on your devices –endless scrolling or creative projects. Although productive, online time can "fly by" without you realizing it.

- **Digital distractions:** It's hard to stay focused when notifications bombard you from all directions, making multitasking challenging.

- **Preference for digital communication:** Face-to-face or on the phone? Maybe. But a quick message is much handier. You prioritize your relationships based on the time available and the platforms you use.

- **Activity planning:** Classic planning isn't your strong point, but things change when an excellent app comes along. Digital helps you keep everything organized.

- **Flexibility matters:** Free time is sacred! Your preference for relaxing activities and flexibility in choices show how much you value the freedom to decide what you do with your time.

In short, you are a generation that inspires through creativity, dynamism and openness to change. The challenge is to find a balance between online and offline life, focus on what really matters and use your digital resources to build an extraordinary future.

1.2. How does Generation Z perceive time?

Time is a precious resource for you, but managing it is not always easy. Research has shown us some interesting things about how you get organized, what you prefer, and what challenges you face. Let's see what time looks like through the eyes of Generation Z!



- **Time and technology: inseparable**

You grew up with phones, tablets and laptops that are extensions of you—no wonder you spend hours connected, whether you're learning, socializing or just relaxing. While useful, online time can sometimes get out of hand, leaving less room for other activities.

- **Distractions are everywhere**

Notifications, memes and short videos bombard your attention. Staying focused on a task is hard when your phone vibrates every few minutes. Digital distractions are one of the biggest challenges in time management.

- **Digital communication: more accessible, faster**

Why make a phone call when you can send a quick message? Many of you prefer online

communication, which is more effective and less intrusive. But this style influences how you build your relationships and how much time you allocate to them.

- **Digital planning**

Traditional planning may seem tedious, but digital apps and tools are the perfect ally. Automatic reminder settings, colorful calendars, and interactive lists help you keep everything under control, even if long-term planning remains a challenge.

- **Free time, first**

Flexibility and freedom to choose how you spend your time are essential for you. Your preferences for relaxation and fun can sometimes conflict with time dedicated to personal or professional development.

What does all this mean?

Technology plays a significant role in your daily life, shaping how you spend your time and interact with the world around you. But with a little organization (and a few helpful apps), you can turn these habits into an advantage.

What could be the starting point? Find a balance between digital and offline, use technology to support your goals, and remember that sometimes it's good to take a step back, breathe, and live in the moment. 🕒

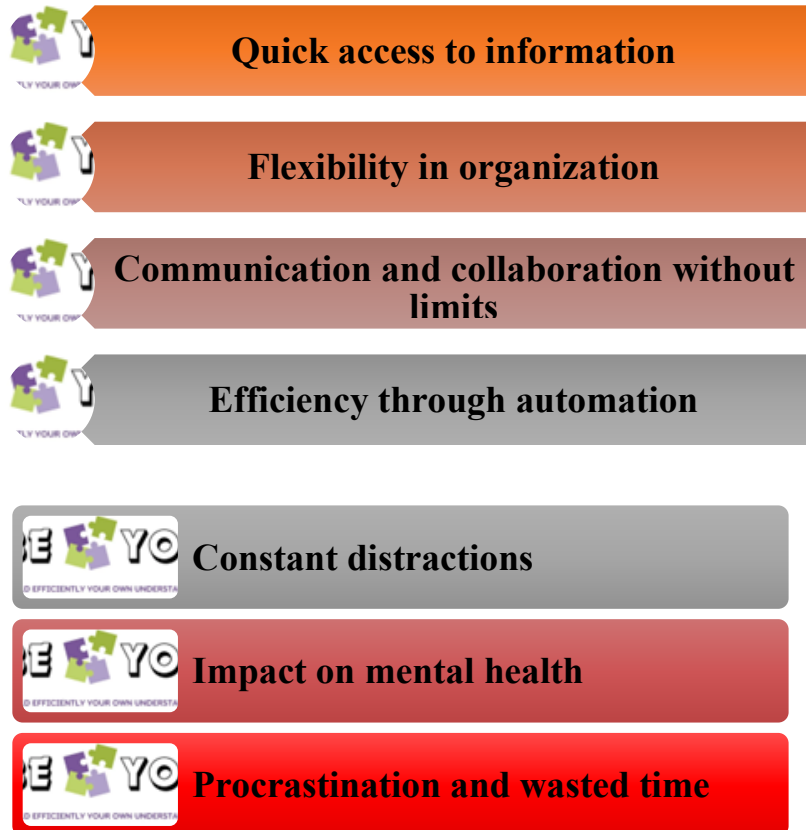
1.3. How does technology influence time management for Generation Z?

Technology and the digital environment are integral to Generation Z's lives, profoundly impacting how you perceive and manage time. It's like a double-edged sword: on the one hand, it gives you digital superpowers, but on the other hand, it comes with challenges. Let's see both sides.

The positive impact: How technology helps you save time

- **Quick access to information:** Answers are just a click away in a digital world. Do you want to learn something new? Tutorials, articles and videos are ready to help you in seconds.
- **Flexibility in organization:** Technology allows you to manage your schedule. With scheduling apps or digital calendars, you can set reminders, organize to-do lists and prioritize effectively.

- **Communication and collaboration without limits:** Distances no longer matter. Group projects, meetings or brainstorming are now done on digital platforms, simplifying collaboration and saving time.
- **Efficiency through automation:** Online payments, automatic notifications or program synchronization? Technology helps you eliminate repetitive tasks and focus on what really matters.



The Negative Impact: The Pitfalls of Digital Time



- **Constant distractions:** Notifications that pop up unexpectedly, endless scrolling on social media or the latest episodes of an exciting series can cause you to waste precious hours without realizing it.
- **Procrastination and wasted time:** Video games, TikTok or YouTube can become real "time thieves." Procrastination becomes challenging, especially when important tasks are postponed for seemingly harmless relaxation activities.
- **Impact on mental health:** Excessive time spent online can lead to anxiety or the feeling of "wasting your time." Social isolation and constant social media comparisons can also affect your motivation and productivity.

How to find a balance?

Technology is a powerful tool for you, but the key is to use it consciously.

- **Set limits:** Use features to monitor time spent on devices and enforce regular breaks.
- **Prioritize essential activities:** Start the day with the tasks that matter most and leave relaxation for later.
- **Disconnect sometimes:** Offline moments are essential for mental health. Go for a walk, read a book or spend time with friends face-to-face.

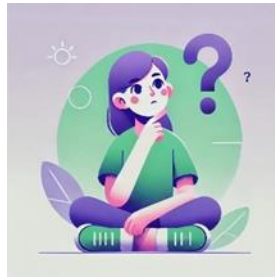
Technology is an incredible ally, but it must be used wisely, like any resource. In balance, you can turn the digital environment into a real support to manage your time better and achieve your goals. 😊

1.4. Why is time management important to you?

Time is like a daily budget – you get it every morning but you can't save it for tomorrow. How you spend it makes the difference between achieving your dreams and feeling like you're always falling behind. Time management is not just a skill; it is the key to a balanced, happy and productive life. Let's see how it can help you build the life you want!

Benefits of Effective Time Management

- **You become more efficient and organized:** First, knowing what you have to do and when is essential. If you prioritize important tasks, you can avoid procrastination and use your energy where it counts. Ask yourself:



- ✓ *What should I do first?*
- ✓ *What can it expect?*

- **Stress disappears (or at least diminishes):** Do you feel caught up in chaos and tasks overwhelm you? With a well-developed plan, things become clear and deadlines no longer seem so scary. When you have control over time, you have less stress and more peace of mind.

- **You're more productive in less time:** Focus on essential tasks and you'll notice how you manage to get more done in a day. Why waste hours on insignificant things when you can advance toward the goals that matter?

- **Work-life balance becomes possible:** Life is not just about work or school but also about friends, family, hobbies and time for yourself. Proper time management allows you to enjoy these things without feeling guilty or exhausted.

- **You achieve your goals step by step:** Do you have big dreams? Perfect! Time management helps you break them down into small steps and progress steadily. Every time you tick a stage, you get closer to what you want.

- **Flexibility helps you adapt:** Remember, plans are not rigid. Life can come with surprises and it's important to adapt without losing sight of what really matters. Be flexible, but stay focused on your long-term goals.

1.5. How time management influences your success at school and in your career

Effective time management is essential to achieving your goals related to school, hobbies, or future plans. By learning to organize your time, you can achieve better school results, more free time for activities you like and less stress.

How time management helps you at school

- ✓ **Learning planning:** If you organize your time, you can allocate dedicated time for homework, learning and preparing for tests without feeling overwhelmed.

- ✓ **Prioritize tasks:** Focus on what's really important, like important projects or tests and leave less urgent tasks for later.

✓ **Avoid procrastination:** When you know what you have to do and when, you will be more motivated to get to work and not procrastinate.

✓ **Less stress:** Good organization helps you feel more in control and avoid stress before deadlines.

How time management helps you for your future

✓ **Efficiency:** Start organizing your time now to learn how to be productive and get more done in a shorter amount of time.

✓ **Flexibility:** With a well-developed plan, you can adapt if unexpected changes arise, such as additional tasks or new activities.

✓ **Personal development:** Use the time to learn new things, enroll in classes or participate in extracurricular activities that you enjoy and help you grow.

✓ **Career readiness:** If you manage your time well, you'll have more space to get involved in projects or volunteering that can help you in your future career.

By organizing your time efficiently, you will have more freedom to do what you love, enjoy your free time and prepare for your academic success and professional future. Well-managed time is an investment in you and what you can become!"

1.6. Time management: What can we learn from each other?

Have you ever argued with an adult in your life — maybe parents, teachers or a boss at a part-time job — because they had different opinions about how to use your time? You may have heard remarks like "You spend too much time on your phone!" or "You need to be more organized!" These discussions come from how young people and adults manage their time based on different responsibilities, priorities and life experiences.

Let's analyze these differences through a more personal example:

Imagine that you need to prepare a presentation for school but prefer to relax a little on social media. Meanwhile, your parent stresses finishing household chores, paying bills and organizing his workday. What do you think each of you sees in the other?

❖ **Different responsibilities**

- **You:** Education, hobbies, friends and online time are your everyday priorities. You can afford to postpone some things because you may not yet have financial responsibilities or the care of a household.

- **Adults:** Work, paying bills, cooking and planning the whole family's day are their priorities. For them, every minute counts because they juggle many responsibilities at the same time.

❖ **Organization skills**

- **You:** You may feel like you have "enough time" for everything but sometimes you underestimate how long it takes to finish a task. It's easy to get lost in a video or game.
- **Adults:** They have years of experience learning how to plan and estimate time. That's why they sometimes insist on planning your day better – they want to help you avoid their mistakes.

❖ **Different motivations**

- **You:** Maybe you are more motivated by the thought of having fun, feeling part of a group of friends or finishing chores as quickly as possible to have free time.
- **Adults:** They often have more "serious" motivations – to ensure family stability, improve their career or save for the future. That's why they always seem "on the run".

❖ **Time perceived differently**

- **You:** Sometimes, it can feel like you have endless time for everything. Whether we are talking about school, projects or hobbies, the pressure may seem less – until the day before a deadline!
- **Adults:** They see time as a limited resource. That's why they sometimes get frustrated if it looks like you're "wasting time."

How can we learn from each other?

- Learn from adults: Observe how they plan their day and try to apply tricks that work for you. For example, make a short list of what you must finish by a specific time.
- Help them understand you: Explain to them that, for you, relaxation breaks or time spent with friends online are essential for your emotional balance.
- Find common ground: You can accept their advice on prioritization and show them that you too can complete important tasks without completely giving up the fun.

Finally, time management doesn't have to be a reason for conflict. It's a "game" that you learn along the way – and even if adults have years of extra practice, they were once like you. And you have something they may have forgotten: spontaneity and the ability to enjoy the present moment. If you listen to each other, you can learn valuable things about balancing life's

responsibilities and joys.

2. Your time is precious: learn to protect yourself from "time thieves"

You know that feeling when you start your day full of determination with a clear list of tasks, but at the end, you ask yourself: "Where did this day go? What have I done with my time?" You're not the only one. Many times, it's not that you're not capable but that your time has been stolen by "time thieves."

"Time thieves" are those people, activities or habits that distract you and consume precious hours without you realizing it. They are invisible and easily creep into your daily routine, affecting your focus, efficiency and ability to achieve your goals.

They are everywhere, invisible, silent but very active and if you are not careful, they steal a large part of this important resource. In vain, you will shout, "I don't have time anymore," when you finally find that you will not be able to make up for the lost minutes. Even though "time thieves" will never disappear, time management can help you control them.

The first thing you need to do is to recognize these "time thieves." Identifying them is extremely important if you want to stop wasting your time and increase your learning or work efficiency. "Time



thieves" take different forms by exploiting your daily routine, disguised as tasks or responsibilities that seem urgent and important to you: scrolling through social networks, excessive checking of emails, unimportant meetings, unnecessary tasks, etc. What they have in common is that they do not contribute to your personal growth and the achievement of your career goals. Instead, it gives you the feeling of busyness, that you are important, preventing you from doing essential work that impacts your life. Even though time thieves act differently from person to person, there are common patterns that affect us all. Depending on the environment they come from, "time thieves" can be external or internal.

External "time thieves" come from the outside and even if you can't prevent them from appearing, it doesn't mean you can't control and minimize their effects. They are disguised in phone calls, messages, unscheduled visits and interruptions caused by friends, relatives, acquaintances, etc.

Internal "time thieves" are found in your behaviour and routine: habits, personal organization, lack of planning, etc. They are more challenging to identify and accept: procrastination, aimless surfing the internet or lack of a clear plan for the day.

If you allow "time thieves" to steal your time, you can enter a very negative dynamic. You'll need more time to fulfill your commitments and you can't get this time unless you take it from somewhere else: time spent with family or time spent on hobbies.

Some "time thieves" steal a lot of your time with every action and you identify them more easily. Others, more perfidious, steal only a few minutes at a time but appear frequently and if you do the calculation at the end of the day or week, you realize that they have dispossessed you for a very long time.

Who are the most frequent and dangerous "time thieves"?

- **Interruptions** are extremely dangerous for the time you allocate for an activity. They consume not only the time you suspend your activity: after an interruption, it takes about 15 minutes on average to regain your lost concentration. That's why it's very important to politely reduce unnecessary and lengthy phone conversations, to be firm and assertive with the usual office conversations, to postpone others' emergencies for a period that suits you and to turn off your phone/turn off notifications when you need maximum concentration. Another recommendation is to inform those who are used to interrupting your calendar so that they know your availability.



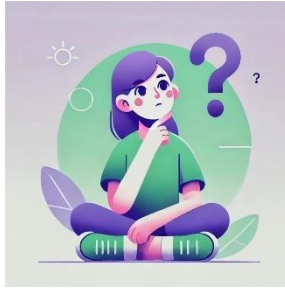
Did you know?

You received a message on your phone. Even if you only need 30 seconds to view it, you need at least 15 minutes to return to your previous concentration.

- **You don't know how to say "NO"**. You can be a generous person, but by always putting the needs of others before yourself, you stop living your life. You will enter a vicious circle in which you will do many things that have no value for your personal and professional development. Every time you say YES to something you will inherently end up saying NO to many other things. Why is it difficult for some people to say

NO? Because there is a negative association with the word NO. But you don't have to think that way, because saying NO is simply a matter of priority. You should never feel guilty for saying NO.

The good thing is that you can learn to say NO. To make this easier, you need to identify what you should refuse:

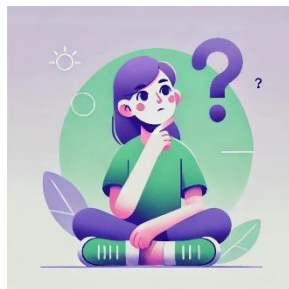


- ✓ What you can outsource
- ✓ Which distracts you
- ✓ What is unhealthy
- ✓ Actions you can't control
- ✓ Actions that go against your principles

The next step is to practice saying NO. You can start with low-risk situations, offering alternatives such as suggesting another time to interrupt your activity. It would help if you told this shortly, politely and firmly.

- **Disorganization.** Drawing up an action plan is not a waste of our time. Without a clear plan, seemingly simple tasks can take two or three times longer than they should. If you don't plan, you risk the day being dominated by unimportant things, leaving you frustrated and overwhelmed. You could set aside a few minutes each morning to prioritize your tasks and create a list of essential tasks.

- **Procrastination** is a highly active time thief. How often have you said: "I'll leave it until tomorrow"? Procrastination is dangerous because it keeps you stuck in your comfort zone and gives you the false impression that if you ignore the tasks, they will resolve themselves. But the postponed tasks accumulate, generating stress and superficiality in execution. How do you overcome procrastination?



- ✓ Break down large tasks into small, manageable steps.
- ✓ Reward yourself for each completed stage.

If you do postpone something for later, make sure that these are less important things, things that will not have major consequences. Only the postponement of irrelevant things can have a positive value in a working day.

- **Multitasking** is a common phenomenon in today's world. The fast pace at which events unfold in the current period leads you in the direction of juggling several tasks at once. Although you may think you're efficient, in reality, multitasking often leads to a loss of focus and decreased productivity. Instead of giving all your attention to one task at a time, you divide your energy and concentration between several activities, the results obtained being of poor quality. Studies by Stanford University and the University of California found that people who frequently switch tasks are more easily distracted, less productive and slower to complete their work than those who focus on one task at a time. This is because when you try to do too many things at once, your brain becomes overwhelmed by information overload. This leads to mistakes or an increase in the time it takes to complete tasks. To truly achieve meaningful results and insights, it's essential to devote all of your attention to one task at a time.



- Focus on one task at a time and set aside dedicated time slots for each task

❖ **Social networks** and the use of the Internet are ferocious time thieves. Addiction to technology and the online environment, spending excessive time on social networks or browsing the Internet without a specific purpose can consume valuable hours of your time. The lure of endless scrolling and the need for instant gratification can easily trap you in a cycle of wasted time and low self-esteem. How can you protect yourself?



- Set clear boundaries for your time spent online
- Use apps that block access to social media while working

❖ **Emails and notifications** are another time thief who acts nonchalantly. Having your device permanently connected to the Internet, you are tempted to check it and respond to emails and notifications constantly. This can affect your workflow, decreasing productivity. In addition, this habit can affect attention and contribute to mental fatigue. What can you do?



- Set fixed intervals for checking emails and turn off non-essential notifications

❖ **Meetings**, while necessary for collaboration and communication, they can quickly become a time thief if not managed effectively. Frequent and prolonged meetings can consume a significant portion of the workday, leaving little time for actual work. In addition, if meetings do not have clear objectives or result in minimal tangible results, they become counterproductive and hinder our overall productivity. How can you optimize them?



- Only attend essential meetings
- Prepare a clear agenda and limit the duration of discussions

❖ **Faulty prioritization** can become a time stealer. Effective planning is essential for productivity but if you spend too much time planning and organizing mundane tasks, you're wasting valuable time that could be allocated to an important task. You have to find the balance between planning and execution.

❖ **Delegation** can significantly impact your productivity if you know how to use it. If you are reluctant to delegate tasks, you will end up overworking, and due to stress, your efficiency will decrease. It would help if you learned to trust and rely on capable people so that you can focus on high-value tasks and achieve more in less time.

❖ **Self-sabotage** is one of the most ferocious thieves of time. Negative thoughts about a series of events in the past or fear caused by a hypothetical failure can consume a large part of the time. A positive attitude and a winning spirit have the power to drive away self-sabotage.

❖ **Unclear objectives.** If the objectives are not very clearly formulated, you cannot develop a proper plan and the work becomes chaotic. You will waste a lot of time performing tasks that prove unimportant for your professional career.

❖ **Overthinking and indecision.** Constantly analyzing every decision can lead to delayed progress and missed opportunities. While careful consideration is required, it is essential to strike a balance and make decisions on time.

How to protect yourself from "time thieves"?

1. Reduce external interruptions:

- ✓ Only answer important calls.
- ✓ Postpone long discussions for more appropriate times.
- ✓ Turn off notifications and close apps that aren't needed.

2. Manage "inside thieves":

- ✓ Be honest with yourself and recognize habits that consume your time.
- ✓ Plan your day using to-do lists and prioritize what really matters.
- ✓ Watch out for "false emergencies" – activities that seem important but they aren't.

3. Plan your time wisely:

- ✓ Create a calendar and block out slots for deep, uninterrupted work.
- ✓ Learn to say "no" politely when someone distracts you unnecessarily.

4. Adapt:

- ✓ Understand that not all "time thieves" can be completely eliminated. The important thing is to control them and minimize losses.

A message for you

Time is a limited resource that you cannot recover. Every minute counts and how you manage your time today can majorly impact your life tomorrow. Identify your "time thieves," manage them effectively, and use your time to work on what's really important to you – whether it's learning, career or time spent with loved ones.

Today is the perfect day to start taking action. Which "time thief" has bothered you the most lately and how will you get rid of him? 😊

What you can do at home

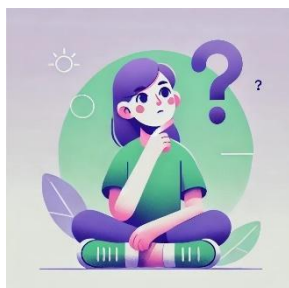
Eliminate/reduce time thieves using the Pareto Technique

- For 3 days, monitor your time and write down all your activities, including those that seem insignificant (e.g., checking emails, chatting on social media, browsing the internet, interruptions caused by friends, acquaintances, colleagues, etc.). Also write down the time you spend on these activities.
- Analyze which of these activities contribute the least to achieving your goals and bring you the least positive results.
- Apply the 80/20 principle: Identify those 20% of activities that are responsible for 80% of the waste of time. These are the major time thieves.
- Develop a plan to eliminate or reduce these activities. You can use methods like blocking time, eliminating distractions, or delegating tasks.

Expected result: You will have more free time for productive activities and reduce the loss of time caused by unnecessary activities.

3. Setting priorities – the key to success in time management

Have you ever been overwhelmed by the many tasks you have to solve and don't know which one to solve first? I am sure you have been. It happens to all of us that we don't know how to solve our tasks in a working day.



- What should I start with?
- What is the task I should prioritize?

These questions can sometimes be difficult to answer. In such situations, you need to set priorities.

The priority is to be the first in a chronological sequence. Priorities are organized into a ranking of things, people or actions. They help you differentiate between what is really important and valuable for your professional and personal life and what is unimportant. Some priorities are

self-determined and others are the result of your decisions. It is essential to understand how you rank the priorities you choose. Why is this ranking important? Because it often happens that the notion "some time" means "never." Success in life is related to optimal time management.

The question you need to answer is: "How do I make this ranking?" How about prioritizing in the video below?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uls5b64pBM4>

If you're wondering what criteria to prioritize, take a look at the following:

- **Time constraints** – If other people depend on you, tasks with strict deadlines should be prioritized.
- **Benefits of certain activities** – Focus on the activities that bring you the most profit or the greatest impact on your goals.
- **External pressure** – Sometimes, the boss, teachers or family may impose additional priorities. Make sure they are balanced with your own goals.

In the book "The Power of Concentration", Jack Canfield proposes a 4-step formula for setting priorities.

Step I: Learn to say NO. It would be best if you did this whenever a less important task (a "time thief") distracts you from a goal that is important to you.

Step II. Delegate. Don't try to do everything by yourself. If a task is too complicated or doesn't deserve your full attention, delegate it to someone who can complete it efficiently.

Step III: Postpone. This postponement refers to the activities that you need to do, but not exactly at this time. It would help if you learned to leave this task for a more appropriate time.

Attention: Do not fall into the trap of using procrastination for important and urgent activities.

Step IV: Act. After eliminating the unimportant tasks, you have reached the ones that cannot be postponed and need to start **NOW**. Don't procrastinate, don't look for excuses and don't forget to give yourself a reward after completing a task on time. 🧠

Prioritization is important because:



- You focus on what is truly valuable.
- You avoid wasting time on meaningless activities.
- Confidently tackle pressing tasks that are relevant to your long-term goals.

Prioritization isn't just about getting things done faster, it's also about doing the things that really matter. Your life is made up of the choices you make every day. If you learn to manage your time wisely, success will not be long in coming.

3.1. Prioritization tools

Even though simple prioritization fits many situations, there are situations when exceptional prioritization and time management tools are needed to be effective.

3.1.1. Peer Benchmarking

It helps you prioritize options by comparing each item to those in a list. It is useful when the decision-making criteria are vague, subjective or inconsistent.

The method works by dividing options into a series of direct votes. You have to choose which activity from the two groups is a priority. Once these priorities are selected, you will form new pairs and choose the priority again.

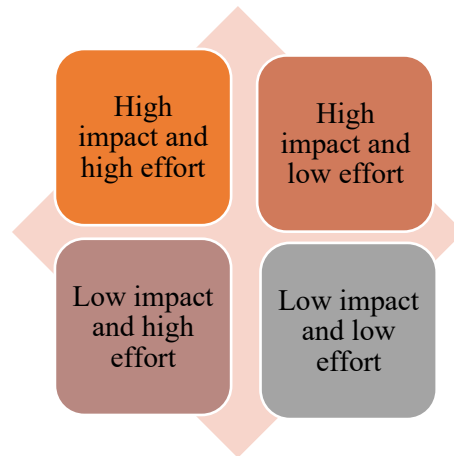
<https://www.opinionx.co/research-method-guides/paired-comparison>

3.1.2. Action Priorities Matrix

The Action Priorities Matrix shows you how to prioritize activities so that you get the most out of your time, energy and talents. Using this matrix will help you spend more time on activities that impact your professional and personal life. It is helpful because you rarely have time for all the activities you want to do. It's essential to choose wisely to make the most of your time and the opportunities that come your way in life. You won't be able to do this unless you identify the activities you need to do and avoid those that don't have value to you.

A 4-quadrant priority matrix template can include:

- Big impact and great effort
- High impact and low effort
- Low impact and high effort
- Low impact and reduced effort



Once you've created a template with these 4 watch faces, you create sections that signify the recommended action for each task based on effort and impact.

Example:

- **Now:** high-impact, low-effort tasks that don't take up a lot of your time:
 - *Signing new employment documents;*
 - *Filling in the documents for an exam.*
- **Next:** high-impact, high-effort tasks that require a lot of time, but are also very important:
 - *Creating a strategy proposal for the client;*
 - *Going through the contents for the final exams.*
- **Later:** low-impact, low-effort tasks, which include jobs that don't have as much impact but are still worth doing.
 - *Organization of the customer contact list;*
 - *Solving a crossword puzzle (easy level).*
- **Don't:** low-impact, high-effort tasks.
 - *Correction of a strategic message document that the creative department has already approved;*
 - *Writing an essay on a topic of personal interest.*

Once you have created the template with custom labels and sections, you should follow the following steps:

1. You copy the basic template of the prioritization matrix.
2. You rename the template (for example, "Prioritization matrix for the week")

3. You add all the appropriate tasks to the template.
4. Assign custom labels to each task, indicating effort and impact.
5. Place the tasks in the appropriate section (Now, Next, Later, Don't).
6. Add your start dates.

3.1.3. The Eisenhower Matrix

The Eisenhower Matrix is a simple tool for prioritizing tasks so that you can use your time effectively.

The principle underlying this matrix starts from the classification of tasks into two main categories:

- **"IMPORTANT"**: those that bring you closer to your goals, to your objectives;
- **"URGENT"**: those requiring immediate attention without a long-term finality.

Eisenhower believed it is essential to focus on what is really important, not necessarily on what is urgent. In setting priorities, you will always encounter the contradiction between **important** and **urgent**.

The reality that surrounds you is full of pitfalls of urgency, which can make it difficult for you to get to the things that are really important and valuable. Only when you know what are the important activities and which are the urgent ones can you overcome the temptation to focus on urgent but unimportant activities.

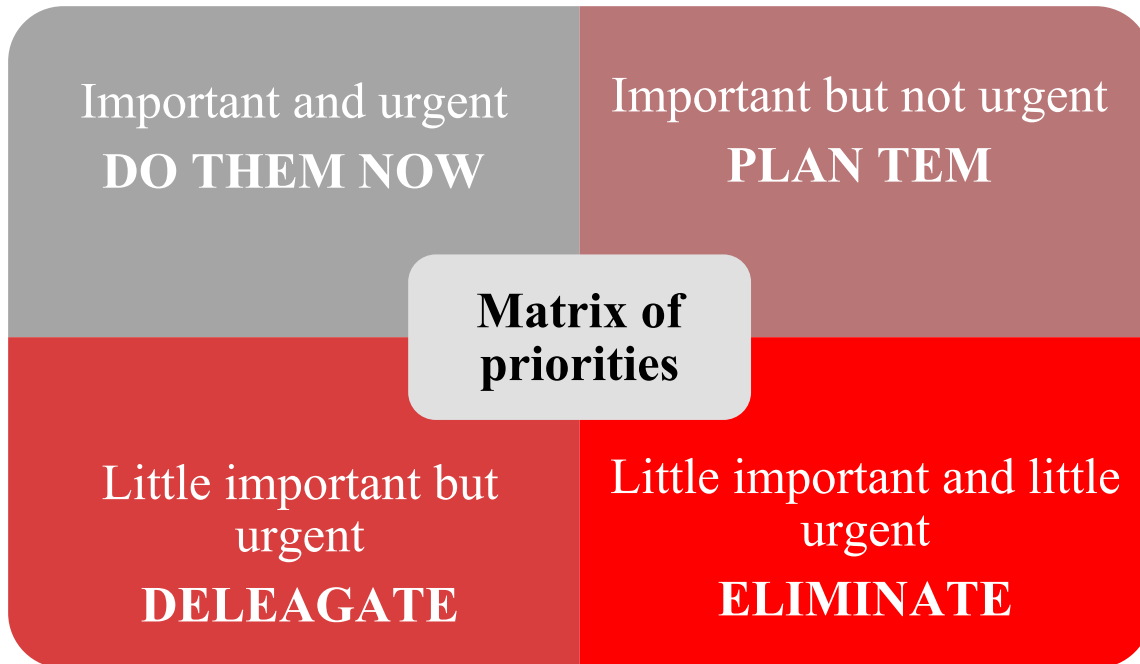
If you want to apply Eisenhower's principle in practice, you should start listing all the activities/projects you manage. It includes all activities at work, school, home, hobbies, no matter how unimportant you consider them. If you've used a **To do list**, you know what it's about. Once you have identified all the activities, place them in one of the 4 categories, as

shown in the figure below:

Think of the matrix as a video game where you have to manage resources (your time) to get a high score. Each task is a mission that you must complete in a strategic way to win.

What does each dial mean?

- **Important and Urgent.** These are grade-A priorities and you need to solve them personally



as soon as possible. You couldn't foresee these priorities or you kept postponing them until the deadline came. It's not always possible even if you think you can avoid this category through planning. The best approach is to always keep free time on your agenda for such unexpected problems and postponed activities. If this is not possible, you will have to postpone other tasks. It is essential to try to identify how you can reduce the list of deferred activities that have become emergencies because of you as much as possible.

- **Important, but not urgent.** These are B-grade priorities and include activities that help you achieve your career and personal goals. It is the dial to which you will have to give the greatest importance. The tasks in this quadrant are important for your career and professional life and you have planned them in advance. They do not need to be solved today, but they must be strategically planned with well-defined deadlines, stages of implementation and necessary actions. Complying with them relieves you of stress and anxiety related to time.
- **A little important but urgent.** These are C-grade priorities and represent tasks that stress you out with their urgency, eat away at your precious time, and divert you from the really important goals in your life. The main source of these activities is the people in your life. You have to learn to say NO politely to people and invite them to solve their own problems.

What tasks do you include in this category?

- Post on social media
- Reply to emails that aren't important
- Take over the task of a colleague who has another priority

They must be fulfilled but it is not mandatory for you to do it. If you're wondering how to solve these tasks, the answer is FAST. You may not always find someone to pass such tasks on. In this case, you will have to reschedule them for when you are available or announce the schedule to people who usually interrupt your work.

- **It is neither important nor urgent.** These are priorities of degree D. They are those things that are too little outlined, the ones that time solves or simply the trash can. Most of them you can ignore or undo. If there are activities that some people want you to do, you'll need to politely say **NO** and explain why you can't do it.

The greatest importance should be given to the tasks in quadrant 2. Identify the activities you will have to do and try to plan them. This way you will reduce the pressure in quadrant 1, reducing the number of urgent and important activities. With planning and prioritization, you can remove or reduce a number of tasks in quadrants 3 and 4.

In order for this principle to work in your life and become an effective decision-making tool, you should build your own system of priorities. Adapt the matrix to your own goals and plans. Do this in as much detail and as mandatory in writing because only in this way will your system of priorities become law in the adoption of future decisions. For the system to really work, actively communicate it to those around you.

Tips for prioritizing tasks

- Plan ahead when possible
 - Leave free time to deal with surprises
 - Schedule time regularly to take care of important but not urgent tasks
 - Delegate less important tasks



- Set clear boundaries for activities that serve others but not you

What you can do at home

Manage a busy day

Start the day by writing down all the tasks you need to do.

Put each task in the appropriate quadrant.

Start your day with tasks in the "Urgent & Important" quadrant. Through out the day, see how the list evolves and adjust priorities if necessary.

At the end of the day, analyze how well you managed to follow your plan. What could you improve? What tasks should have been handled differently?

What you can do at home

Plan your weekly tasks

At the beginning of each week, take 20 minutes to plan.

Based on the four quadrants, plan what you will do each day.

For example, on Monday morning you will focus on urgent and important tasks.

Make it a goal to multitask in the "Important but not urgent" category to reduce stress and improve your planning.

Evaluate how you handled tasks. Did you manage to focus on what was really important? What can you change for the next week?

The MoSCoW method is a technique used to prioritize tasks and requirements within projects. By using it, the team ensures that it remains focused on objectives and that resources are distributed efficiently.

The MoSCoW method is useful for learning to manage your time, resources and priorities, whether in school, personal life or career development. Although it is a technique used

predominantly in project management and software development, its principles can be adapted to support organizing activities and making important decisions.

MoSCoW is an acronym that stands for four categories of priorities:

- **M—Must have.** In this category, essential requirements are introduced that must be met. They cannot be negotiated because failure to do so will cause the project to fail.
- **S—Should have.** This category introduces requirements that are important but not essential for the project. Their lack can create difficulties but does not compromise the project.
- **C—Could have.** These are requirements that are desirable but not essential. You can include them if you have the time and resources. Removing them would not significantly affect the project's success.
- **W—Won't have** They are requirements that are not planned for implementation in this phase or project. They are usually postponed or excluded.

Example

a) Imagine that you want to go on a road trip with friends:

1. Must have:

Fuel, GPS map and ID cards. Without them, you can't get started.

2. Should have:

A good playlist on Spotify and snacks. They are not essential, but they make the trip much more enjoyable.

3. Could have:

A Polaroid camera for retro photos. It's a nice addition, but it doesn't stop you from enjoying the trip if you don't have it.

4. Won't have for now:

Stop at all the sights along the route. If you don't have enough time, you can leave these stops for another trip.

b) How do you apply the MoSCoW method in your life as a student?

Homework for school:

1. Must have:

Finish the presentation project that is due tomorrow.

2. Should have:

You are studying for next week's test.

3. Could have:

You're working on an additional creative project for a school competition.

4. Won't have for now:

You're reading a new novel for fun — it can be postponed for the weekend.

How the MoSCoW method can be helpful for you

- **You manage time efficiently.** Do you often face many simultaneous responsibilities (homework, exams, extracurricular activities, hobbies)? Applying the MoSCoW method, you learn to prioritize essential tasks ("Must have") and allocate time efficiently.



Example: Tasks that are essential to pass an exam would be "Must have", while relaxation activities could be "Could have" or "Won't have", depending on the moment.

- **You develop your decision-making capacity.** Using MoSCoW develops more structured thinking regarding which activities deserve immediate attention and what can be postponed or eliminated. This helps you make more informed decisions and avoid procrastination.



Example: If you have to choose between learning for an important test and going out with friends, the MoSCoW method can help you decide that the test is a "Must have" and the output can be "Won't have" at that time.

- **You reduce stress.** A clear prioritization of requirements and activities helps reduce feelings of overwhelm. When you know what's essential and what can be left out, you can avoid trying to do too many things simultaneously.



Example: During an exam period, you can use MoSCoW to focus on core subjects and critical exams, thus reducing the anxiety of being unable to cover everything.

- **You plan for the long term.** If you want to plan personal or professional goals, you can use the MoSCoW method to structure your short, medium and long-term goals. This can include both career planning and life goals.



Example: If you want to become a programmer you could prioritize learning a programming language like "Must have", learning secondary languages like "Should have" and other non-essential activities like "Could have".

Limitations of the MoSCow method

✓ **Lack of experience in prioritization.** You may have difficulty distinguishing between "Must have" and "Should have", especially if you have no experience in time management. You can consider too many things as essential.

- ✓ **External influences.** Friends, family or teachers may influence you as to what your priorities should be, which can make it difficult to apply the method objectively.

Conclusions

The MoSCoW method can be extremely useful for you, as it gives you a structured way to organize your life and make better decisions. However, to function optimally, you must learn to differentiate between essential and less important requirements, which require practice and experience. Applying it consistently, the MoSCoW method can help you become more efficient and organized.

What you can do at home

Prioritize daily tasks

Write a list of 10 tasks that you need to complete in the next week. It includes both personal and professional tasks.

Using the MoSCoW method, it classifies each task into one of the categories "Must have", "Should have", "Could have", and "Won't have".

Analyze your decisions. Why did you choose to place certain tasks in "Must have" and others in "Could have"?

Tips

- ***Once you've applied MoSCoW to your daily tasks, review them at the end of the week or month***
- ***Evaluate whether your priorities were right and whether they helped achieve your goals. Adjust your strategy for the next period.***

The ABC rule is a simple and effective method of prioritizing tasks based on their impact on your goals. This rule represents the Pareto Principle applied to priorities. This principle states that, in many situations, about 80% of the results are generated by only 20% of causes or activities. The Pareto principle was initially applied in economics and income distribution but was later extended and applied in various areas, including time management, personal productivity and efficiency in office work.

To apply the ABC Rule you need to go through 2 steps:

I. **Identification of activities.** Start by listing all the tasks and activities you need to complete.

II. **Impact assessment.** Evaluate the impact of each activity on your goals. "What impact does this activity have on my long-term success?"

It divides the activities into 3 categories:

Category A (20%). These are the activities that have the greatest impact on your goals. They should be treated as absolute priorities and addressed first.

Category B (30%). These activities are important but do not have as much impact as those in category A. They should follow after the activities in category A.

Category C (50%). These activities have a relatively small impact and can be considered things you can do if you have the time but they are not urgent or essential to your primary goals. Once you've prioritized your tasks, act accordingly by focusing your time and energy on those in category A, then B and then C.

Advantages of applying the Pareto Principle in prioritization

❖ Focus on maximum impact activities. It is important to identify and focus on those activities that generate the greatest results and impact.

❖ Prioritize tasks based on importance and impact. By applying the Pareto Principle, you can prioritize tasks and activities according to their impact on goals. Thus, you can focus on those activities that contribute the most to achieving the desired results.

❖ Elimination of unnecessary or non-essential activities. The Pareto principle helps you identify and eliminate activities that do not significantly impact or consume resources without bringing proportionate benefits. This way, you can focus your resources and energy on the actions that really matter.

❖ Application in time planning and task management. The Pareto principle is a useful tool in time and resource management that helps you identify and focus on the actions that bring the greatest impact and results in your personal and professional life. By applying this principle, you will optimize your efficiency and achieve better results in a smarter and more strategic way.

What you can do at home

Plan extracurricular activities for next week

Write down any extracurricular activities you've committed to or would like to do. For example: sports training, music lessons, volunteering, personal projects, etc.

Classify activities into the 3 categories: A, B and C

Prioritize within each category: Plan your week so that you allocate time first to activities in category A, followed by those in B and, if you still have time, those in C

You will have a better balance between extracurricular obligations and free time, without neglecting your studies.

What you can do at home

Balance between school and social life

List activities: Make a list of the activities you have in your schedule, both school and social. For example: homework, outings with friends, parties, individual study, etc.

Categorize activities:

- A: Activities critical to school performance (e.g., completing an assignment with a close deadline).
- B: Important activities that can be postponed a little (for example, an outing with friends that can be rescheduled).
- C. Optional or non-impactful activities (e.g., watching a TV show).

Prioritize within each category: Make sure A-tasks are always completed first. Then, you can allocate time for B activities, and those in category C can only be done if you have enough free time.

You will be able to better balance your school and social life, without sacrificing any of them.

What you can do at home

Evaluation and rearrangement of tasks

Once you've grouped your tasks into ABC categories, review your list at the end of the day or week. Are there any Category A tasks left unresolved? Maybe some tasks in category B have become more urgent in the meantime?

Example:

If you haven't finished studying for tomorrow's test (category A task), you should make an adjustment in your priorities and allocate more time to this activity.

Objective: To develop the ability to adjust priorities as new emergencies or changes in the schedule arise.

4. Agenda of the day

The way you organize your 24 hours of the day is very important. For a good management, you need an agenda. A well-made agenda can make the difference between "I was super productive today" and "Where did this day go?"

For old-schoolers: The classic agenda, on paper, is preferred by those who appreciate the break from technology. If you like to write by hand, draw on the edge, use colors for highlighting, and check off tasks "for real," then this is for you. In addition, it is therapeutic to see everything well organized on paper.

For tech-lovers: The digital agenda is the perfect friend for those who live by phone or tablet. You can easily edit it, receive notifications that remind you what to do and access it from any device, no matter where you are.

Regardless of how it is organized, the agenda must include the scheduled times for each activity. They can be associated with locations, people involved and other relevant information. For a daily agenda to be effective, it must contain the following sections:

- ❖ **Priorities section.** In this section, you write down priority and urgent tasks. They have the greatest impact on the goals you have set for yourself.

- ❖ **Time frames.** Allocate time to each activity. Be realistic and leave buffer periods between them for delays or breaks.

❖ **Reminders and notifications.** Setting reminders and notifications helps you not to miss any scheduled activity that day. It's like having a "coach" who keeps up with you.

❖ **Notes section.** Keep a place to add important information you've gained during activities, new ideas, thoughts, etc.

❖ **Objectives of the day.** Set 1-2 goals for the day. It helps you stay motivated.

❖ **Review and rating of the day.** At the end of the day, write down what you have achieved, what you have learned and what you can improve on in the coming days. It's a super useful reflection exercise.

You can combine your agenda with other tools, such as electronic calendars, task management apps and to-do lists for effective organization.

It is recommended that the tasks be grouped into categories: work, education, personal activities and household. This organization will allow you to identify more clearly how much time you spend on your private and professional life.

4.1. Time blocking, the method that saves your day

If you find yourself jumping from one task to another without finishing anything, try "Time Blocking". "Time blocking" is a time organization technique that involves dividing the day into blocks of time dedicated to certain activities or types of tasks. Instead of going through the to-do list as they come up, you set aside fixed periods of the day to focus on specific tasks. This method helps you eliminate multitasking, increase productivity and better time management.

How to implement the "Time blocking" technique

1. **Identify essential tasks:** Start by determining what the most important tasks of the day are. These can be related to work, personal life or other responsibilities.

2. **Allocate blocks of time for each task you've identified:** Divide the day into segments (blocks of time) to work on these tasks. This way of organizing eliminates multitasking and helps you be more productive and have more free time.

3. **Structure each block.** Each block of time is dedicated to a specific task or type of task. During the block, focus only on that activity, without interruptions. You can set a timer to help you stick to your allotted time.

4. **Allocate blocks for breaks and recovery:** Don't forget to allocate time for breaks between work blocks, so you can recharge your energy. These breaks can range from 5 minutes between tasks to 30-60 minutes for meals or relaxation.

5. Stay flexible: While it's important to stick to your time blocks, be prepared to adjust your schedule for the unexpected. Sometimes, tasks take longer or shorter than you anticipated and flexibility is key to avoiding stress.

At	Activity
7,00 – 8,00	Morning routine (hygiene, sports, breakfast)
8,00 – 10,00	Essential work tasks
10,00 – 10,30	Break (relaxation, tea, quick check emails)
10,30 – 12,00	Focused work for an important project
12,00 – 13,00	Lunch
13,00 – 15,00	Meetings, calls, collaboration
15,30 – 17,00	Administrative tasks
17,00 – 18,00	Leisure/exercise
18,00 – 19,00	Dinner
19,00 – 21,00	Time for hobbies, family, relaxation

Tips for implementing the Time Blocking technique

- Start with the important tasks: Allocate the first blocks of time to the tasks that require the most intellectual effort or concentration.
- Be realistic: Don't block every minute of the day. It leaves room for adjustments and unforeseen events.
- Review and adjust: At the end of the day or week, evaluate how effective your schedule has been and adjust it to become more effective.



Why use the Time Blocking technique

- Focusing on one task at a time helps you work more efficiently and complete tasks faster.
- By having dedicated time for each task, you'll be less tempted to procrastinate.
- Your schedule becomes clear, knowing exactly when you need to do each task.
- By blocking out time for personal activities (e.g., exercise, reading, family time), you can maintain a healthy balance.

Time blocking is an excellent method for young people who want to manage time better, reduce distractions and achieve high productivity.

4.2. Stages of the elaboration of the Agenda

❖ **Step 1. Identify the tasks of the day.** Before you start organizing your tasks, you must list what you must do that day. If you're using an app, you enter them individually to know you've recorded them. It is essential to include all tasks in this list, no matter how simple or insignificant you consider them. For example, you must include meal breaks and relaxation as recurring activities. If new tasks appear, you can add them to the list.

❖ **Step 2. Prioritize tasks.** You've already learned how to prioritize your tasks. Before putting them in the Agenda, you should clarify an important aspect: "What tasks have deadlines that cannot be postponed?" If there are tasks in your list that interfere, you will have to consider the one that is the most urgent.

❖ **Step 3. Make a note of the deadlines.** Deadlines tell you when you need to complete the task. If you haven't set a deadline, you may miss a deliverable, even if you had enough time to work on it. Even if you're unsure what the deadline should be, it's still good to select a deadline that makes sense for now. After all, you can update it at any time. Deadlines do not only apply to professional projects but also to personal ones.

❖ **Step 4. Identify recurring tasks.** Once you've written down the deadlines in the list, highlight all recurring tasks. This will help you when developing your next agendas. Now is the time to identify if any of these recurring tasks you can remove or delegate.

❖ **Step 5. Complete tasks in your calendar by time, priority or deadline.** Now it's time to complete the tasks in the day's Agenda according to the start time and the deadline. One dilemma you'll face will be whether to solve the complex or easy tasks first. There is no one-size-fits-all solution. Some people prefer to solve easy and time-consuming tasks first. Solving them increases their self-confidence and they feel charged to solve more complex tasks. Others prefer to solve challenging tasks first when their energy is at its peak. Remember that some tasks will take hours to be performed, conditioned by external factors, and you will have to relate to them. Don't forget about the breaks for recharging with energy.

❖ **Step 6. Stay flexible.** Once you have completed the agenda, it is good to remain flexible because events may occur that will disrupt your schedule. The solution would be to reschedule. Using a digital planner will make scheduling tasks much more manageable.

Why is the agenda of the day important?

✓ It helps you organize and structure your time according to priorities. Establishing a clear plan aims to avoid wasting time and focus on the activities that really matter.

✓ A well-organized agenda allows you to efficiently allocate resources to accomplish as many tasks as possible productively.

✓ Setting a Daily Agenda helps you focus on those tasks that are both important and urgent and address them appropriately.

✓ Having a precise plan for each day will reduce the stress and anxiety levels associated with uncertainty and feeling overwhelmed by tasks.

✓ Monitoring completed activities and checking them off in your agenda will give you a sense of satisfaction and help you see how much you have achieved throughout the day, motivating you to continue managing your time efficiently.

✓ Developing your agenda allows you to identify time for personal activities and relaxation, thus contributing to a healthy work-life balance.

✓ Writing down tasks in your agenda helps free up working memory, allowing you to focus better on your current tasks and reducing the risk of forgetting important tasks.

✓ Using a daily planner helps you take responsibility for managing time and completing tasks, helping to develop self-discipline.

✓ A daily agenda allows you to adapt to unforeseen changes and reorganize tasks according to new priorities.

✓ Using a planner helps you clarify your daily goals and focus on achieving them without distractions. Each task you write down becomes a specific goal, which allows you to work more efficiently.

✓ Developing a clear plan for the day helps reduce procrastination. The agenda gives you a clear guide for what you must do, reducing the tendency to postpone completing a task.

✓ Planning and organizing your daily tasks allows you to allocate enough time for each activity, which can increase the quality of the results obtained. Each task has its time to be completed without the need for haste.

✓ Using an agenda makes you more autonomous in managing your time and activities. You don't have to rely on others to remind you what to do, which gives you more control over your life.

✓ By using a daily planner, you will identify progress over time and be able to make effective long-term plans. You'll identify activity patterns that will help you adjust to improve overall efficiency.

✓ The time planning process also stimulates the development of creativity and innovation.

✓ Creating and sticking to a daily schedule contributes to developing personal discipline, which is essential for long-term success in any field.

What you can do at home

Review your weekly goals

Analyze the goals you set for the coming week and break them down into smaller, achievable daily tasks.

Result: Better time planning, taking into account overall goals and daily details.

What you can do at home

Evening Reflection

Set aside 10 minutes at the end of the day to reflect on the achievements and challenges of the day.

Result: Increasing personal awareness and adjusting the daily agenda according to the lessons learned

4.3. How to organize your time with a digital agenda

If you prefer technology, the apps below are popular among young people. Why? Because they are affordable, easy to use and they automatically sync to your phone, laptop or tablet. That means you can organize your time efficiently –school, work projects or plans with friends.

1. Google Calendar

Why is it so popular? It is probably the most used organization app due to its seamless integration with Gmail, Google Meet, and other Google services. Did you receive an email about a meeting? Google Calendar can automatically add it for you.

What does it do well? You can set events, get notifications and share calendars with friends or colleagues. In addition, it allows you to create several calendars, to separate school from

hobbies or other activities.

- [How To Use Microsoft Outlook Calendar for Beginners \(2024\)](#)
- [How to use the New Microsoft Outlook Calendar - Beginner's Class](#)
- [Get started with the Outlook Calendar](#)



2. Microsoft Outlook Calendar

Why is it so popular? Due to the seamless synchronization in the iCloud ecosystem, it is the natural choice for Apple device users. Anyone using their iPhone, iPad or MacBook can quickly and easily access scheduled events.

What does it do well? Apple Calendar lets you create and share events, set notifications and sync everything across devices. It has a clean, minimalist and intuitive design, which makes it extremely easy to use.



- [How To Use Microsoft Outlook Calendar for Beginners \(2024\)](#)
- [How to use the New Microsoft Outlook Calendar - Beginner's Class](#)
- [Get started with the Outlook Calendar](#)

3. Apple Calendar

Why is it so popular? Due to the seamless synchronization in the iCloud ecosystem, it is the natural choice for Apple device users. Anyone who uses their iPhone, iPad or MacBook can quickly and easily access scheduled events.

What does it do well? Apple Calendar lets you create and share events, set notifications and sync everything across devices. Its clean, minimalist and intuitive design makes it extremely easy to use.



- [How to get the best out of Apple Calendar](#)
- [Use Apple Calendar Like a Pro: 7 Features You Need to Know](#)
- [Apple Calendar for Mac | Everything You Need to Know \(2023\)](#)

4. Trello

Why is it so popular? Young people love Trello for its flexibility in project management. The visual system of cards and columns makes it ideal for organizing your tasks and simply tracking progress.

What does it do well? Trello uses a "kanban" format to represent tasks as cards that can be moved between columns (e.g. "To Do", "In Progress" and "Completed"). You can add tags, deadlines and attachments, making it perfect for individual projects and teamwork.



- [Getting started with Trello \(demo\)](#)
- [How to use TRELLO - Tutorial for beginners](#)
- [Trello Tutorial: How to Use Trello to Increase Your Productivity](#)

5. Todoist

Why is it so popular? Todoist is appreciated for its minimalist design and the ease with which you can organize daily tasks. It's perfect for those looking for a simple yet powerful tool for time management.

What does it do well? The app allows you to create to-do lists, prioritize them, use tags and categories for organization. The integration feature with external calendars makes planning even more efficient.



- [Use calendar integration](#)
- [Plan your next week](#)
- [Todoist: Calendar update](#)
- [New to Todoist](#)

6. TickTick

Why is it so popular? TickTick is perfect for young people who want to balance planning and advanced functionalities, such as the Pomodoro technique and time tracking. It is an exciting alternative to Todoist.

What does it do well? It includes features for organizing tasks, daily and weekly planning, plus tools to increase productivity. You can set Pomodoro timers and sync everything with other

calendars.

- [Beginner's Guide](#)



- [TickTick Calendar QuickStart: 4 Steps to Complete Time Blocking](#)
- [How to use the TickTick calendar](#)

Digital agendas are ideal for those who want to be organized without wasting time. All you need is a phone call and a little feel like planning your day! 😊

5. How to tame your time

5.1. Parkinson's Law: Why do you do everything at the last minute?

Imagine that you have to submit an essay in a week. What do you do in the first six days? You do nothing or almost nothing. On the last day, you suddenly become an expert in organization and finish everything in a sprint of panic and coffee. Well, this is a classic example of Parkinson's Law.

Parkinson's Law is a principle observed by British historian Cyril Northcote Parkinson in 1955. It describes the human tendency to fill the time available to complete a task, regardless of its complexity or importance. This principle was initially formulated in the context of administrative activities and government spending but it was later applied in other areas, including time management and personal productivity.

Principles of Parkinson's Law:

- ❖ Expand to fit the time available. The basic principle of Parkinson's Law is that things will always take up all the time allotted to them. In other words, if you have a certain amount of time to complete a task, you will tend to prolong your activities to occupy all that time, whether necessary or not.



❖ The tendency to leave things to the last minute. Another aspect of Parkinson's Law is that when you have more time to complete a task, you tend to leave things to the last minute and work harder before the deadline.

❖ Impact on time management. It's essential to be aware of how you manage your time and not fall into the trap of filling your available time with tasks that aren't necessary or prioritized. Setting clear and strict deadlines can help limit the tendency to leave things to the last minute.

❖ Application in other fields. Apart from time management, Parkinson's Law can also be applied to other aspects of life, such as financial organization and planning or managing projects and resources in the professional environment.



Principles of Parkinson's Law

How not to fall into the trap?

- Set short, clear deadlines. If you have two days to do something, treat it as if you only had one day.
- Work little by little. Don't let all the tasks add up like a mountain that suffocates you at the end.
- Escape from procrastination. If you feel like wasting your time, ask yourself, "Do I really need to check TikTok for a third time today?"

5.2. Pomodoro Technique

When dealing with Time, there are many situations in which it can appear as a predator:

❖ While working on a task, Time may appear in your mind in the form of thoughts such as:

- *I think it's time to see what else has appeared on TikTok.*

- *I should try on my clothes for tomorrow's party.*
 - *Why didn't I start working earlier?*
 - *It's hard. What if I take a break? I've got a lot of things to do.*
- ❖ During a day, you have several tasks to complete and Time can appear to you in the form of thoughts such as:
- *Wouldn't it be better to leave this for the end of the day?*
 - *Have I forgotten something I need to do today?*
 - *Sure, it's an easier way to do that. What would it be?*
- ❖ While working in a team, time can creep into your mind in the form of thoughts like:
- *I shouldn't have accepted this task.*
 - *My colleagues worked harder than me. I don't think I'll finish on time.*

In each of these situations, Time appears as a predator and your responses are dysfunctional. Many people face a lack of time to perform daily professional and personal tasks. Surely it happens to you that you are overwhelmed by the large number of tasks you have to perform and do not know which one to start with. Luckily someone has found the solution: Francesco Cirillo invented the Pomodoro Technique.



Francesco Cirillo, creator of the Pomodoro® technique, tells "The Pomodoro Story"

"I was a university student in 1987 and I had to take the sociology exam in September. I couldn't keep my mind focused on my book. I was constantly distracted. I made a humble bet with myself: "Can you stay focused for two minutes without distraction? I went to the kitchen, took a stopwatch and returned to the table. The timer was red and shaped like a Pomodoro (tomato in English), I gave it up to two minutes and started reading the book. I won the bet against Time. Surprised, I began to wonder why it worked. I gradually increased the time to an hour, but it didn't take me much time to realize that for some factors, the ideal unit of work was 25 minutes followed by a 2-5 minute break.

There, on that table in September 1987, I hadn't noticed it yet, but I had managed to turn time into an ally for the first time. Just when Time seemed like such a malicious predator, I managed to stop in front of him, still afraid to ask this simple question: "How can you, Time, be of use to me now?"

For the first time, I used the time instead of running away from Time. I decided to use Time to spend it taking a break, to favor my mental processes, to allow my mind to organize the information it had acquired in the time of work, and to put myself in the best situation to start my next Pomodoro."

If time makes you feel like a hamster running aimlessly in the wheel, the Pomodoro technique helps you get off the wheel and become super productive.

The Pomodoro technique was a resounding success and became extremely popular. Time management experts around the world have adopted it. Francesco Cirillo improved the method over time, adding suggestions for increasing concentration, productivity and efficiency.

What is the Pomodoro technique?

The Pomodoro technique is a revolutionary way to regain control of your time. It is a structured time management method made up of processes, tools, principles and values to learn how to deal with time and turn it into an ally to increase productivity. It is based on a series of principles built on self-observation and awareness. Developing these skills makes it possible to change the relationship with time and achieve goals with less effort and anxiety.

The Pomodoro technique involves fragmenting the working time into 25-minute work intervals of concentrated work called **pomodoro**. After each pomodoro a 5-minute break follows. After 4 intervals, a longer break is taken, usually 15-30 minutes.

You might think that the Pomodoro Technique is just the stopwatch. It is not. The stopwatch is true to be the technique's emblematic element, but it is only one element.

How to apply the Pomodoro Technique in 5 steps

- I.** Choose the task you want to accomplish
- II.** Set the timer to 25 minutes
- III.** Work on the task until the timer goes off. Setting aside time for recapitulation for each Pomodoro would ensure a smooth transition to the next Pomodoro. Avoid internal and external distractions like interruptions, phone calls, social media, emails, etc.
- IV.** 5-minute break. For advanced riders, the break can be shortened to 2 minutes. For breaks, it is recommended that you select an activity that contrasts with the workload. If you work on the computer, you should get away from it and you should do a physical activity, walk, have a snack or relax.
- V.** Long break of 15-30 minutes after four Pomodoro intervals.

Tips that can help you implement the Pomodoro Technique

- *Use a timer, as it helps you stay within ranges. You can use a Pomodoro timer or an app on your phone. Some browsers on your computer also have Pomodoro timer extensions.*
- *Plan your workday and estimate how many Pomodoro intervals you need for each task. Fragment complex tasks into smaller pieces so you can easily divide them into Pomodoro intervals.*
- *Make the most of your breaks by practicing activities that refresh you for your next Pomodoro. You can practice any activity that relaxes and energizes you.*
- *Customize the ranges. Maybe you don't like the 25-minute work interval and the 5-minute break. In this case, you can adjust the time that suits you best. The idea is to take enough time to focus on work and take breaks to relax your mind and energize yourself.*



Rules for maximum productivity

1. **Fragment complex projects.** If a task requires more than four pomodoros, it should be broken down into smaller, actionable steps. Following this rule will help you make clear progress in your work.
2. **Small tasks can be done together.** You can combine tasks that take less than a Pomodoro with other simple tasks.
3. **Once a Pomodoro is set, it needs to ring.** Pomodoro is an indivisible unit of time and cannot be broken, especially not to be the target of time thieves. You write down any ideas, tasks, or requests that arise during a Pomodoro and review them later.

Fragment complex projects

Small tasks can be done together

Once a Pomodoro is set, it must ring

In case of an unavoidable interruption, take a 5-minute break and start again. Cirillo recommends watching for interruptions (internal or external) as they occur and reflecting on how to avoid them in the next session. The rule applies even if you finish your task before the alarm goes off. You can use the remaining time to overlearn or improve your skills or field of knowledge.

Benefits of the Pomodoro technique

- Encourage focused work. Delimiting a time only for work allows you to stay focused on the task.
- It helps you organize yourself by dividing complex tasks into smaller pieces that you tackle one at a time and manage more efficiently.
- You can adapt the technique to the task's demands, whether it requires intense concentration or more creative, free-thinking.
- It reduces stress and anxiety because it gives you control over the time it takes to complete your task and get the results. In addition, time is no longer measured in minutes and hours but in ... pomodoros (tomatoes), which can be funnier.
- Improved communication and flexibility in the team. The Pomodoro technique can also be used in teamwork, facilitating structured and effective communication. Setting specific intervals for collaboration and individual work reduces interruptions and allows team members to plan their interaction times more effectively, including switching pairs for different tasks or perspectives.

Disadvantages of the Pomodoro technique

✓ The rigid schedule can create a state of discomfort if you do not have a certain culture of discipline;

✓ If you fail to perform the task during a pomodoro, you can become stressed;

The program does not consider interruptions you cannot control: colleagues or bosses who want to consult you on various professional issues.

The Pomodoro technique is for you if



You are a person who is easily distracted when you work



It is difficult for you to properly appreciate what you can do in a working day



You face complex tasks over a long period of time (preparation for an exam)



You really like tomatoes 🍅)

What you can do at home

"Choose your Pomodoro"

Apply the Pomodoro technique to daily learning activities. Divide the time you have allocated for learning into several Pomodoro sessions separated by breaks.

Share with the group how you organized your time and if it was effective to use the Pomodoro Technique:

"How did you feel when you worked continuously on a task for 25 minutes?"

"How often did you feel the need for a break when you worked?"

6. Conclusions

Time management and prioritization aren't just "grown-up stuff" – they're superpowers that any teenager or young person can develop with some practice. When you learn to organize your time, you become like a magician juggling classes and making his plans come to life.

Through the techniques and ideas presented, you can turn chaos into a system that works for you. Planning days and weeks, to-do lists and creative methods like Pomodoro are just a few weapons in your arsenal to take control of time.

Here are some ideas that can change your life.

❖ **Daily and weekly activity planning:** Consider your day a personalized playlist. Choose which "songs" you want to "listen to" (a.k.a. tasks), decide on the order, and leave room for a relaxing "chorus".



A student might plan their day by setting study hours for different subjects, setting aside time for work or other obligations and including time for relaxation or recreational activities.

❖ **Use to-do lists:** Imagine ticking things off a list – the feeling is like winning a level in a game. Plus, forgetting something important is hard if you have everything written down.



A budding entrepreneur could list "what I have to do today"—brainstorming for the business idea, a TikTok about the concept, and, of course, a few moments of respite.

❖ **Using the Pomodoro technique to tame time:** 25 minutes of complete focus, then a short break – sounds good, right? It helps you stay focused without feeling like you're in an endless marathon.



Do you have an essay to write? Divide it into pieces – each "tomato" (Pomodoro) brings you closer to the "final harvest".

Find what suits you!

There's no one-size-fits-all recipe – and that's great! Each of us has a different way of functioning and time management is a tool that you can customize. If one type of planning doesn't work, change your approach without getting discouraged.

If you are neurodivergent, remember that flexibility and adaptation are your allies. Experiment, play with ideas and choose only what you feel that it resonates with you. You have every right to do things differently – and you may even discover methods that inspire others.

Context 1



Alex is 17 years old, a high school student and has ADHD. He has difficulty staying focused on long tasks and sometimes feels overwhelmed by homework, extracurricular activities and daily obligations.

Challenge:

Alex has to prepare a biology project, but he tends to procrastinate until the last minute.

Adapted plan for time management:

1. Dividing the project into small and clear tasks:

Instead of thinking about "I need to finish the project," Alex breaks down his work into simple, specific steps:

- *Research on the subject (2 days).*
- *Creating the outline (1 day).*
- *Writing the introduction and conclusion (1 day).*

- Review and verification (1 day).

2. Set a visual calendar:

Alex uses an organization app or a colorful physical calendar. Each task is given a different color. For example, the research is green, the outline writing is yellow and the revision is blue.

3. Implementation of the customized Pomodoro technique:

Because he finds it difficult to concentrate for a long time, Alex sets 15-minute work intervals, followed by a 5-minute break. After 4 intervals (about an hour), take a break over 20 minutes.

4. Creating a Friendly Workspace:

Alex arranges his desk with things that help him focus: a colorful lamp that creates a relaxing atmosphere, a visual timer for Pomodoro and a fidget (e.g., a spinner) that he uses during breaks.

5. Using Motivation Rewards:

After completing each task (e.g., research), Alex gives himself a small reward, such as 10 minutes to play on his phone or a favorite snack.

Results:

- *Alex completes the project on time without feeling pressured to do everything simultaneously.*
- *He feels more motivated and confident because he has adapted his strategy to his way of operating.*
- *He discovers that he can stay focused better by using colors and regular breaks.*

To remember:

For neurodivergent young people, the key is to personalize the methods. Shorter intervals, frequent breaks, and small rewards can make an intimidating task more enjoyable and manageable. 🌀

Context 2



Maria, 16 years old, is a student and has dyslexia. She finds it difficult to organize her study materials and feels overwhelmed by multiple tasks.

Strategy:

1. Prioritization of tasks with the Eisenhower method:

Maria writes down all her homework and classifies it:

- **Important and urgent:** *The math homework (it's for tomorrow).*
- **Important, but not urgent:** *Reading a chapter for next week's quiz.*
- **Unimportant:** *Organize old notes.*

2. Using an audio app for to-do lists:

Because writing is more difficult for her, Maria uses an app that turns voice into text to create her daily to-do lists.

3. Custom Time Blocks:

Maria works for 25 minutes on her Maths homework, with a 10-minute break, during which she listens to relaxing music.

4. Visual Feedback:

It uses colorful stickers to mark completed tasks, which gives it a sense of accomplishment.

Result:

Maria completes the important assignment without feeling overwhelmed and manages to stay on track for the next test. Visual and audio methods help her maintain her motivation and clarity. 🌟

Retain! Time management is not a one-size-fits-all solution. It's more like a pair of sneakers—you must try several to find the model that suits you. Start with what attracts you and adjust along the way.

Be open to learn from mistakes, experiment with new methods and adapt them to your own pace. With a bit of patience, you'll discover how to juggle time and build the life you want – without unnecessary stress and with a lot of success.

Each of us has a unique brain, meaning the strategies for organizing time must be equally diverse. If you find yourself on the spectrum of ADHD, autism or another form of neurodiversity, you may need methods that fit your particular way of thinking. And that's super OK! The idea is to find what works for you.

You've got everything you need – now get to work and conquer the time! 🚀

7. Bibliographic references

Books

1. **Jarrow, Craig.** (2019). *The Time Management Ninja: 21 Rules for More Time and Less Stress in Your Life*. Indianapolis: Wiley.
2. **Newport, Cal.** (2016). *Deep Work: Rules for Focused Success in a Distracted World*. New York: Grand Central Publishing.
3. **Clear, James.** (2018). *Atomic Habits: An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones*. New York: Avery.
4. **Knapp, Jake & Zeratsky, John.** (2018). *Make Time: How to Focus on What Matters Every Day*. New York: Currency.

Academic articles

1. **"Time Management Strategies for Generation Z Students: Challenges and Opportunities"** (2022). *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 34(2), 123-140.
2. **"Digital Distractions: How Social Media Impacts the Productivity of Generation Z"** (2021). *Journal of Technology and Education*, 29(4), 56-68.
3. **"The Role of Technology in Time Management Skills of Generation Z"** (2023). *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 72(1), 98-115.

Online resources

1. **Vanderkam, Laura.** (2016). *TED Talk: How to Gain Control of Your Free Time*. TED https://www.ted.com/talks/laura_vanderkam_how_to_gain_control_of_your_free_time?subtitle=en
2. **Vanderkam, Laura: How to Take CONTROL of Your TIME and Get MORE DONE!** | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-K2Wg-lpaf4>
3. **Vanderkam, Laura: 9 Strategies To Better Control Your Time - Laura Vanderkam** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ff12RsvjdPc>
4. **Mind Tools.** (n.d.). *What is Time Management?* <https://www.mindtools.com/arb6j5a/what-is-time-management>
5. **Urgent or Important? The Eisenhower Principle** <https://www.mindtools.com/a8z08fb/the-eisenhower-principle>
6. **Diamond, Dylan "I Help Gen Z Students with Time Management"** <https://www.fastcompany.com/91146564/i-help-gen-z-students-with-time-management-heres-what-you-need-to-know-about-entering-the-workforce>

7. "Gen Z, Masters of Time Management?" on Z.Lab by Hotel Institute Montreux
<https://www.zlab-by-him.com/post/gen-z-masters-of-time-management>

Other resources

- <https://panorama.ro/deficit-atentie-gen-z-tineri-munca/>
- <https://extension.umn.edu/youth-learning-and-skills/daily-time-management-wellbeing>
- <https://www.verywellfamily.com/teaching-time-management-skills-to-teens-2608794>
- <https://mentalhealthcenterkids.com/blogs/articles/time-management-for-teens>
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7729922/>
- <https://www.connectionsacademy.com/support/resources/article/time-management-for-teens/>
- <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/family-dynamics/Pages/time-management-as-a-teen-wellness-tool-less-stress-more-balance.aspx>
- <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Health/aftercareinformation/pages/conditions.aspx?hwid=ug6046>
- <https://www.additudemag.com/time-management-for-teens/>
- <https://rise.crimsoneducation.org/articles/time-management-for-teens-made-easy-in-5-steps-parents-guide>
- <https://www.calendar.com/blog/arrest-these-12-time-and-productivity-thieves/>
- <https://facilethings.com/blog/en/time-thieves>
- <https://pandorafms.com/blog/time-thieves/>
- <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/10-time-thieves-you-need-fight-every-day-francisco-s%C3%A1ez/>
- <https://libguides.marshall.edu/c.php?g=1022652&p=7416703>
- <https://libguides.marshall.edu/c.php?g=1022652&p=7407359>
- <https://teamhood.com/productivity/time-thieves/>
- <https://itrevolution.com/articles/the-five-time-thieves/>
- <https://www.zn-advisory.com/blog/2023/5/24/identifying-and-overcoming-time-thieves-in-your-daily-routine>
- <https://leanscape.io/time-thieves-how-time-slips-away/>
- <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Time-Thieves-a-time-management-activity-4390858>

- <https://www.zn-advisory.com/blog/2023/5/24/identifying-and-overcoming-time-thieves-in-your-daily-routine>
- <https://www.pomodrotechnique.com/book-pomodoro-technique.php>
- <https://todoist.com/productivity-methods/pomodoro-technique#three-pomodoro-technique-rules-for-maximum-productivity>
- <https://pomofocus.io/>
- <https://www.techtarget.com/whatis/definition/pomodoro-technique>
- <https://flexi-project.com/ro/metoda-moscow-o-tehnica-eficienta-de-prioritizare-a-sarcinilor-in-managementul-proiectelor/>
- https://ca.koshachek.com/articles/ce-este-metoda-moscow-knowledge-compact.html#google_vignette

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES FOR YOUTH

INTRODUCTION FOR PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES

The practical activities associated with Chapter 2, "**Time is of the essence**", involve two workshops: a skills training workshop and a workshop on implementing the LARP "**Time is of the essence.**"

The skills training workshop "Time is of the essence" is intended for young people (20-30 participants) aged between 15 and 20. We designed it to last at least 5 hours. The space where face-to-face activities will occur must allow for teamwork and individual activities.

Resources needed: video projector, flipchart, markers, worksheets, Pomodoro stopwatch.

Workshop 1 has two modules separated by a 15-minute break. The sequences are separated by energizing exercises (10 minutes).

Module I (140 minutes) consists of 2 sequences:

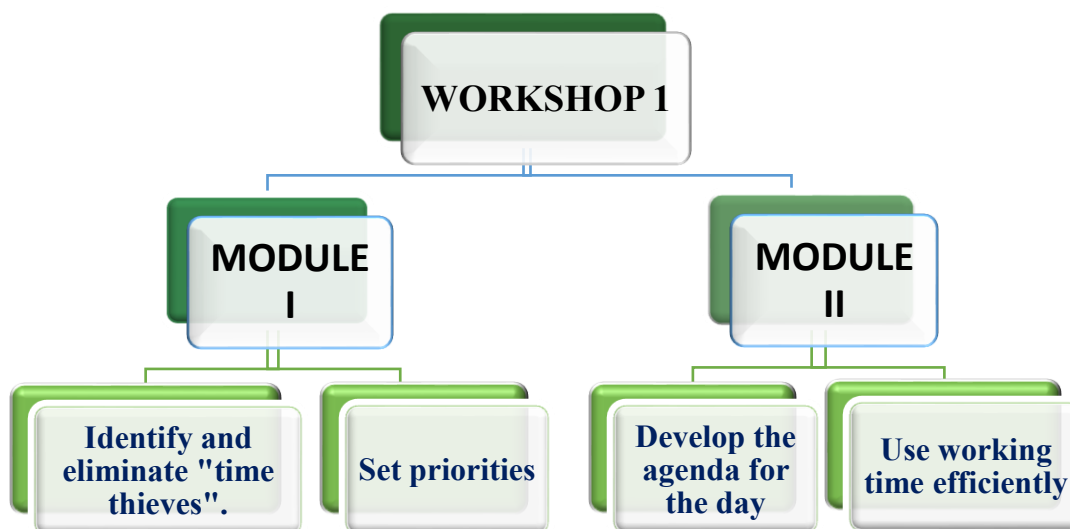
Sequence 1: Identify and eliminate time thieves (65 minutes)

Sequence 2: Set priorities (65 minutes)

Module II (145 minutes) consists of 2 sequences:

Sequence 1: Develop the agenda of the day

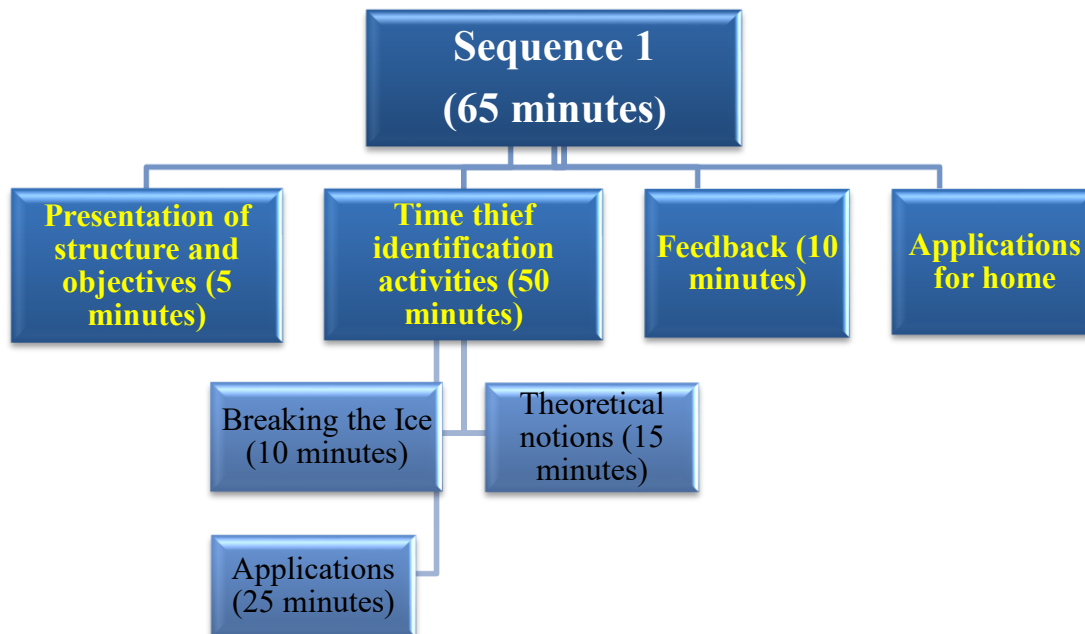
Sequence 2: Use your work time efficiently



WORKSHOP 1

1. MODULE I

1.1. Sequence 1. Identify and eliminate "time thieves"



❖ **Presentation of structure and objectives (5 minutes).** Discuss with the participants the duration, structure, objectives, and their involvement.

❖ **Time thief identification activities (50 minutes).**

- **Breaking the ice (10 minutes).** Divide the participants into groups of 5 members and propose an activity (no matter the theme) that will take 2 minutes of intensive work. During these 2 minutes, they play the role of "time thieves": they constantly disturb some groups by preventing them from completing work tasks. You can also involve volunteers from among the participants without the rest of the group knowing their role. When these 2 minutes are over, you collect the results obtained by each group and analyse if all the groups have completed the activity. The goal is to make the participants aware of factors that consume their time, distracting them from their goals.

- **Theoretical notions (15 minutes).** It shows the importance of time management and the need not to accept that it is stolen from you. This information can be found in the theoretical part of the chapter.

- Practical activity (25 minutes). Keep the groups created during the breaking the ice activity. Provide each group with a worksheet with the image below to analyze how "time thieves" consume time. Ask them to find connections between these "time thieves."

- ❖ **Feedback (10 minutes).** Encourage participants to share their own experiences regarding these "time thieves":

- How often do you feel like you're wasting time on non-essential activities?
- What activities seem to consume your time without bringing you value?
- How do you think this analysis of time thieves helps you become more efficient?

- ❖ **Home exercises.** Encourage young people to solve the proposed activity for home, to reduce the time stolen by "thieves of time".

Worksheet *Time thieves*



- *Analyse the "time thieves" and reflect on how they consume your time.*
- *Identify connections between time thieves.*
- *Write down next to each "time thief" a solution to reduce it.*

Examples of connections between time thieves

- Constant notifications influence multitasking;
- Video games and binge-watching influence procrastination;
- Notifications amplify the use of social networks;
- FOMO makes us use social networks and notifications frequently;
- The use of video games, streaming, etc, amplifies procrastination.

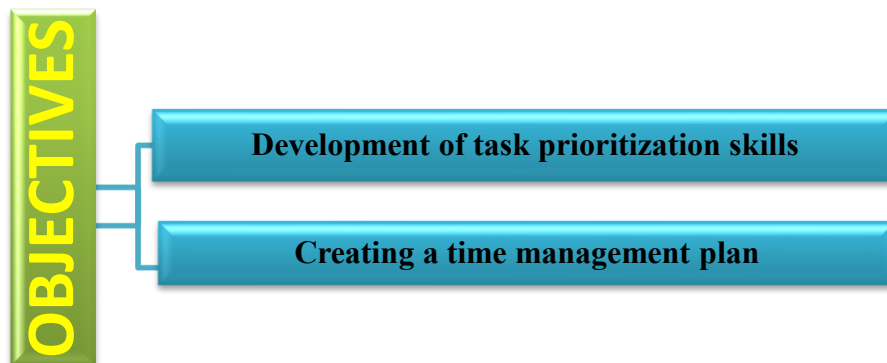
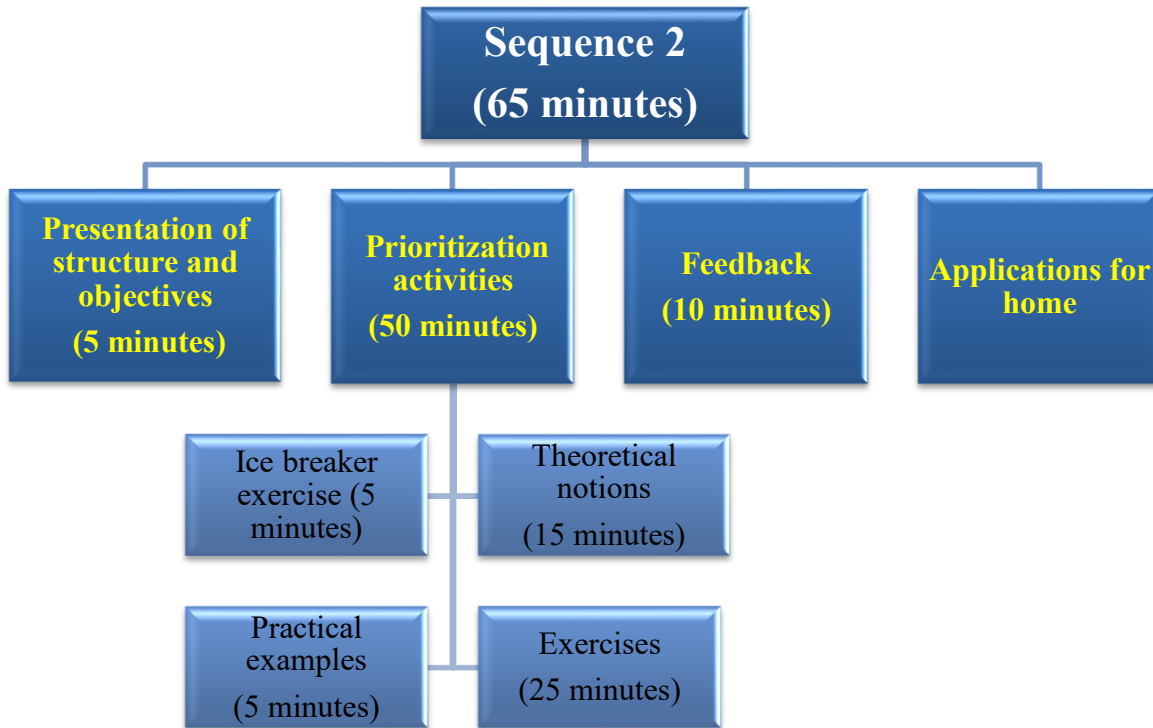
What you can do at home

Eliminate/reduce time thieves using the Pareto Technique

- For 3 days, monitor your time and write down all your activities, including those that seem insignificant (e.g., checking emails, chatting on social media, browsing the internet, interruptions caused by friends, acquaintances, colleagues, etc.). Also write down the time you spend on these activities.
- Analyze which of these activities contribute the least to achieving your goals and bring you the least positive results.
- Apply the 80/20 principle: Identify those 20% of activities that are responsible for 80% of the waste of time. These are the major time thieves.
- Develop a plan to eliminate or reduce these activities. You can use methods like blocking time, eliminating distractions or delegating tasks.

Expected result: You will have more free time for productive activities and reduce the loss of time caused by unnecessary activities.

1.2.Sequence 2. Set priorities



❖ **Present the structure and objectives (5 minutes).** Discuss with the participants the duration, structure of the sequence, objectives, and their involvement.

❖ **Prioritisation activities (50 minutes).**

- I. **Ice-breaking activity (5 minutes):** Ask a few participants to identify a task that they have not been able to solve in the last week and why.
- II. **Theoretical notions (15 minutes).** Introduce students to the importance of prioritization in achieving personal and career goals and the difference between important and urgent. Depending on the group's structure (age, education, profession), you can present a single prioritization method or several of those described in the theoretical part.
- III. **Practical example (5 minutes).** Provides participants with the prioritization model specific to the chosen method(s). The model aims to familiarize them with the application of the method.
- IV. **Exercises (25 minutes).** Depending on their availability, provide participants with one or more prioritization exercises. For a time allotted of 25 minutes, the structure can be 15 minutes of solving tasks and 10 minutes of discussing in pairs how they set priorities.

❖ **Feedback (10 minutes).** Encourage participants to share about the difficulty of setting priorities.

❖ **Home exercises.** Participants are asked to get involved in solving the activities suggested for home to form the habit of prioritizing tasks in their daily lives.

❖ **Post-implementation follow-up.** Offer participants mentoring sessions, during which young people can discuss specific issues and receive additional guidance on how to better apply the method.

Prioritization using the Eisenhower Matrix

This part presents the ranking of priorities using the Eisenhower Matrix. The degree of detail is established according to the time you have available.

After presenting the theoretical concepts, suggest that students consider the following example of prioritization based on the Eisenhower Matrix. Provide your participants with an Eisenhower Matrix worksheet and a list of tasks they must arrange in the appropriate quadrant.

Example of using the Eisenhower Matrix

Task list

- *Study for the exam (2 days until the exam).*
- *Email your teacher (today).*
- *Wash clothes (you only have a few clean clothes).*
- *Play on your phone.*
- *Go out with friends tonight.*

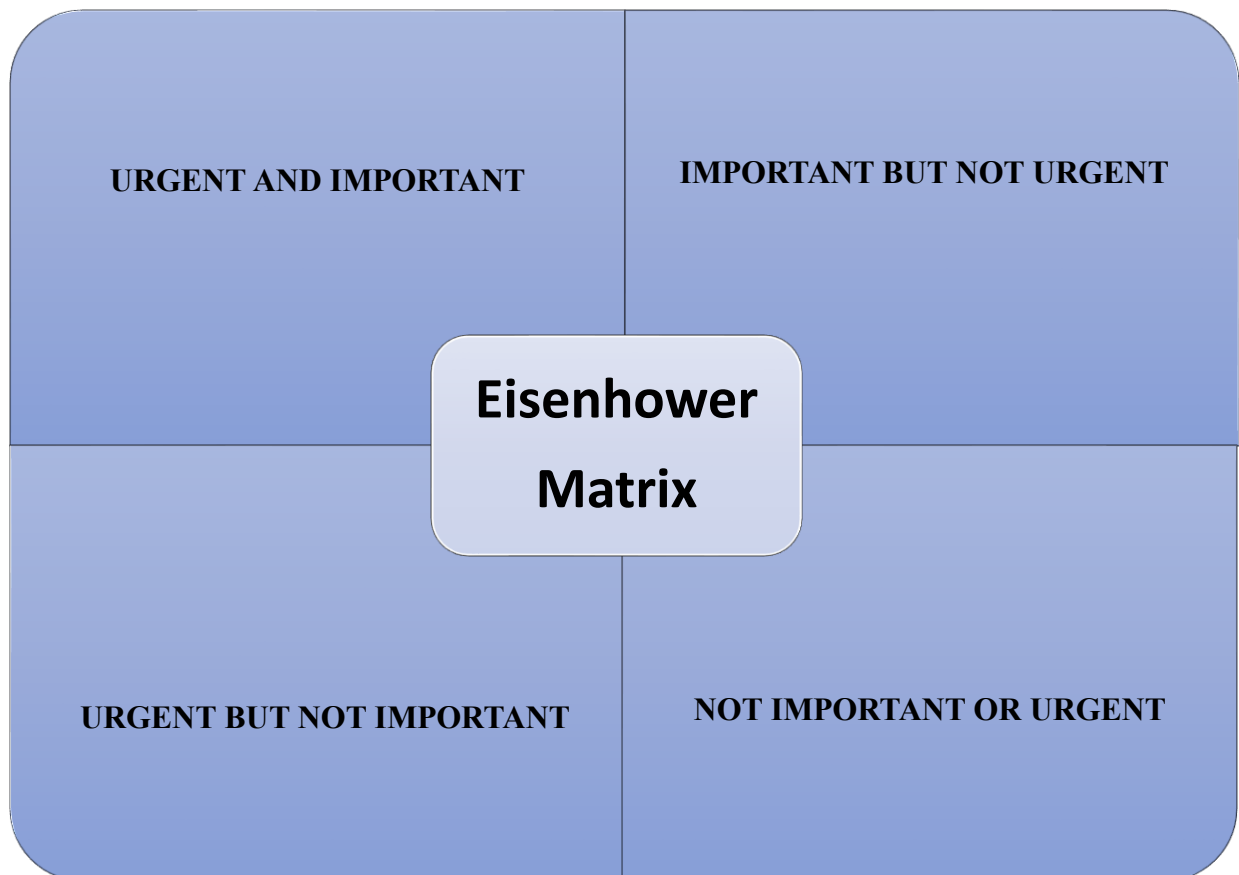


Worksheet 1

Education

Tasks:

- Constant learning in an area of interest.
- Preparing for an exam that is tomorrow.
- Reading materials that do not bring real value to studies.
- Solving a topic that is not very relevant to long-term goals but has a short-term one.

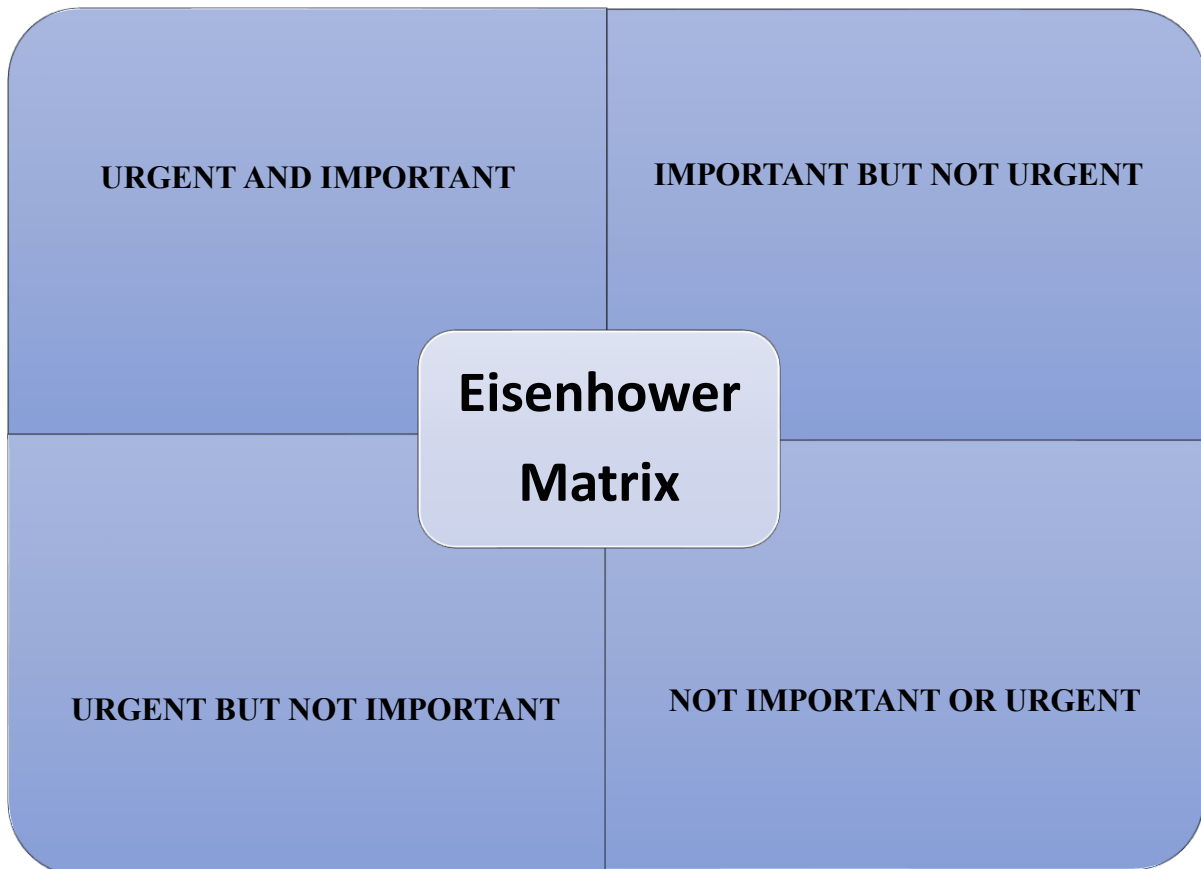


Worksheet 2

Project management at work

Tasks:

- Responding to daily emails that don't require special attention but have short deadlines.
- Checking social media during working hours.
- Developing a marketing strategy for the next six months.
- Completing a presentation for an important client with a due date tomorrow.

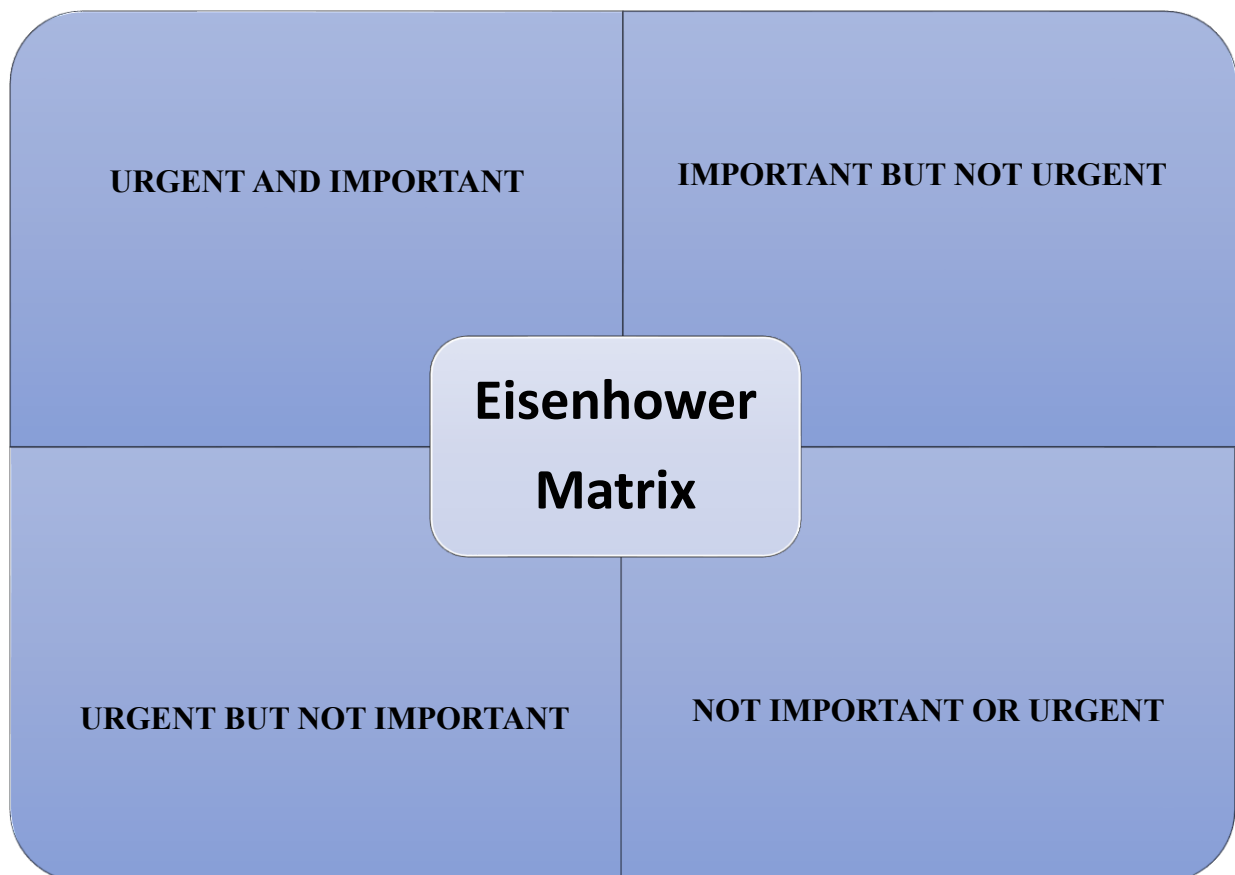


Worksheet 3

Planning personal activities

Tasks:

- Going to the doctor for an emergency check-up.
- Watching a series or browsing the internet without purpose.
- Solving small administrative problems, such as paying an invoice that has not yet reached the deadline.
- Planning a vacation or setting personal development goals.

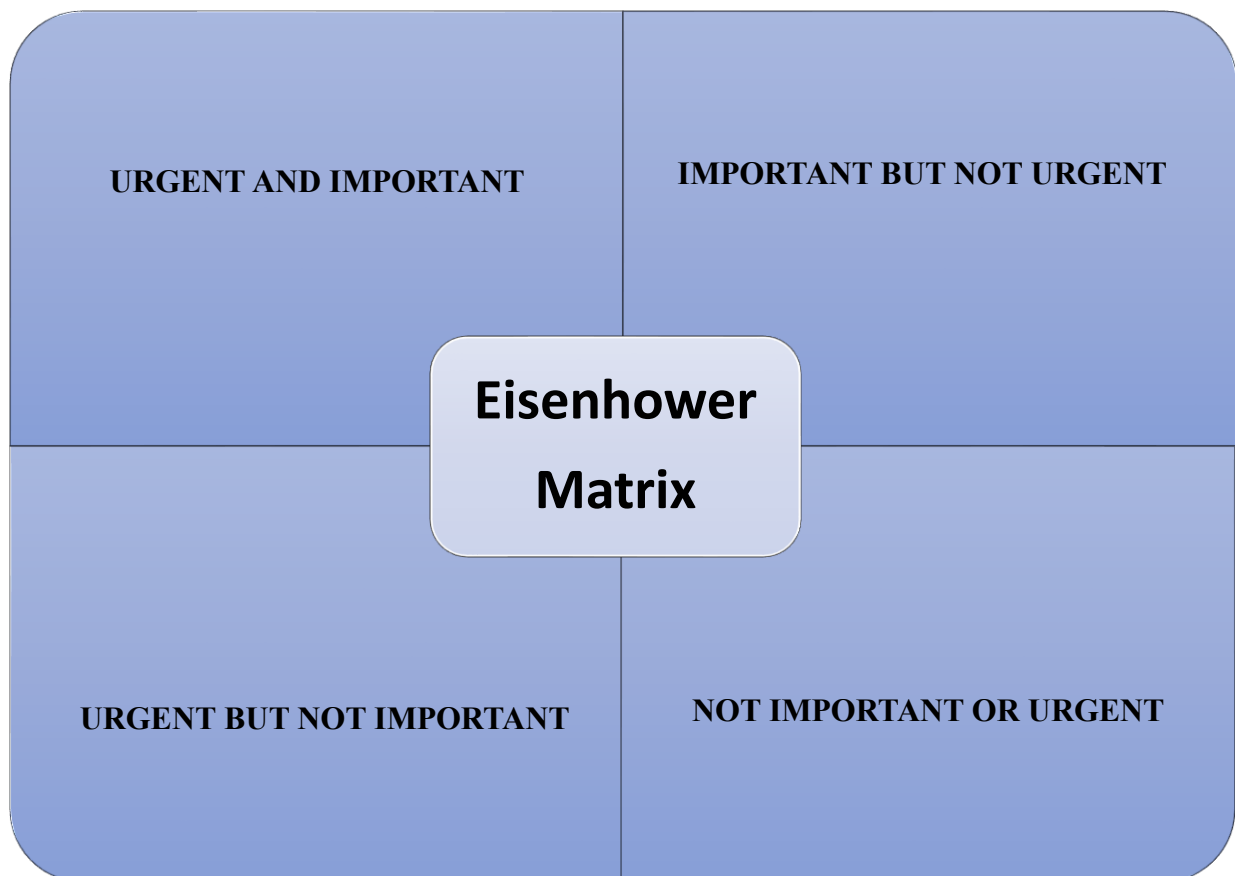


Worksheet 4

Family time management

Tasks

- Managing a family medical emergency.
- Watching TV shows that do not add value to the time spent with the family.
- Solving unimportant household tasks.
- Organizing a family gathering to spend quality time together.

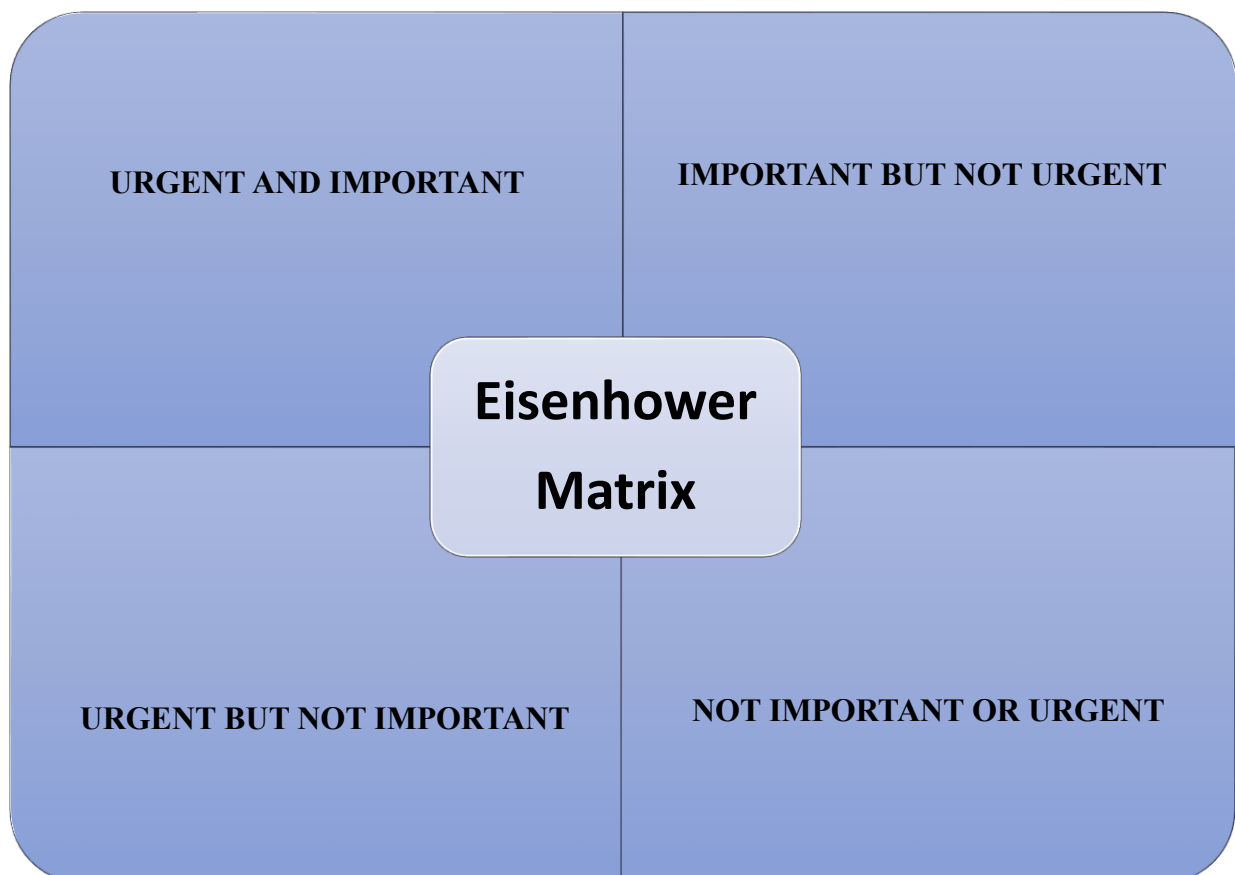


Worksheet 5

Personal Finance Planning

Tasks:

- Creating a long-term budget and investments for the future.
- Impulsive spending on non-essential things.
- Purchase of discounted products that are not needed immediately.
- Impulsive spending on non-essential things.



Exercise Solutions

Worksheet 1. *Education*

- *Urgent and important:* Preparing for an exam that is tomorrow.
- *Important but not urgent:* Constant learning and accumulation of knowledge in an area of interest.
- *Urgent but not important:* Fulfilling a theme that is not very relevant to long-term goals but has a short-term one.
- *It is neither urgent nor important:* Reading materials that do not bring real value to studies.

Worksheet 2. *Project management at work*

- *Urgent and important:* Completing a presentation for an important client with a deadline tomorrow.
- *Important but not urgent:* Developing a marketing strategy for the next six months.
- *Urgent but not important:* Responding to daily emails that don't require special attention but have short deadlines.
- *It is neither urgent nor important:* Checking social networks during working hours.

Worksheet 3. *Planning personal activities*

- *Urgent and important:* Go to the doctor for an urgently needed health check-up.
- *Important, but not urgent:* Planning a vacation or setting personal development goals.
- *Urgent, but not important:* Solving small administrative problems, such as paying an invoice that has not yet reached the deadline.
- *It is neither urgent nor important:* Watching a series or surfing the Internet without purpose.

Worksheet 4. *Family time management*

- *Urgent and important:* Managing a family medical emergency.
- *Important, but not urgent:* Organizing a family gathering to spend quality time together.
- *Urgent, but not important:* Solving minor household tasks that can be delegated or postponed.

- *It's neither urgent nor important:* Watching TV shows that don't add value to the time spent with the family.

Worksheet 5. Personal Finance Planning

- *Urgent and important:* Payment of instalments or overdue invoices.
- *Important, but not urgent:* Creating a long-term budget and investments for the future.
- *Urgent, but not important:* Purchase discounted products that are not needed immediately.
- *It's neither urgent nor important:* Impulsive spending on non-essential things.

Feedback

- Is it clear to you how each category influences the approach and prioritisation of tasks?
- Was it easy to identify which tasks are urgent versus important?
- Have you found a clear distinction between what is important and what is urgent?
- Did you identify tasks that seemed urgent but weren't important? How did you manage this?
- Do you think this technique helps you prioritise more effectively?

What you can do at home

Manage a busy day

1. Start the day by writing down all the tasks you need to do.
2. Put each task in the appropriate quadrant.
3. Start your day with tasks in the "Urgent & Important" quadrant. Throughout the day, see how the list evolves and adjust priorities if necessary.

At the end of the day, analyze how well you managed to follow your plan. What could you improve? What tasks should have been handled differently?

What you can do at home

Plan your weekly tasks

1. At the beginning of each week, take 20 minutes to plan.
2. Based on the four quadrants, plan what you will do each day.

For example, on Monday morning you will focus on urgent and important tasks.

3. Make it a goal to multitask in the "Important but not urgent" category to reduce stress and improve your planning.

Evaluate how you handled tasks. Did you manage to focus on what was really important? What can you change for the next week?

Prioritisation using the MoSCoW method

It presents the ranking of priorities by the MoSCoW method. The degree of detail is determined according to the time you have available.

Scenario for a pupil/student

I am a student. I have 10 weeks left to prepare for the final exams and I want to prioritise my activities to ensure that I will get good results.

1. Must have:

- I have to review the subjects for the exams to ensure I understand all the key concepts.
- I have to review topics I didn't fully understand and clarify my doubts with the teachers or colleagues.
- I have to solve tests and simulations from previous years to familiarise myself with the exam format.

2. Should have:

- I should review secondary subjects that are not important for exams but may appear in general assessments.

- I should attend additional study sessions with colleagues to discuss and review more complex topics.
- I should make a daily learning plan to manage my time leading up to exams effectively.

3. Could have:

- I could only participate in extracurricular activities, such as school clubs, if time permits.
- I could watch educational videos to deepen some topics, but only if other priorities are already covered.

4. Won't have:

- I will not participate in large social events or activities that can distract me from studying during this critical period.
- I will not practice time-consuming hobbies, such as new sports or art classes, until after exam time.

Scenario for a young man

I am a young man who wants to organize personal and professional development priorities over the next six months.

1. Must have (I should do):

- I need to complete my exams or school/university projects.
- I need to find an internship or part-time job relevant to the field I want to work in.
- I need to exercise at least 3 times a week to maintain health.
- I need to save 10% of my monthly income for future needs (e.g. a course or travel).

2. Should have:

- I should attend an online course or webinar in my field of interest.
- I should read at least two personal or professional development books.
- I should volunteer in a local project for the development of social and professional skills.

3. Could have:

- I could start a blog or YouTube channel to share my experiences and knowledge.
- I could start a new hobby.
- I could visit new cities or places to expand my cultural horizons.

4. Won't have (Won't do in the next 6 months):

- I won't start learning new languages (I can postpone this for another time).
- I'm not moving to another city for study or work (it may be a long-term option, but it's not realistic for the next 6 months)

Feedback

How do you assess the criteria you used to classify tasks?

- Were they relevant and clear enough?
- Did you feel that you gave the right importance to each task?
- Was it clear and easy to understand the classification in each category?
- Have you encountered difficulties in establishing the differences between these categories?

What you can do at home

Prioritize daily tasks

- Write a list of 10 tasks that you need to complete in the next week. It includes both personal and professional tasks.
- Using the MoSCoW method, classify each task into one of the categories "Must have", "Should have", "Could have" and "Won't have".
- Analyze your decisions. Why did you choose to place certain tasks in "Must have" and others in "Could have"?

Tips

- *Once you've applied MoSCoW to your daily tasks, review them at the week's or month's end.*
- *Evaluate whether your priorities were right and whether they helped you achieve your goals. Adjust your strategy for the next period.*

Prioritization using the ABC Technique

It presents the ranking of priorities using the MoSCoW method. The degree of detail is determined according to the time you have available.

Example of application of the ABC Technique

- **Tasks for today**

1. Complete the client's report (deadline: today).
2. Prepare the presentation for next week's meeting.
3. Reply to incoming emails.
4. Purchase office supplies.
5. Organize documents on the desk.

- **Classification and prioritization within each category**

- A1: Completion of the report for the client (essential and urgent).
- B1: Preparation of the presentation for next week's meeting (important, but not urgent).
- C1: Organization of documents on the desk (neither urgent nor important).
- C2: Purchase of office supplies (neither urgent nor important).
- B2: Reply to incoming emails (important, but not urgent).

- **Execution of tasks**

In this case, you'll start with task A1 (report completion) because it's the most critical. Once you finish the tasks in category A, you will move on to task B and then to task C.

Practical Prioritization Exercises Using the ABC Technique

Exercise 1

Write down all the tasks you need to do tomorrow and group them into categories A, B, and C.

Objective: To learn to differentiate between urgent and less urgent tasks.

Exercise 2

Imagine having several urgent tasks in a single day (for example, you have at least two tasks).

A). Try prioritizing them within each category and determining which ones must be solved first.

Objective: To develop your ability to work under pressure and to make quick and efficient choices between priority tasks.

Exercise 3

List your long-term goals (e.g., educational, professional, personal) and use the ABC technique to prioritize them.

Objective: Prioritize activities to help you achieve your long-term goals, avoiding procrastination.

Exercise 4

After a week of applying the ABC technique, analyze how many tasks you completed in each category and what you could improve in managing priorities. You may have completed all the tasks in Category A but postponed many in Category B. Evaluate whether the tasks in Category B should have been prioritized earlier.

Objective: To evaluate your efficiency and adjust your technique in the future for better time management.

Feedback after applying the ABC technique

- How comfortable was it to classify tasks into categories A, B, and C?
 - Was it clear which tasks need to fall into each category?
 - Have you had difficulty setting the right priorities?
- Were you tempted to put too many tasks in category A?
 - What has led to this trend?
 - How could you avoid overloading category A?

What you can do at home *Managing a busy week*

For each day of the week, create a list of daily tasks and prioritize them using the ABC technique.

Objective: Develop a plan for the entire week and ensure that all essential tasks are covered.

What you can do at home

Evaluation and rearrangement of tasks

Once you've grouped your tasks into ABC categories, review your list at the end of the day or week. Are there any Category A tasks left unresolved? Maybe some tasks in category B have become more urgent in the meantime?

Example:

If you haven't finished studying for tomorrow's test (category A task), you should make an adjustment in your priorities and allocate more time to this activity.

Objective: To develop the ability to adjust priorities as new emergencies or changes in the schedule arise.

What you can do at home

Plan extracurricular activities for next week

- Write down any extracurricular activities you've committed to or would like to do. For example: sports training, music lessons, volunteering, personal projects, etc.
- Classify activities into the 3 categories: A, B and C.
- Prioritize within each category: Plan your week so that you allocate time first to activities in category A, followed by those in B and if you still have time, those in C.

You will have a better balance between extracurricular obligations and free time, without neglecting your studies.

What you can do at home

Organize your study day

- Write down all the study-related activities you need to do that day. For example: learning for a test, completing an assignment, reading a chapter, reviewing notes, etc.
- Classify tasks into 3 categories.
- Prioritize within each category. Start the study day with task A, then move on to tasks B and C depending on the time available.

You will be able to focus on essential tasks and avoid procrastinating them, which will increase your chances of being successful in school.

What you can do at home

Balance between school and social life

- List activities: Make a list of the activities you have in your schedule, both school and social. For example: homework, outings with friends, parties, individual study, etc.
- Categorize activities:
 - A: Activities critical to school performance (e.g., completing an assignment with a close deadline).
 - B: Important activities that can be postponed a little (for example, an outing with friends that can be rescheduled).
 - C. Optional or non-impactful activities (e.g., watching a TV show).
- Prioritize within each category: Make sure A-tasks are always completed first. Then, you can allocate time for B activities and those in category C can only be done if you have enough free time.

You will be able to better balance your school and social life without sacrificing any of them.

Setting priorities using the Pareto Principle

This part introduces participants to prioritizing using the Pareto Principle. The degree of detail is determined according to the time you have available.

Example of applying the Pareto principle in prioritization

Let's say you have ten tasks on your list for a day:

1. Completion of a report for an important client.
2. Replying to daily emails.
3. Taking part in a meeting.
4. Developing a strategy for a new project.
5. Writing an article for the company's blog.
6. Checking and approval of documents.
7. Preparation of a marketing plan.
8. Meeting with a colleague for feedback.
9. Learning a new skill through an online course.

Applying the Pareto principle, you could conclude that completing the client report and developing the strategy for the new project are the two activities (20%) that will have the greatest impact on your professional success (80% of the results). Therefore, they should be prioritized on the day, while low-impact tasks can be delegated or postponed.

Exercise. Analysis of a work/study day

- Make a list of all the activities you did today.
- Evaluate the impact: Ask yourself which activities contributed the most to achieving your goals. Write down the most important ones.
- Apply the 80/20 principle: Identify those 20% of activities that have produced 80% of your results or progress for the day.
- Plan the next day: Use this analysis to plan your next day, focusing on the activities with the greatest impact.

Expected result: You will become more aware of the activities that bring you the greatest benefits and you will be able to prioritize important tasks more effectively.

Feedback

- Was it easy to discern which activities bring the most value?
- What criteria did you use to determine the impact of each task?
- Were there cases when almost all tasks seemed important and difficult to differentiate?
- How did you manage the activities with a seemingly similar impact?

What you can do at home

Optimize personal time

- Make a list of your free time activities from a typical week (e.g., hobbies, meeting friends, watching movies, surfing the internet).
- For each activity, evaluate how much satisfaction, relaxation, or value it brings you. You can use a scale from 1 to 10.
- Identify those 20% of activities that bring you 80% of satisfaction or benefits
- Think about how you can reduce the time spent on non-value-adding activities and how you can increase the time allocated to priority activities.

Your free time will be better managed, giving you more satisfaction and a better work-life balance.

What you can do at home

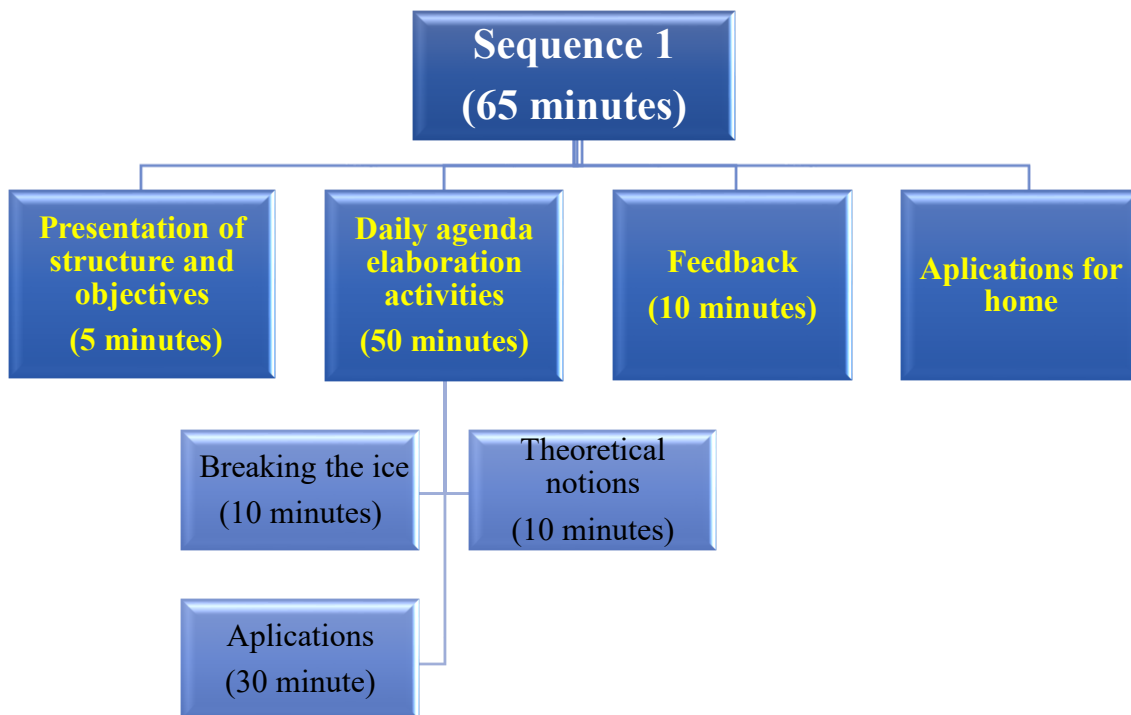
Prioritize a project

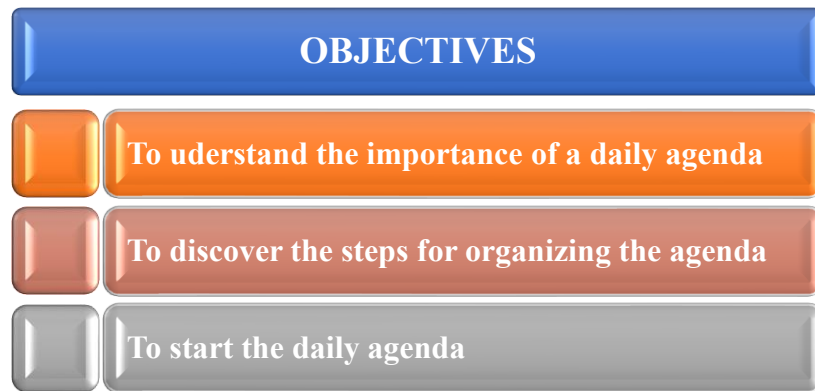
- Choose an important project you have in progress or need to start.
- Make list with all the tasks and steps required to complete the project.
- For each task, estimate its impact on the project's overall success. Think about which tasks are critical and which are less important.
- Identify those 20% of tasks that will contribute to 80% of the project's success. Prioritize these tasks and allocate the necessary resources to them.
- Create an action plan focusing on these priority tasks and ensuring their execution first.

The project will move forward faster and more efficiently because you will focus on the tasks that matter most.

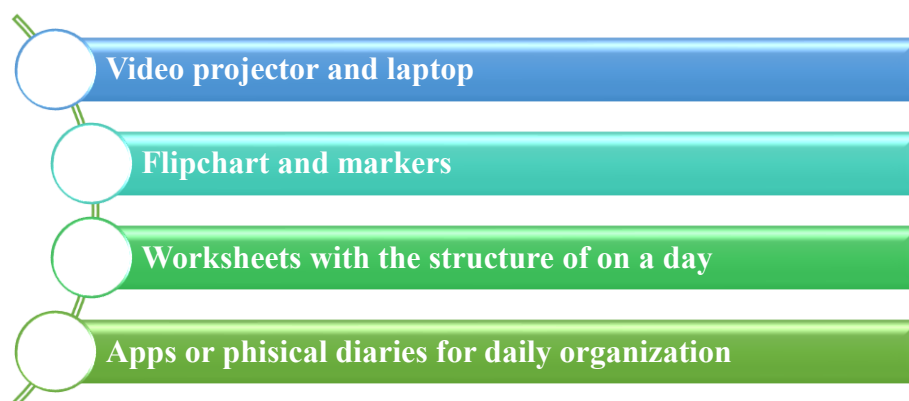
2. MODULE II

2.1. Sequence 1. Elaboration of the day's agenda





Materials needed



❖ Presentation of the sequence structure and objectives

(5 minutes). Discuss with the participants about the duration, structure of the sequence, objectives, and their involvement.

❖ Daily agenda development activities (50 minutes).

I. Breaking the ice (10 minutes). Ask the participants to get involved in one of the following activities:

a) "A word that describes my agenda" - each participant says a word that reflects how they organize their day.

Example: the agenda is non-existent, summary, clear, organized, detailed, structured, loaded, concise, detailed, flexible, useful, etc.

b) Ask an open-ended question: "How do you usually organize your day?"

c) Invite participants to write down on a worksheet how they spend their time on a typical day.

Do not analyse what students write. The exercise is intended to introduce the students to the theme of this section.

II. Theoretical notions (10 minutes). It outlines the principles and importance of developing a daily agenda as a tool for achieving daily goals. This information can be found in the theoretical part of the chapter.

III. Practical activities (30 minutes).

- ***In the first phase***, you lead practical activities with the young people before elaborating on the agenda. They aim to make participants aware of how they use their time: which activities last the longest, which are part of the daily routine, and how much time each of them consumes. Examples of this type of activity can be found in the specific section.

- ***In the second phase***, the participants develop the outline of their agenda (with examples in the dedicated paragraph)



Suggestion. *Select the activity/activities proposed below that you consider the most appropriate for the time available or that correspond to the particularities of the group you are working with.*

❖ **Feedback (10 minutes).** Talk to the group about what they learned.

- What was the hardest thing to plan?
- What changes would this approach bring to your daily life?

❖ **Home exercises.** Encourage participants to solve the proposed activity/activities for home to understand and prove the effectiveness of using the agenda in achieving the objectives.

Phase 1. Practical activities before the development of the daily agenda

1. Self-assessment exercise: Divide the group into teams of 4-5 members. Each student writes down how they spend their time on a typical day and identifies strengths and challenges in their daily routine.

If you used activity c) from the moment of "breaking the ice", ask the participants to reflect on what they wrote down at that moment.

2. Time diary: Participants write down their daily activities from the previous week to assess how they used their time. The exercise aims to identify patterns of time use and discover moments of maximum productivity and time-consuming activities.

Phase 2. Practical activities for developing the daily agenda

Step 1. Suggest that students write down the activities they must do for the next day.

Step 2. Students plan the day using **time blocks** following the model below.



A counsel for young participants

Use charts, colours, or symbols to differentiate the types of activities (e.g., work, breaks, self-time) to visualize the daily schedule clearly and manage the balance between different areas of life.

Step 3. Learners organize activities within each block of time using a prioritization method.



Tips for youth:

- *The agenda does not have to be perfect but functional and realistic*
- *Review your agenda every night*
- *Be flexible, things can change*
- *Set realistic goals*
- *Check off each activity in the agenda. It will give you a sense of well-being.*

Expected results

- *Each participant leaves with a personalized daily plan and concrete techniques for efficient time management*
- *Raising awareness of the importance of a work-life balance*



Suggestions for youth workers:



- **Encourage participants to** find a suitable time to plan their next day (e.g., the evening before bed).
- **Be flexible:** Be prepared to adapt activities according to the level of involvement of the participants.
- **Be a role model:** Share your experience using your daily planner to create a real example.
- **Encourage participation:** Use open questions to stimulate discussion and sharing of ideas.

Feedback

- Have you managed to establish a clear and realistic structure of the day's activities?
- Was it easy to allocate the right time for each activity?

- Did you use a specific technique (Pareto, ABC, etc.) to determine which activities should be at the top of your agenda?
- Have you been able to differentiate between urgent and important tasks?

Template of a daily agenda for a student based on time-blocking

Time interval	Activity	Achievement
6,45 – 7,15	Waking up and personal hygiene (washing, dressing)	
7,15 – 7,30	Breakfast	
7,30-8,00	Going to school	
8,00 – 13,00	School schedule	
13,00 – 13,30	Return from school	
13,30 – 14,00	Lunch	
14,00 – 15,00	Break and relaxation (games, reading, relaxation)	
15,00 – 17,00	Time for homework and study	
17,00 – 17,15	Light snack	
17,15 – 18,45	Extracurricular activities (sports, hobbies)	
18,45 – 19,45	Continuation of the themes	
19,45 – 20,15	Family dinner	
20,15 – 21,00	Relaxation or activities with the family (discussions, board games)	
21,00 – 21,20	Personal hygiene	
21,20 – 21,30	Developing the agenda for the next day	
21,30 – 22,30	Reading Time	
22,30 – 6,45	Sleep	

The schedule can be adjusted according to the needs and activities of each day.

Template of the agenda of the day for a young employee based on time blocking

Time interval	Activity	Achievement
7,00 – 7,30	Waking up and personal hygiene (washing, dressing)	
7,30 – 8,00	Breakfast	
8,00 – 8,30	Commuting to work (checking emails, listening to a podcast on the road (if possible)	
8,30 – 13,00	Work schedule (I): focus on priority tasks, meetings, team meetings	

13,00 – 14,00	Lunch break	
14,00 – 17,30	Work schedule (II): completion of the day's tasks, checking the agenda for the next day	
17,30 – 18,00	Returning home	
18,00 – 19,00	Sports or recreational activities	
19,00 – 20,00	Supper	
20,00 – 21,00	Free time: reading, series, social media, meeting friends)	
21,00 – 22,00	Personal development: reading articles in the field of interest, learning foreign languages	
22,00 – 22,30	Organizing tomorrow's activities, revising the agenda	
22,30 – 23,30	Relaxation and preparation for sleep: personal hygiene, reading, etc.	
23,30 – 7,00	Sleep	

The program may vary depending on the specifics of the job and personal preferences, but it takes into account a healthy work-life balance.

What you can do at home

Evening Reflection

Set aside 10 minutes at the end of the day to reflect on the achievements and challenges of the day.

Result: Increasing personal awareness and adjusting the daily agenda according to the learned lessons.

What you can do at home

Review your weekly goals

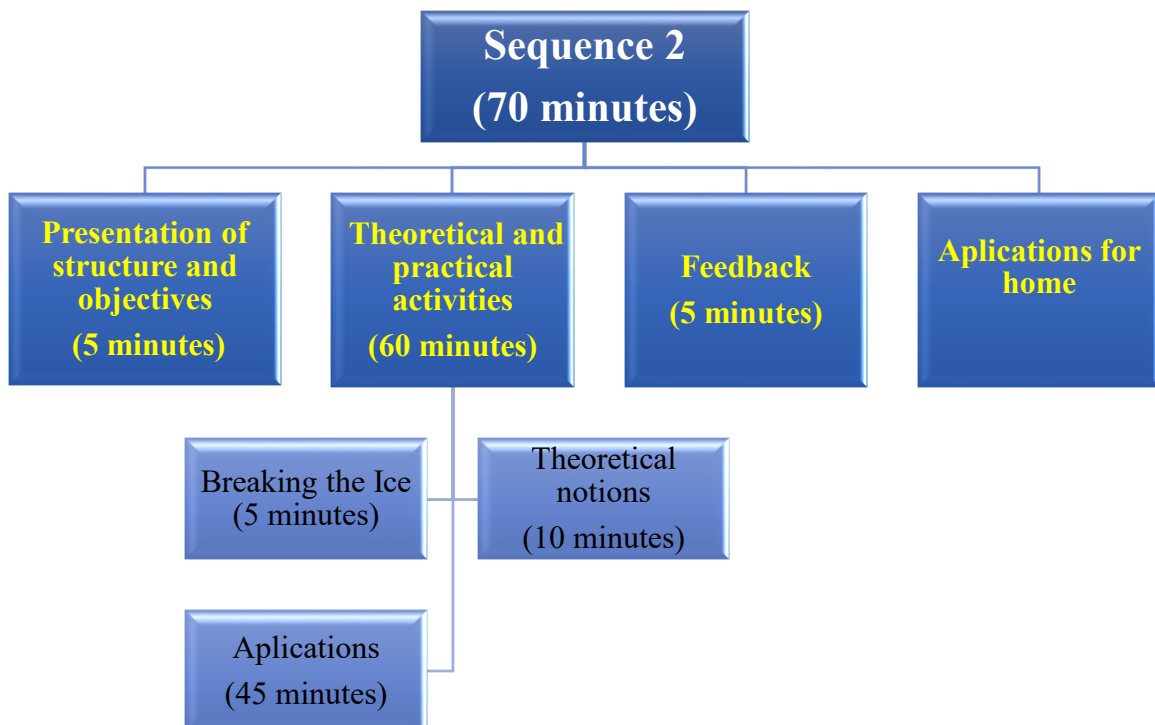
Analyze the goals you set for the coming week and break them down into smaller, achievable daily tasks.

Result: Better time planning, taking into account overall goals and daily details.

What you can do at home
Fill out a digital agenda

- Choose an app and experience completing your agenda for a day/week
- Share with your colleagues in the group the experience of using the digital agenda

2.2. Sequence 2. Efficient use of working time



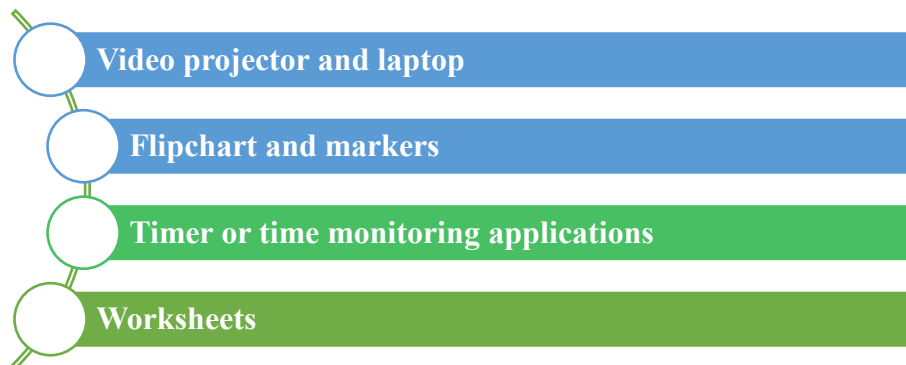
OBJECTIVES

To encourage concentrated and productive work

To learn the Pomodoro technique

To counteract Parkinson's principle

Materials needed



❖ **Presentation of the sequence structure and objectives (5 minutes).** Discuss with the participants the duration, structure, goals, and their involvement.

❖ **Activities to use time efficiently in carrying out tasks (45 minutes).**

I. Breaking the ice (5 minutes). This exercise invites participants to exemplify a recent activity in which they took part that lasted longer than necessary and to identify the causes for which the time was unduly extended (e.g., procrastination, lack of a clear deadline, distractions).

Example: Working on a project at the office, organizing an event, developing a school assignment, writing a report, etc.

II. Theoretical notions (10 minutes). Present to the students what it is, how to use it, what advantages it has to use the Pomodoro technique and/or counteract the Parkinson's principle. The degree of detail is determined according to the time you have available.

III. Practical activities (45 minutes). Encourage participants to participate in the practical activities presented below to develop skills for efficient use of working time.

❖ **Feedback (5 minutes)**. A very good feedback method is "thumbs up / thumbs down." This method is useful if you want to get quick feedback on an activity or idea without getting into long or detailed discussions.

❖ **Home exercises**. Encourage participants to get involved in the activities proposed for home in order to acquire the skills of efficient use of working time.

Practical activities with young people

❖ ***Using the Pomodoro Technique to streamline the time to complete tasks***

Objective:

Forming the habit of completing a task in a shorter time than usual increases concentration and efficiency.

"Pomodoro Story" (minimum 25 minutes, optimal 45-50 minutes). Divide the group into teams of 3-4 members. Each team receives a prompt or story theme (adventure, mystery, sci-fi, etc.). The members of each team collaborate and write a story.

You set the Pomodoro timer to 10 minutes, and the teams must work intensely to solve the task within the allotted time. After 10 minutes, the teams take a 3-minute break (they can discuss strategies or relax).

- First Pomodoro (10 minutes): Team members brainstorm ideas and sketch the story.
 - ✓ *Short break (2 minutes): Groups discuss their ideas informally or relax.*
- Second Pomodoro (10 minutes): The teams write the beginning of the story.
 - ✓ *Short break (2 minutes): Teams relax.*
- Third Pomodoro (10 minutes): Teams write the middle part of the story.
 - ✓ *Short break (2 minutes): Teams relax and prepare for the completion of the task.*
- Fourth Pomodoro (10 minutes): Teams complete and revise the story.
 - ✓ *Long break (5 minutes): Team members relax and prepare for the presentation.*
- Presentation and reflection. Each group presents its story of the entire workshop. Reflect on the challenges they faced and how they were overcome.



Suggestions for the youth worker:

If the available time is very short, only two 10-minute sequences can be simulated with a 2 to 3-minute break between them.

Pay attention to the group dynamics and ensure that everyone contributes.

Encourage discussion about how it felt to work continuously for a period of time and the effects of short breaks.

Feedback

- Have you understood dividing activities into short, focused work sessions followed by breaks?
- Have you understood the importance of respecting breaks to avoid fatigue and maintain constant productivity?
- How easy/difficult can you apply the Pomodoro technique in your activities?
- Do you like the idea of learning/working quickly and focused over a short period?
- Do you think the Pomodoro technique helps you improve your concentration and reduce procrastination?
- Are you ready to focus only on work, or will you be tempted to respond to messages, calls, or emails?
- Do you think you can stick to the 25-minute intervals strictly, especially for more complex tasks

What you can do at home

"Choose your Pomodoro"

- Apply the Pomodoro technique to daily learning activities. Divide the time you have allocated for learning into several Pomodoro sessions separated by breaks.
- Share with the group how you organized your time and if it was effective to use the Pomodoro Technique:
 - ✓ **"How did you feel when you worked continuously on a task for 25 minutes?"**
 - ✓ **"How often did you feel the need for a break when you worked?"**

Complete a task under the pressure of a limited time (20 minutes)

Objective: Learn how to complete a task in a shorter time frame than usual, increasing concentration and efficiency.

Instructions:

1. Give participants a simple standard task:

- *Writing a professional email.*
- *Planning a day or week of activities.*
- *Organising a small project (e.g., a shopping list or travel plan).*

Time estimation. Before starting work, ask each student to estimate how much time they would typically spend completing their chosen task.

2. Reducing the time allotted. According to the estimate, ask the students to reduce this time by 50%. This stimulates the contraction of the time in which the task needs to be completed, forcing them to focus more and be more efficient.

3. Solving the task. Students begin to solve the task within the set time. Use a timer to track the time and announce the time remaining halfway through the interval to keep the time pressure on.

4. Reflection and feedback. After the time is up, challenge students to share how they met the new deadline. Reflection questions:

- *Did you manage to finish the task in a short time?*
- *Have you been able to set stricter deadlines for your assignments?*
- *Did you rely on previous experience to assess the actual duration of the tasks?*
- *How did it feel to work under greater time pressure?*
- *What changes have you made to be more efficient (simplification, eliminating unnecessary steps, reducing distractions)?*

5. Conclusions. Discuss with participants how they can apply this method in their daily lives, reducing the time they spend on tasks to avoid procrastination.

Variants of the exercise

Competition: You can divide participants into teams and challenge them to complete a task in a shorter time than the other team.

This exercise aims to prove that tasks can be completed in a shorter time than we imagine if we set a closer deadline. As Parkinson's principle states, this counteracts the undue extension of time.

CHAPTER III: "I Collaborate and Integrate"

Methods for Enhancing Teamwork and Self-
Organization

Created by EUROPE4YOUTH

1. Will Being Good at Teamwork Get Me Hired? – Competences of the 21st Century

21st-century skills are like superpowers you can learn to help you think better, learn smarter, work well with others, and live a successful life. These skills include being creative, solving problems, working in teams, learning how to learn, communicating well, understanding technology, and being a responsible citizen both locally and globally.

In the past, just finishing high school was enough, but now you need to be ready for college, your career, and real-life challenges. Here's why 21st-century skills are so important:

- Colleges and employers say that soft skills, like communication and teamwork, are key to success in both school and work.
- Schools today are helping students get ready for jobs that don't even exist yet. That means you need a variety of skills to handle whatever comes your way.
- Social media has changed how we interact with each other, bringing new challenges in how we deal with social situations.
- The internet gives us access to tons of information, but it's important to know how to sort through and make sense of it all.
- Knowing facts is great, but it's also crucial to learn how to use that knowledge to tackle complex problems.

Understanding and developing these skills will help you navigate the world and be ready for whatever the future holds.

One of the most important skills of the XXI century is collaboration in a team, also referred to as teamwork. This chapter of the BE YOU Guide will focus on this competence in detail, analyzing knowledge, skills and attitudes that it consists of, helping you to assess what kind of team workers you are and giving you concrete ideas how to improve yourself.

Let's start with answering the question of what teamwork is and why it is so important. Teamwork, as a social intelligence competency, is the ability to collaborate with others toward a common goal. It involves actively participating, sharing both responsibilities and rewards, and enhancing the team's overall effectiveness. Leaders that are good team workers are able to empathize and create an atmosphere of respect, helpfulness, and cooperation. They inspire others to fully commit to the team's efforts, build strong bonds, and create a sense of pride and unity within the team. This skill is essential for successful collaboration in any situation.

John J. Murphy, author of *“Pulling Together: 10 Rules for High-Performance Teamwork”* says that teamwork is essential to success of any group that is facing a challenging task. “Each individual has unique gifts, talents and skills. When we bring them to the table and share them for a common purpose, it can give companies a real competitive advantage.” - he says. Research carried out by the Institute of International Communication showed that more than 50% of employees in the UK say their jobs are reliant on collaboration, while 75% of them rate teamwork and collaboration as being very important. What is more, 54% of project managers and employers claim that communication is more critical to project success than technical skills of the team members.

Teamwork is extremely important in any job or task because it helps a group run smoothly, and supports its operational efficiency. When people work well together, they can break down big projects into smaller, manageable tasks, making everyone more productive, and helping the group succeed. Good teamwork also creates a supportive environment, which makes work more enjoyable and boosts everyone's mood.

When a team is really in sync, it encourages the generation of new ideas and leads to creative solutions. It also helps everyone tackle tough tasks more easily. Team leaders are key in this—they make sure everyone communicates openly and that everyone's ideas are heard. This not only leads to better decisions but also benefits the whole group.

There are a number of benefits of mastering Teamwork in any situation: in a workplace, project group at school or any other task or hobby that requires a group effort. Here we list those that we consider to be most important:

1. Teamwork boosts effective communication

Successful teamwork starts with solid communication. To work well together—whether brainstorming or tackling a new project—everyone needs to communicate effectively. This helps set clear goals and keeps everyone on the same page.

2. Teamwork enhances brainstorming

Brainstorming is all about thinking outside the box as a team. When your team communicates well and feels comfortable sharing ideas, you can come up with creative solutions for projects, processes, or products. Without teamwork, brainstorming sessions might not be as productive, which could affect your team's overall performance.

3. Teamwork keeps everyone focused on a common goal

Having a shared goal is crucial for prioritizing tasks and projects. When everyone is working toward the same objective, it keeps the team focused and ensures that all tasks are aligned and completed on time.

4. Teamwork improves problem-solving skills

Solving problems can be tough on your own, but when you work together as a team, you can find

quicker and more effective solutions.

5. Teamwork builds trust

Trust doesn't happen overnight—it grows over time through open communication, one-on-one interactions, and mutual support. A team that trusts each other feels more comfortable sharing ideas, working together, and contributing to the team's success.

6. Teamwork strengthens organizational culture

Building a long-lasting group is more than just social events; it's about making everyone feel heard and supported in their work. Teamwork helps create an environment where people can do their best while enjoying a good work-life balance.

7. Teamwork increases efficiency

Effective communication and a strong team culture lead to greater efficiency. An efficient team can handle tasks and solve problems quickly, using resources wisely and meeting deadlines faster.

8. Teamwork boosts engagement

When people feel like they're part of a supportive team, they're happier and more engaged at what they do. This sense of belonging can increase their satisfaction over time.

9. Teamwork motivates the team

Teamwork encourages accountability, pushing everyone to not only meet expectations but exceed them. As each team member performs better, the whole team improves, leading to high-quality work and greater satisfaction of each member.

10. Teamwork develops individual strengths

Teamwork isn't just about the group—it also helps each person grow. By working together, you can learn from others and develop important skills like problem-solving, communication, and time management. This makes you a stronger team member and helps the whole team succeed.

11. Teamwork improves decision-making skills

Good decision-making requires confidence and knowledge. Working in a team helps you build these skills, as you'll learn to make quick, informed decisions while tackling challenges together.

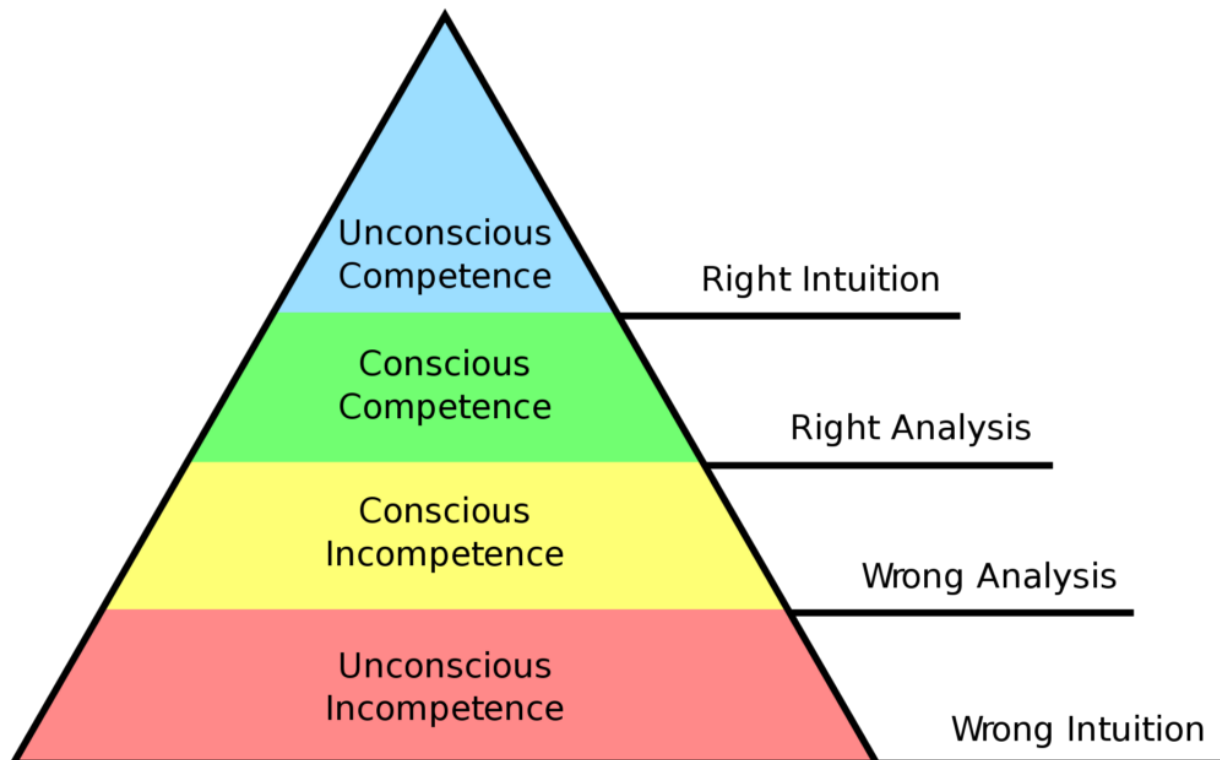
2. Yeah, But Where Can I Learn It? - How To Improve Your Competences

Accelerating your learning, practicing teamwork, building leadership skills, and bringing new ideas into your group are key abilities you can grow through different learning methods. One popular approach is the Four Stages of Competence, created by Noel Burch. This model breaks down the steps you go through when learning something new, helping you understand how to improve in any skill or knowledge area.

The Four Stages of Competence Model

The Four Stages of Competence Model explains how we learn new skills in four stages: unconscious incompetence, conscious incompetence, conscious competence, and unconscious competence.

1. **Unconscious Incompetence:** At this stage, you don't know what you don't know. You're unaware of your lack of knowledge or skill in a certain area, so you might not see the need to improve. For example, someone who doesn't realize how important social media marketing is in today's world might be at this stage.
2. **Conscious Incompetence:** Here, you start to realize that you're missing certain skills or knowledge. You know you need to learn more, which can feel frustrating or overwhelming. For instance, if you know social media marketing is important but don't yet understand how to use it well, you're at this stage.
3. **Conscious Competence:** At this point, you've learned the skill, but it still takes effort and focus to do it right. You might need regular practice to keep up your abilities. For example, if you've learned how to use social media marketing but still need to concentrate on making good content and tracking results, you're here.
4. **Unconscious Competence:** In this final stage, you've become so skilled that you can do the task almost without thinking. The knowledge and skills are now second nature. For instance, if you can easily create great social media content and analyze the outcomes without much effort, you've reached this stage.



Hierarchy of Competence

source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Four_stages_of_competence

Wait, but how is all of this useful for me? Being aware of the process is a first step to understanding how you learn. Especially, when it comes to social competences, like teamwork, understanding the Four Stages of Competence can help you figure out where you are in your learning journey and how to improve. By applying this model, you can set realistic goals, focus on what you need to learn, and develop a growth mindset that will help you succeed in learning, leadership, and innovation. It also helps organizations create better training programs and pinpoint areas where young people might need extra support and development.

1. **Engage in Self-Reflection:** Self-reflection is key to understanding yourself better. It helps you align how you see yourself with how others see you. By reflecting on your thoughts, emotions, and actions, you can identify areas where you want to grow and improve. This practice gives you a clearer picture of your strengths and weaknesses, allowing you to make intentional changes and progress.
2. **Practice Mindfulness**
Mindfulness means being fully present in the moment without letting distractions or biases get in the way. By focusing on the "here and now", you can connect more deeply with your experiences, and be open to new opportunities for personal growth. Mindfulness helps you become more aware of your thoughts and emotions, which is crucial for self-improvement.
3. **Cultivate a Growth Mindset**
A growth mindset is the belief that your abilities and skills can be developed through effort and learning. When you believe in your ability to improve, you're more likely to put in the work needed to grow. This mindset helps you see challenges as opportunities, and setbacks as learning experiences, pushing you to achieve your personal and professional goals.
4. **Acknowledge Feelings of Shame**
Sometimes, our desire to improve comes from external pressures or feelings of inadequacy. If your motivation to grow is driven by a need to meet expectations of others, you might not find true fulfillment even after reaching your goals. It's important to recognize any feelings of shame, and reassess your goals to ensure they align with what truly matters to you. Real growth happens when your self-improvement is guided by your values and authentic aspirations, not by outside influences.

In addition to those general tips, we bring you some more ideas to improve your teamwork competence specifically. If you are already aware of the areas that you need to improve, it is a first step to success. The rest is up to practice. Have a look at the suggestions below and try to implement some of them in your daily work. Don't try to do it all at once – be patient and remember that each change starts from a

single step. Firstly, you will need to keep the suggestions in mind, with time it will become your habit that will just happen unconsciously.

Here is what you can do to become a better team worker:

1. Encourage everyone to share ideas and feedback by having regular group meetings – face to face or online – if you can meet with people you are working with. Having a space to discuss is necessary even for the most experienced teams and can't be underestimated.
2. Ensure everyone understands the team's goals and their role in achieving them. Each team member needs to be aware of the purpose of the group and expectations towards them – this will help you to avoid potential conflicts and disappointments.
3. Build trust by acknowledging each person's strengths and giving them tasks that play to those strengths, such as assigning the most organized team member to handle details.
4. Organize fun team activities, like group outings or virtual game nights, to help everyone bond and work better together.
5. Lead by example by actively participating in team projects, thanking team members for their efforts during meetings, and making sure everyone gets credit for their contributions.
6. Be open to feedback: Feedback is essential for growth. Learn to accept constructive criticism from your teammates and use it to improve. Don't be afraid to offer helpful feedback to others, too, in a respectful way.
7. Respect differences: Every team is made up of people with different skills, backgrounds, and perspectives. Embrace these differences and learn from them. Respect everyone's contributions, even if they're different from your own.
8. Make sure other team members trust you: Trust is the foundation of any good team. Be reliable and do your part to help the team succeed. Show that you're dependable by meeting deadlines, supporting your teammates, and being honest.
9. Practice Empathy: Understanding your teammates' feelings and perspectives is key to working well together. Try to see things from their point of view and offer support when they need it.
10. Stay Positive: A positive attitude can boost team morale. Encourage your teammates, celebrate successes, and stay motivated, even when things get tough.
11. Learn to Compromise: Teamwork often involves finding a middle ground. Practice compromising to reach decisions that benefit the whole team, not just one person.
12. Reflect and Improve: After working on a team project, take time to reflect on what went well and what could be improved. Use these insights to strengthen your teamwork skills for the future.

3. Teamwork – How Does It Actually Work?

In the next part of this chapter, we will laser in on teamwork competence and all its components. To truly understand how the competence is manifested, you need to have a closer look at the criteria to what extent it is developed by oneself and at the indicators of fulfillment of those criteria. In order to do that, we will be using the SALTO Competence Model. SALTO Youth is a network of resource centers that supports youth work and non-formal learning across Europe. It is part of the European Union's Erasmus+ program and focuses on providing training, resources, and support to youth workers, organizations, and young people.

The SALTO Competence Model is a framework designed to help young people like you develop essential skills for personal and professional growth. Whether you're looking to improve your communication, leadership, or teamwork abilities, this model provides a clear path to mastering key competencies. It's all about helping you become more confident, adaptable, and ready to tackle challenges, both in your daily life and in your future career. By understanding and applying the SALTO Competence Model, you'll be better equipped to succeed in whatever you choose to pursue.

The SALTO Competence Model describes each competence area by breaking it down into specific skills, attitudes, and knowledge that are essential for effective youth work and personal development.

The model includes teamwork into a competence area called “cooperating successfully in teams” and breaks it down into six competences:

1. Contributing actively to team tasks
2. Being willing to take on responsibility
3. Encouraging and involving other team members
4. Learning with and from others
5. Being aware of the team processes and how they affect the team's effectiveness
6. Managing disagreements constructively

Each of those competences is defined by knowledge, skills and attitudes that manifest acquisition of the competence as well as numerous indicators assessing to which extent the criteria is reached. Let's have a closer look at those competences.

Contributing actively to team tasks		
	Criteria	Indicators
Knowledge	Knowledge of the tasks of the team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knows how to orientate and relate his/her efforts to the tasks of the team
Skills	Skill to clarify roles and responsibilities in the team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Masters methods and techniques to support a clear and fair division of roles and responsibilities Promotes communication and cooperation amongst team members to show qualities and overcome resistance
Attitudes	Openness to tasks that are not necessarily part of their usual role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dares to be challenged and to take on new roles and responsibilities Requests and offers support when needed Looks for additional resources where needed

Being willing to take on responsibility		
	Criteria	Indicators
Knowledge	Knowledge of one's possibilities and limits in the context of educational activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyses and identifies their own resources and limits in the context of the activity
Skills	Skill to ensure that roles and responsibilities are properly distributed in the team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures that knowledge and skills in the team are shared and communicated Contributes to team members' well-being with regard to the tasks to be performed
Attitudes	Openness and readiness to accept challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenges their own competences Follows through with new tasks to ensure safety for the team members and learners

Encouraging and involving other team members		
	Criteria	Indicators
Knowledge	Knowledge of the resources of team members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates an understanding of team competences

Skills	Skill to involve other team members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coaches colleagues – where possible and necessary – based on the approach to non-formal learning (e.g., if requested) ● Encourages colleagues ● Facilitates team spirit and trust
	Skill to foster cooperation among team members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Applies team work mechanisms ● Balances working styles and preferences ● Challenges colleagues where necessary and appropriate ● Highlights everyone's strengths
Attitudes	Curiosity and goodwill towards the team members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shows genuine interest in and support for team members

Learning with and from others

	Criteria	Indicators
Knowledge	Awareness of the learning potential others can offer and of the principles of 'to get and to give'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Acknowledges colleagues' learning potential and makes best use of it
Attitudes	Openness towards sharing one's own potential and curiosity about others' resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shares their own ideas and resources and shows interest in other team members' ideas and resources ● Asks for support and recognises personal limitations ● Supports colleagues' learning needs

Being aware of the team processes and how they affect the team's effectiveness

	Criteria	Indicators
Knowledge	Knowledge of team processes and their influence on team effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Refers to team processes and their potential influence on team effectiveness
Skills	Skill to recognise team processes during team work and to adjust them accordingly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Manages tailor-made team work processes

Attitudes	Openness to team processes and recognition of their importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows an interest in the team process and does not ignore any team work issues
-----------	--	--

Managing disagreements constructively		
	Criteria	Indicators
Knowledge	Knowledge of the theories and concepts of constructive communication (e.g., social intelligence, emotional intelligence, conflict resolution, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refers to these theories and concepts to understand and explain disagreement
Skills	Skill to recognise disagreements and apply specific ways and methods for dealing with disagreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognises disagreements and applies various ways to deal with them Drives collective and individual emotions towards a resolution Receives and phrases criticism respectfully, honestly and constructively Listens to and expresses emotions in a teamwork context
Attitudes	Tolerance for interpersonal tensions and openness to deal with disagreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deals with frustration in a constructive manner

As we wrap up our exploration of teamwork through the SALTO Competence Model, it's clear that being a good team player is more than just getting along with others—it's about developing a set of values, attitudes, beliefs, skills, and knowledge that you use to handle different situations and tasks effectively. Whether you're working on a group project in school, participating in a sports team, or collaborating on a community initiative it's important to have confidence, stay motivated, and feel good about yourself.

By understanding and applying the principles of the SALTO Competence Model, you can take your teamwork skills to the next level. Start by recognizing your current strengths and areas for growth, and actively work on developing key skills like communication, adaptability, and conflict resolution. Embrace a positive attitude, trust in your teammates, and remember that every challenge is an opportunity to learn and improve.

Teamwork isn't just about what you can achieve together—it's also about the journey of learning and growing with others. As you continue to develop your teamwork competences, you'll find that your ability to contribute meaningfully to any group will expand, leading to more rewarding and successful experiences, both now and in the future.

So, take what you've learned, put it into practice, and keep striving to be the best team player you can be. After all, when we work together, we can accomplish amazing things.

4. Are You a Good Teamworker? Check Yourself!

In this part of the guide, we would like you to look back at different situations in which you were working in different teams, no matter the task. Try to reflect on your performance – behaviors that you demonstrated and emotions that accompanied them. Before you do that, look again at the different competences connected to teamwork, described in the previous part of this chapter. Try to self-reflect on the extent to which the indicator of acquiring those competences applies to you, based on past situations when you were working in a team. Self-evaluation is a process of looking at your own skills, attitudes, and knowledge to understand what you're good at and where you might need improvement. It is empowering as it helps you take control of your own development and growth - by understanding your strengths and weaknesses you will boost your confidence, but also know which areas of competence you need to focus to improve.

Self-reflection is typically a personal process, but you can also share it with someone else. However, it might be valuable to first reflect on your own before seeking a partner to discuss your thoughts, the concept, or any questions that arise. You're free to choose how you reflect—whether by walking, writing, drawing, building, or creating mind maps—whatever feels right for you. Therefore, find a comfortable space that suits you best, whether it's sitting on a bench, lounging on a couch, working at a table, using your computer, or simply being outdoors. The key is to be in a space where you feel at ease.

- **Step 1:** Go back in memory to the few situations that you were working in a group on an important task. Try to remember the first time you started to use teamwork competences, or in which situation you realized you lacked some of them? What was challenging for you in those situations? How did you react to the challenge? Which emotions did you feel at that moment?
- **Step 2:** Consider other key moments in the development of these competences. Recall any important training sessions, workshops, or experiences where you began to develop or use them. Reflect on how you have progressed in developing those competences and identify any challenges that still remain.
- **Step 3:** Here are some guiding questions that you can use to aid your reflection, though you're not required to answer them all:
 - How did you develop this competence? What aspects did you handle well?

- What challenges did you encounter? Which aspects were still difficult?
- How did you assess your progress in developing this competence?
- Where do you currently stand with this competence? How confident do you feel in it?
- What challenges remain? Which areas need further development? Where do you feel uncertain or fearful?
- What do these reflections reveal about your motivation, strategy, and focus in further developing this competence?
- **Step 4:** Record the outcomes for yourself by writing, mind-mapping, drawing, or expressing them in any other way that suits you best.

Congratulations! You have just created your learning plan. Following it will help you to grow as a team worker. You can do this activity again in a few months in order to compare the results and track your progress.

Another area that you can reflect on is how you behave while working in a team. Maybe there are some patterns that you often follow? Being aware of them can also help you to better understand what you can offer to your team and what you need from the others to feel comfortable.

To do that we will use Belbin's Team Roles Model. This model helps people understand different roles that individuals naturally take on when working in a team. It's like thinking about how different people have different strengths, and how each of these strengths can help a team work better together. It was developed in 1981 by Dr Meredith Belbin, British researcher and management consultant best known for his work on management teams. The model identifies nine distinct roles, each with its own strengths and weaknesses, and categorizes them into three groups: **Action-Oriented Roles**, **People-Oriented Roles**, and **Thinking-Oriented Roles**. In any team, it's important to have a mix of these roles. Some people naturally fit into certain roles, and understanding this can help a team use everyone's strengths to achieve their goals. For example, a team full of creative thinkers might have lots of ideas but struggle to get things done without someone to organize and push them forward.

By knowing your role and the roles of others, you can communicate better, work more effectively, and create a stronger, more balanced team.

The model describes nine typical roles that people usually take while working in the team. Let's have a look at strengths and weaknesses of each of those roles.

1. **Action-Oriented Roles:**

- **Shaper:** Drives the team forward, challenges norms, and thrives under pressure. They are dynamic and often push for progress but can be argumentative.

Strengths:

- Dynamic and motivated; they push the team to achieve results.
- Good at overcoming obstacles and driving progress.

- Competitive and thrives under pressure.

Weaknesses:

- Can be prone to frustration or aggression, especially under stress.
- Might come across as confrontational or insensitive to others' feelings.
- May push too hard, risking burnout for themselves and the team.

- **Implementer:** Turns ideas into practical actions. They are disciplined and reliable, but sometimes resistant to change.

Strengths:

- Highly organized and disciplined; they get things done efficiently.
- Practical and reliable, they turn ideas into actionable plans.
- Good at managing day-to-day operations.

Weaknesses:

- May resist change, preferring familiar methods and routines.
- Can be inflexible, sticking too rigidly to plans.
- Might struggle with creativity, preferring clear instructions and processes.

- **Completer Finisher:** Focuses on detail, ensuring tasks are completed to a high standard. They are meticulous but can be overly perfectionistic.

Strengths:

- Detail-oriented and meticulous; they ensure high-quality work.
- Good at meeting deadlines and ensuring nothing is overlooked.
- Persistent and committed to finishing tasks to perfection.

Weaknesses:

- Can be overly perfectionistic, struggling to let go of tasks.
- May worry excessively about small details, slowing down progress.

Sometimes finds it difficult to delegate, preferring to do everything

2. **People-Oriented Roles:**

- **Coordinator:** Acts as a leader or chairperson, delegating tasks and helping the team focus on objectives. They are confident and good at decision-making but may be seen as manipulative.

Strengths:

- Strong leadership skills; they know how to delegate effectively.
- Good at organizing team activities and ensuring everyone's contributions are valued.
- Calm and confident, they help keep the team focused on objectives.

Weaknesses:

- May be perceived as manipulative if they overly rely on others to do the work.

- Can be seen as controlling or bossy by team members.
- Might struggle with hands-on tasks, preferring to manage rather than participate directly.

- **Teamworker:** Promotes team cohesion, supporting others and smoothing over conflicts. They are cooperative and diplomatic but can be indecisive in crucial moments.

Strengths:

- Cooperative and diplomatic; their help maintains harmony in the team.
- Good at listening and mediating between team members.
- Flexible and willing to adapt to meet the team's needs.

Weaknesses:

- Can be indecisive, especially when tough decisions need to be made.
- Might avoid confrontation, even when it's necessary.
- Sometimes places team harmony above task completion.

- **Resource Investigator:** Explores opportunities and develops contacts. They are enthusiastic and communicative but can lose interest once the initial excitement fades.

Strengths:

- Excellent at networking and building external relationships.
- Enthusiastic and outgoing; they bring energy to the team.
- Good at exploring opportunities and gathering information.

Weaknesses:

- May lose interest once the initial excitement fades.
- Can be overly optimistic and may not always follow through with ideas.
- Might spread themselves too thin, focusing on too many things at once.

3. **Thinking-Oriented Roles:**

- **Plant:** Generates ideas and solves difficult problems. They are creative and innovative but may be impractical or ignore details.

Strengths:

- Highly creative and innovative, they think outside the box.
- Good at solving complex problems.
- Can come up with unique ideas and approaches.

Weaknesses:

- May be too preoccupied with their own ideas, leading them to ignore practical details.
- Sometimes they struggle to communicate their ideas clearly.
- Can be absent-minded or forgetful about everyday tasks.

- **Monitor Evaluator:** Analyzes options and makes balanced decisions. They are strategic and impartial, but can be overly critical and slow to act.

Strengths:

- Logical and analytical; they make well-thought-out decisions.
- Excellent at evaluating ideas and options objectively.
- Reliable when it comes to providing balanced judgments.

Weaknesses:

- May be overly critical, focusing on negatives rather than positives.
- Can be slow to make decisions, needing time to consider all angles.
- Sometimes lacks enthusiasm, which can dampen team morale.

- **Specialist:** Brings in-depth knowledge in a specific area. They are highly skilled and dedicated but may focus too narrowly on their expertise.

Strengths:

- Highly knowledgeable in their specific area; they bring expertise to the team.
- Focused and dedicated to their field of interest.
- Provides valuable insights that others may not have.

Weaknesses:

- May have a narrow focus, sometimes missing the bigger picture.
- Can become overly absorbed in their specialism, ignoring other aspects of the project.
- Might struggle to communicate their knowledge to non-experts, leading to misunderstandings.

Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of each of Belbin's Team Roles can help individuals and teams make the most of their talents while being aware of potential pitfalls. Each role is valuable in its own way, but an effective team needs a mix of these roles to balance strengths and weaknesses. Understanding each role's characteristics helps team members support each other and compensate for any potential shortcomings. It also helps in assigning tasks that align with each person's natural strengths, leading to better collaboration and success. Which role are you fitting in the most?

5. Group Development Models – How to Understand Others?

When people come together to work as a group, whether it's for a school project, a sports team, or any other activity, they don't automatically function smoothly. Just like individuals, groups go through different stages of growth and development. Understanding these stages can help you navigate challenges, improve teamwork, and achieve your goals more effectively.

Group development models are frameworks that explain how groups evolve over time. They show us how teams start as a collection of individuals and gradually become a cohesive unit that works well together. By learning about these models, you'll gain insights into what to expect as your group progresses, how to contribute positively at each stage, and how to help your team overcome obstacles. These models are like a roadmap for working together successfully. They can guide you through the ups and downs of group dynamics, helping you to build strong, effective teams that are capable of reaching their full potential. Whether you're just starting out with a new group or looking to improve an existing one, understanding group development is a key step in becoming a better team player and leader.

5.1 Tuckman's Stages of Group Development

One of the most popular of those models was developed by American professor of educational psychology Bruce Tuckman in 1965 and it's called "Tuckman's Stages of Group Development". Tuckman's model breaks down how groups grow and change over time into five stages: Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing, and Reforming. As a team matures and becomes more skilled, members start to build stronger relationships, and leadership tends to become more collaborative and shared.

Originally, Tuckman's model was just an observation of how groups naturally evolve, whether or not they're aware of it. But the real power of this model lies in understanding which stage your team is in and helping it move forward in a way that supports collaboration. In reality, teams are always forming and changing—each time something shifts, like a new member joining or someone missing meetings, the team can slide into a different stage. For example, a team that was smoothly Norming or Performing might drop back into Storming due to these changes. Being aware of this process helps team leaders guide the group back to Performing as quickly as possible.

Let's have a closer look at what happens inside the group at every stage.

1. Forming: The Beginning of Teamwork

When a team first comes together, they enter the "Forming" stage, where the foundation of the group is built. During this time, everyone is trying to figure out their place and how they fit into the team. Most people are polite and cautious, avoiding any conflict because they want to be accepted. Team members often rely heavily on a leader for direction and guidance.

In this stage, you might notice a few things happening. People are usually on their best behavior, trying to make a good impression. There might be some cliques forming as people connect with others they feel comfortable with. Most members will focus on understanding the tasks ahead, how things will work, and the best way to go about them, but they'll avoid diving into any deep or controversial topics.

The need to feel safe and approved by the group is strong.

Emotionally, this stage can be a mix of feelings. Some people might be excited and optimistic, eager to get started and see what the team can achieve. Others might feel a bit uneasy, anxious about working with new people, or uncertain about what's expected of them. Thoughts like "What's my role?" or "Why am I here?" might cross your mind as you navigate this new group dynamic.

For the team to move forward, a few things need to happen. It's important to clearly define the team's mission and vision, set specific goals, and establish each person's role. Ground rules should be agreed upon, and everyone should know what's expected of them. The first meetings—both in person and in chat—are crucial for setting the tone and ensuring the team is on the right path. Feedback from project guides is also key to helping everyone align.

Leadership at this stage is vital. Project guides and instructors need to provide clear structure and direction, giving the team a sense of confidence and optimism. They should create opportunities for everyone to get to know each other, making the group feel more connected. At this point, team members often look to the leader to make decisions and guide the way, with communication mostly flowing one-way—from leader to team members.

To move past the Forming stage and into the next phase of team development, everyone in the group will need to step out of their comfort zones. This means starting to tackle more challenging topics and embracing the possibility of conflict. It's a necessary step for the team to grow stronger and work more effectively together.

2. Storming: The Challenges of Team Development

After the initial phase of coming together, teams often enter the "Storming" stage, where things can get a bit rocky. This stage is marked by the surfacing of interpersonal conflicts as team members start organizing tasks and figuring out how to work together. Issues related to leadership, power, and structure come to the forefront, and this can create tension within the group.

During the Storming stage, you might notice certain behaviors. Arguments can arise as members clash over ideas, personal styles, or who should take the lead. People might start competing for control, and the team can struggle to make decisions or clarify roles. This lack of clarity and constant power struggles can lead to frustration, slowing down progress and sometimes causing the team to set unrealistic goals. The overall vibe might feel chaotic, with some members worried about the workload and the direction the team is heading.

Emotionally, this stage can be tough. You might feel defensive or confused, and your enthusiasm for the team's mission might wane. Resistance to tasks can build up, and attitudes toward the team can fluctuate wildly. Some members may even start questioning whether they agree with the team's purpose or feel insecure about their role and influence within the group. Tension and jealousy can rise, leading to a sense of "we're not getting anywhere."

To push through this stage, the team needs to focus on improving relationships within the group. It's

essential to acknowledge and address the stylistic and personal differences that are causing friction. Effective communication becomes critical—team members need to practice listening to one another, giving and receiving feedback, and resolving conflicts in a healthy way. It’s also a good time to revisit and clarify the team’s purpose, roles, and ground rules, and to address any violations of the team’s code of conduct.

Leadership during Storming is about guiding the team through conflict. Project guides and instructors should acknowledge the tension and help the group work toward consensus. They can encourage members to take on more responsibility, introduce the concept of shared leadership, and teach conflict resolution skills. Offering support and praise during this challenging time is key, as team members begin to consult each other more and share leadership roles, though decision-making might still be tough.

For the team to move beyond Storming, members need to shift from a mindset of “testing and proving” to one of problem-solving. The most crucial skill in this transition is listening—really paying attention to what your teammates are saying and trying to understand their perspectives. Once the team starts to listen and collaborate more effectively, they can progress to the next stage of development.

3. Norming: Finding Your Groove as a Team

In the "Norming" stage, teams start to hit their stride. This is the phase where things begin to click, and the group starts creating new, more effective ways of working together. As the team develops a stronger sense of unity, leadership evolves from being the responsibility of just one person to being shared among all team members. Trust becomes the foundation of this shared leadership—everyone realizes that for the team to succeed, they must rely on and support one another.

During this stage, you’ll notice that processes and procedures become more established. The group gets comfortable with each other, and there’s a stronger focus and energy directed towards completing tasks. Conflict resolution skills improve, and the team makes sincere efforts to reach decisions that everyone can agree on. Influence is balanced across the team, and problem-solving becomes a collective effort. You’ll also see the team developing routines and achieving task milestones together.

Emotionally, the Norming stage is a time of growing confidence and trust. Team members feel a strong sense of belonging and are comfortable expressing constructive criticism. There’s a general feeling that everything is going to work out fine, and people feel free to contribute and express themselves. Acceptance of each other is high, and the team operates with a sense of unity and mutual respect.

To keep moving forward, the team needs to focus on decision-making processes, encourage everyone to offer ideas and suggestions, and continue sharing the responsibility of leadership. It’s important to use all available resources to support the team’s efforts and to give and receive feedback from project guides. As the team members take on more responsibility, they continue to grow their shared leadership skills.

In this stage, leadership is truly a shared effort. Project guides provide feedback and support but allow for less structure, promoting more team interaction. They encourage contributions from all team members, helping to clarify collaboration and strengthen relationships within the group.

The main goal during the Norming stage is to enhance communication between team members. This is when the team starts to freely share feelings and ideas, offer and accept feedback, and explore actions related to their tasks. Creativity is at its peak, and collaboration becomes clearer as everyone understands and embraces the team's work ethic and shared leadership.

However, one potential downside of the Norming stage is that members might start to worry about the inevitable future breakup of the team. This fear of change can make them resistant to any adjustments or new directions.

4. Performing: Reaching Peak Teamwork

The "Performing" stage is where teams really hit their top performance. By this point, true interdependence has become the norm. The team is flexible, with members adapting to support one another and meeting each other's needs. This is a highly productive phase, both personally and as a group, where everything seems to fall into place.

In this stage, you'll see a team that is fully functional, with clear roles and a strong sense of independence. The team can organize itself without needing constant guidance. Members are flexible, working well on their own, in small groups, or as part of the entire team. Everyone has a better understanding of each other's strengths and weaknesses, and they've gained valuable insights into how the group operates as a whole.

Emotionally, the Performing stage is marked by a deep sense of empathy for one another, a high level of commitment, and a solid grasp of what it means to work collaboratively. The bonds between team members are strong, and the atmosphere is filled with fun, excitement, and creativity. Personal development flourishes, and there's a general sense of satisfaction as the team continually discovers ways to sustain their momentum and enthusiasm.

To keep the team on track during this stage, project guides ensure that the team continues moving in a collaborative direction while maintaining flexibility. They help measure performance, provide necessary information, and facilitate feedback and dialogue within the group.

Leadership in the Performing stage is all about shared responsibility. Team members practice shared leadership, taking the initiative to observe, inquire, and fulfill the team's needs. Project guides take a step back, offering little direction and allowing the team to self-manage. Team members support one another, offering positive reinforcement and sharing new information as needed.

Not all teams reach the Performing stage, but those that do find that their capacity for teamwork and personal relationships expands significantly. In this stage, people can work independently, in small groups, or as a complete unit with equal competence and confidence. This is where the magic of true teamwork happens.

5. Reforming: The Wind of Change

The Reforming stage (often also referred as "Adjourning") is where teams start wrapping things up as they approach the end of their journey together. This stage typically kicks in when a project is coming to an end, like the last week of class or the final stages of a group assignment. Team members prepare

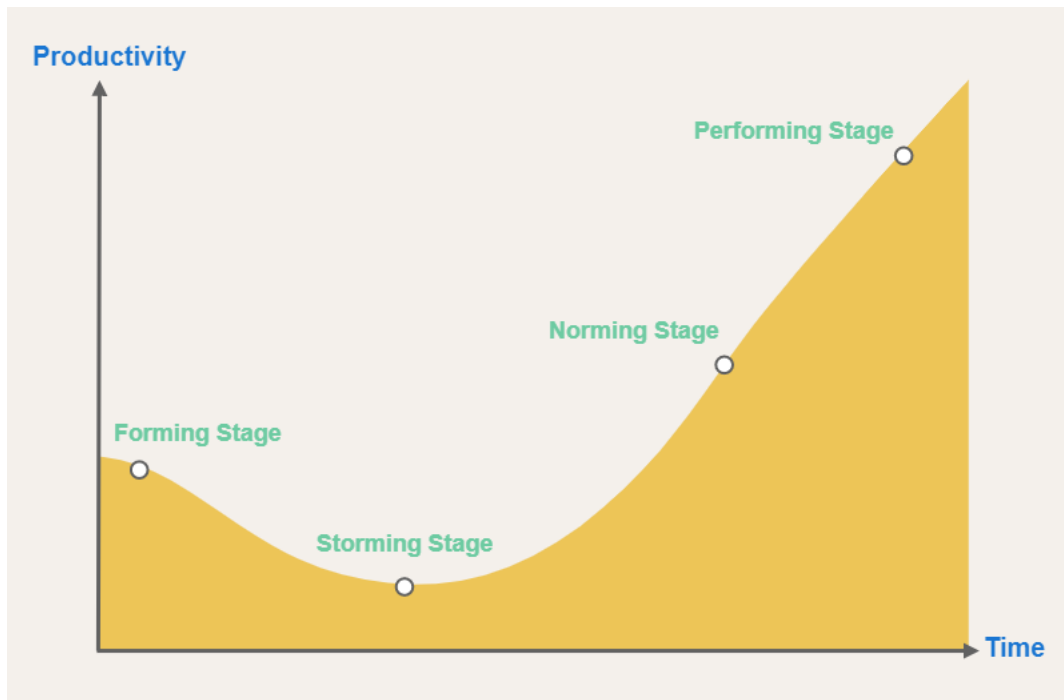
to part ways, leading to significant changes in the team's structure, membership, or overall purpose. Even though the team continues to perform productively, there's a need to manage the feelings that come with saying goodbye and transitioning out of the group.

During this stage, you might notice some clear signs that the end is near. People may show visible signs of grief, momentum might slow down, and there could be restless behavior as everyone comes to terms with the group's conclusion. Sometimes, you'll see bursts of extreme energy as everyone tries to finish strong, but these bursts are often followed by a noticeable drop in energy.

Emotionally, this stage can be a mixed bag. There's often a sense of sadness as people realize that their time together is coming to an end. You might also notice humor that, to outsiders, could seem a bit harsh—this is often a way for the group to cope with the end. Alongside the sadness, there can also be a sense of relief that the hard work is finally over.

At this point, the team needs to focus on evaluating their efforts, tying up loose ends, and recognizing the hard work everyone put in. It's important to reflect on what was accomplished and celebrate the successes, big or small.

Project guides play a crucial role in this stage by helping the team navigate the process of wrapping things up. They provide good listening, offer options for how the team can end on a positive note, and encourage reflection so that the collaborative skills developed can be carried into future opportunities. The Reforming stage is all about concluding the group's work and disengaging from the relationships that have been built. A planned conclusion usually involves some form of recognition for everyone's participation and achievements, as well as a chance for team members to say their personal goodbyes. Ending a group can feel a bit like a minor crisis, as it involves giving up both the control and the sense of belonging that came with being part of the team. But it's also a chance to look back with pride at what was accomplished together.

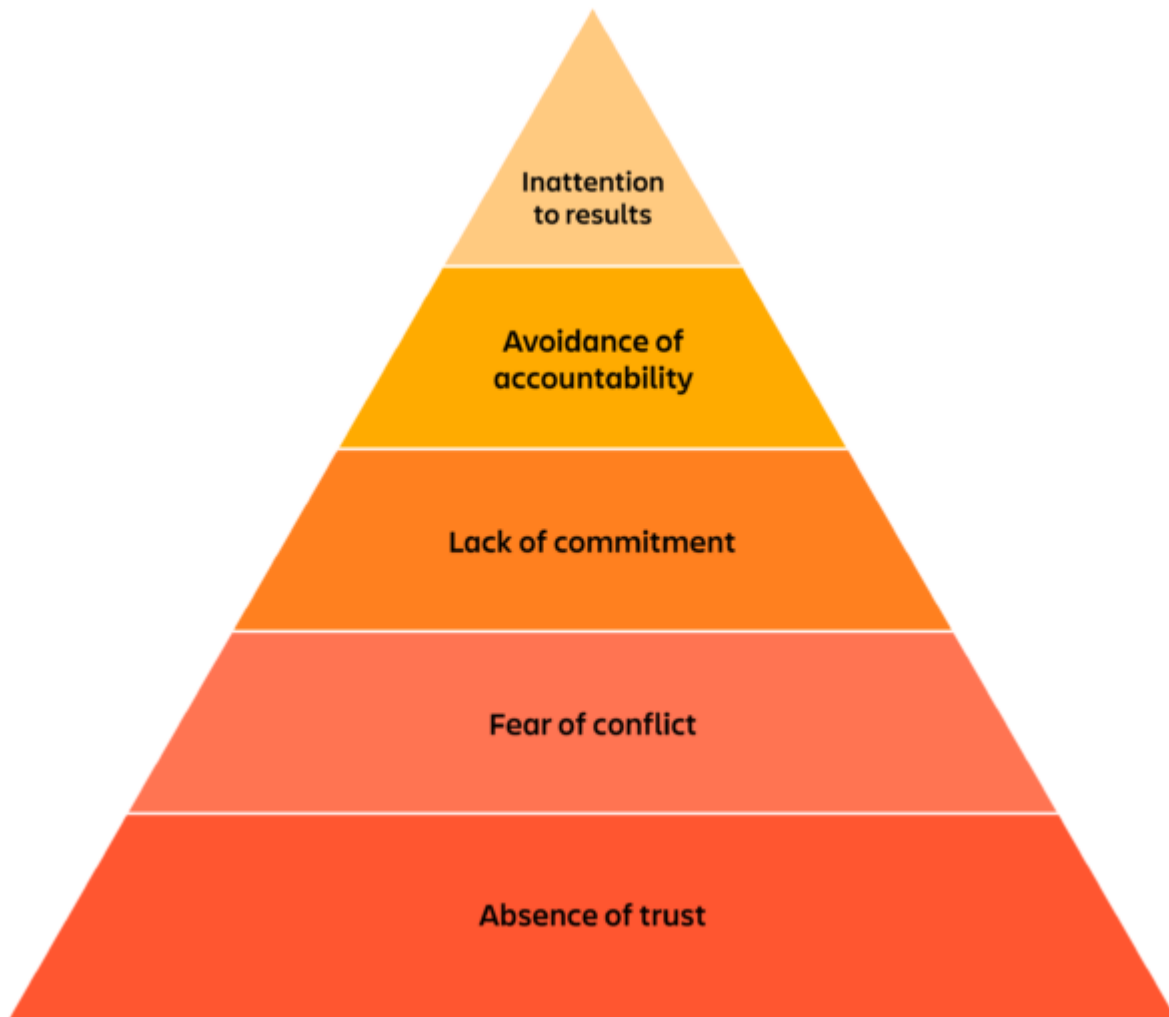


source: <https://nulab.com/learn/project-management/strengthen-team-using-drucker-exercise-tuckman-model/>

By understanding and applying Tuckman's model, you can navigate each stage of team development with greater awareness and purpose. Recognizing where your team is within the process allows you to adapt your approach to meet the team's needs, whether that means building trust and establishing clear goals during the Forming stage, addressing and resolving conflicts in the Storming phase, or fostering deeper collaboration and shared leadership as you progress to Norming and Performing. This model equips you with the tools to actively contribute to your team's success, helping everyone work together more effectively and harmoniously. By embracing the dynamics of each stage, you can strengthen relationships, enhance your teamwork skills, and lead your team to achieve its goals. Ultimately, Tuckman's model serves as a roadmap for becoming a more effective team player, preparing you to succeed in any group environment, whether in school, work, or beyond.

5.2 Lencioni Model

Another teamwork model we are going to mention to you was presented by American writer, Patrick Lencioni, in his book "The Five Dysfunctions of a Team". You may be wondering how this model is different from Tuckman's, which we covered earlier. Well, Lencioni's model doesn't exactly tell you what to do when leading or creating a team, but it identifies some of the problems that can appear during the process. As you can see on the image below, there are 5 major dysfunctions of a team, which, if not addressed, can lead to a team's failure.



source: <https://www.atlassian.com/blog/teamwork/what-strong-teamwork-looks-like>

Here is a bit more information about each of those:

- **Absence of Trust:** it comes from the unwillingness of the team members to be vulnerable within a group. The logic of this is that if members of the team can not be truly open with one another about their weaknesses and mistakes, it becomes impossible to build a foundation of trust. If there is no trust within a team, other problems are more likely to appear;
- **Fear of Conflict:** when there is not enough trust between the team members, it becomes harder to engage into open debates of ideas – meaning that you would be more restrained and hesitant to point out ideas that could potentially be harmful for the team, just so that the team member who proposed them doesn't take it the wrong way;
- **Lack of Commitment:** usually follows the Fear of Conflict. If, during discussion, you didn't point out the ideas you think make no sense and just agreed to everything that was said, it will be hard to believe in the plan of action – and it is quite hard to commit to something you don't believe in;

- **Avoidance of Accountability:** if you don't believe in the plan of action and just want the task to be over with, you are less likely to call out your team members on actions and behaviors that might be counterproductive to the good of the team;
- **Inattention to Results:** is the result of avoidance of accountability. If you decide to focus just on your own task, without caring for what (or how) other members of your team are doing, you are putting your own, individual needs (recognition, ego, career development) above the collective goals of the team – which will, even if you do your task perfectly, lead to failure.

Those dysfunctions that we mentioned above usually build up on one another, but if even a single one of them is allowed to flourish, the teamwork will deteriorate. Now we are going to address the dysfunctions one by one, and give you some guidelines on how to approach them in case you notice them in your team. After every dysfunction, we will provide you with some practical tools that should be helpful in case you decide to use this model.

1. Absence of trust

In the context of this part of the guide, trust means the confidence among team members that their intentions are good and that there is no reason to be protective or careful around the group. Building trust is probably the most important part of Lencioni's model, because it sets the foundation every team should build upon.

You can recognize if your team is struggling with this dysfunction if the team members do some of the following:

- Hide their weaknesses and mistakes from one another
- Hesitate to ask for help or provide constructive feedback (*to give constructive feedback to a team member, try to present it in a way of help and guidance; it is important to be honest, respectful and to allow your team members to explain why they are doing something differently*)
- Hesitate to offer help outside of their own tasks (*this is where we need to remember this TEAM part in the word Teamwork – even if you do your task perfectly, your team might still fail to achieve the goal you set for yourselves if there is no mutual support*)
- Jump to conclusions about the intentions of others without asking for clarification (*for example, if your team members become upset when receiving feedback or being asked if they need help*)
- Fail to recognize and tap into one another's skills and experiences
- Waste time and energy discussing topics irrelevant to the purpose of the team (*for example, discussing politics during team meetings, while it has nothing to do with what your team is trying to achieve*)
- Hold grudges (*for example, getting offended when someone gives you feedback, and just waiting for the opportunity to get back at them*)

- Avoid meetings and find reasons to avoid spending time together

If you are in the role of the leader, and your team is experiencing this dysfunction, you should be the one to demonstrate vulnerability first, and aim to create an environment that does not punish or ridicule vulnerability. Below you will find a tool that should help you start addressing this dysfunction of your team:

TOOL: Personal Histories

Time required: 30 minutes

This exercise is used to take the first steps towards developing trust. The only things you are going to need for it are some pens and paper! During this exercise, your team members are going to have to answer some questions about themselves, such as:

- *Number of siblings*
- *Hometown*
- *Hobbies*
- *Unique challenges*
- *Favourite type of music*
- *Favourite movie*

You can add more questions to this list, or you can change any of them into something more fitting for your team. After everyone is done answering the questions, each one of you is going to read aloud the answers one by one. This exercise is used to get to understand your team members more, and puts you on a fast track to break down the initial barriers!

2. Fear of Conflict

The second dysfunction we are going to address is Fear of Conflict. If your team has successfully built the foundation of trust, engaging in constructive discussions should be possible. Why is that? Well, if you and your team members all trust each other, you will feel much freer to express your own opinions, because you will know that there will be no judgment. However, many teams have a tendency to avoid (productive) conflict and consider it unnecessary.

If you and your team members do the following, you might be dealing with this dysfunction:

- Have boring meetings (*as in, meetings where there are no discussions and no one voices their opinion, because they are afraid that they are going to be judged*),
- Have created an environment in which gossip and personal attacks are common (*for example, talking behind the back of team members, allowing during discussions...*)
- Ignore topics that are critical to team success (*deadlines, responsibilities, briefings on what was done...*),

- Fail to consider all the opinions and perspectives of team members (*of course, this doesn't mean to just agree with all the options – it means to consider all of them, and choose the best ones*),
- Waste time and energy on unrelated topics

If you are in the role of the team leader while trying to deal with this dysfunction, you should try to demonstrate restraint when people engage in conflict, and allow resolution to occur naturally. Of course, you will need to moderate it and “put it back on track”, if your team members take it in a direction where it becomes irrelevant for the team.

TOOL: Real-Time Permission

This exercise can happen naturally when your team is sharing ideas or looking for solutions to problems that have come up. What you need to do is to recognize when people who are engaged in the conflict (debate, discussion) are becoming uncomfortable with the level of tension, and then interrupt them by reminding them why this is necessary (mentioning the good of the team). Interrupting to put focus back on the good of the team is a good way to break tension and prevent the discussion from becoming personal.

3. Lack of Commitment

According to Lencioni, two greatest causes for the lack of commitment are the desire for consensus and the need for certainty. When it comes to consensus, if you and your team members expressed your opinions, and if all of them have been addressed, it is going to be a lot easier to commit to the plan of action you come up with, even if it was not your proposition that the team finally went with. Because you will know that you were heard. When it comes to certainty, he says that any decision is better than no decision, even if that decision turns out to be wrong. In case the decision turns out to be wrong, it is important that you react and change it as soon as possible, because procrastination is going to introduce uncertainty, and make everything worse.

You will know that your team is affected by this dysfunction, if it:

- Allows for more than one interpretation of direction and priorities,
- Breaks deadlines because of excessive analysis and procrastination,
- Shows lack of confidence and is too afraid of failure,
- Discusses the same decisions multiple times, and
- Encourages second-guessing among team members

If you are in the position of the team leader, you must be comfortable with making a decision that can turn out to be wrong – because even if it turns out like that, you avoided uncertainty and gave your team something to work towards. You should also check if everyone is following deadlines and schedule that

the team has agreed upon.

TOOL: Deadlines

One of the best tools for ensuring commitment is the use of clear deadlines. This means that when tasks are given to the members of your team, everyone needs to know exactly until when they have to finish their tasks – nothing should be open to interpretation. There should be more than just one, final, deadline – you should put deadlines for various milestones on the path to completing the goal of your team. Every time you reach one of the milestones, your team should meet and see if all the deadlines were respected. If you organize your deadlines like this, you will be able to identify which tasks need to be prioritized or more team members assigned to, before it is too late.

TOOL: Cascading messages

Minimum time required: 10 minutes

This exercise doesn't take long, and you should do it after every team meeting. After the meeting is done and decisions were made, they should be repeated so that everyone is on the same page. The less things you leave for interpretation, the more effective your team is going to be. By doing this, you make sure that everyone in the team has understood everything in the same way, and you avoid uncertainty.

TOOL: Contingency and Worst-Case Scenario Analysis

This exercise is supposed to help you address the fears you might have regarding decisions of your team. As the name says, during a team meeting, you can discuss contingency plan with your team, or even do a worst-case scenario analysis, in which you approach a decision you are considering in a way that you try to analyze how things would be if everything went wrong. Usually this leads to reducing fears of your team members, because most often the costs of incorrect decisions are “survivable”, and fixable.

4. Avoidance Of Accountability

The next dysfunction we are going to address is avoidance of accountability. As we mentioned above, this refers to the willingness of you and your team members to call each other out on behavior that might hurt the team. For example – calling your teammates out on not finishing their tasks within deadlines, on not doing their task with enough care (resulting in lowered quality)... A team who is suffering this disfunction usually:

- Creates resentment among team members who have different standards or performance,
- Encourages, and is satisfied with, mediocrity,
- Misses deadlines,
- Places unnecessary burden on the team leader to be the only source of discipline.

If you are the team leader, you should encourage and allow the team to be the primary accountability mechanism – meaning that it shouldn't all be just on you. Team members should feel comfortable and permitted to hold each other accountable for the agreed tasks. Your task as a team leader would be to be there to introduce discipline, if the team fails in this.

TOOL: Publication of Goals and Standards

This is an easy tool you can use to encourage accountability within your team. After it has been decided what tasks each of your team members should accomplish, you can publish it as a list on the media that you use to communicate with your team. It can be either a social media group, or even written on a paper, if you meet with your team in person at the same place. This way, everyone knows who is responsible for what, and it can be easily checked.

TOOL: Briefings

Briefings are a great tool to use in order to show the whole team how you are progressing on a bigger scale. Briefings should be done twice per week at the end of the day (you can, of course, adapt it to fit the needs of your team). How it works is that every member of the team is invited to explain how they are progressing with their tasks and what has been done since the previous briefing. This way, everyone is kept in the loop of what the other team members are doing, and is the progress towards the final goal.

5. Inattention To Result

The final dysfunction and according to Lencioni - the ultimate one, is inattention to result. In his book, he identifies 2 types of obstacles that take away the focus from the result – team status and individual status. When it comes to Team status, this is would apply to people who are satisfied by just being part of the group, and do not care about the result itself (imagine being a part of football team, coming to trainings, hanging out with the rest of your team members, but not really trying to improve your football skills – or avoiding to come every time there is a competitive match you were supposed to play in). Individual status would be almost the opposite. If we take the same example with the football team, in this case you would be too focused on improving your football skills, you would not want to integrate with your team, you would demand from your coach to let you play in every match, you wouldn't be willing to pass the ball to your team-mates – all because you want to be “picked up” by a better team. How do you recognize that your team is suffering from this dysfunction? Well, a team that is not focused on results:

- Fails to grow,
- Rarely defeats competitors (*you can be the best football player in the world, but you can't win the game on your own*),

- Loses achievement-oriented members,
- Encourages team members to focus on their individual goals, and
- is easily distracted (*if everyone is focusing on their own, individual thing, no one is focusing on the team result*).

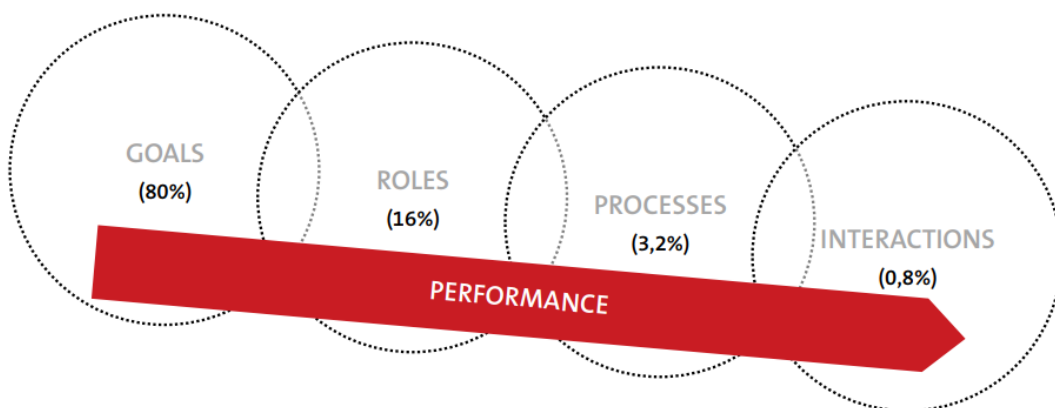
If you are in the position of the team leader, you should set the focus on team results, be objective and give recognition to those who make a real contribution to the achievement of the group goals.

TOOL: Public Declaration

One of the tools you can use to combat this dysfunction is public declaration. What this means is to “promise” or commit that your team is going to achieve a certain result. For example, if you are a member of a team that is organizing an annual festival, you can advertise that this year, your festival is going to be better than it was last year. This helps your team to stay motivated while pursuing the promised result.

5.3 Grpi Model

Another model of team development that we are going to present to you is called GRPI – which stands for Goals, Roles, Processes, Interactions. This model of team development was first introduced by Richard Beckhard in 1972. The idea of this model is to highlight different aspects of team cooperation by identifying goals, clarifying roles, responsibilities and processes and the interpersonal relationships of team members. The GRPI model puts the priority on the core mission of a team, and frames it into a clear action plan. It enables you to find solutions at the right level by setting priorities and identifying potential problems.



source: Raue S., Suk-Han Tang, Weiland Ch. and Wenzlik C.: The GRPI model – an approach for team development, Systemic Excellence Group, 2013

Noel Tichy, in his research based on this model, observed that conflicts accumulate at each level with a ratio of 80:20

- 80% of conflicts in teams are attributed to unclear goals
- From the remaining 20%, 80% are assigned to unclear roles
- From the remainder, there is again 80% to be found in unclear processes
- And only 1% of conflicts in teams can be attributed to interpersonal relationships between the team members

Uncertainty on one level impacts the next, as can be seen here:

- If goals are not clear, uncertainties in the individual roles will arise;
- If roles are unclear, this will result in conflict within the processes,
- If processes are unclear, conflicts at higher levels will appear at people level

The GRPI model emphasizes that it is crucial to establish complete clarity at each level, since this will create a foundation of shared commitment among the members of your team.

Goals

When it comes to goals – they should provide the foundation of good teamwork by establishing the core mission of a team and give frame to the team's purpose. Goals are important because they give your team a direction – which allows you to understand where you are now, where you want to go, and create bonds between you and your team members by unifying your visions on getting there. According to Beckhard, goals are what makes a team a team – they create identity and generate sense. If your team doesn't have a clear, shared and agreed goal, any kind of team development will be limited in its impact.

If all team members understand, accept, share and commit to common objectives, they will be able to align their individual goals with the common goals of the team (*we mentioned SMART goals in another chapter of this guide*).

Roles

A role can be described by its authority, responsibilities and tasks, and it should be aligned to support the goals your team has defined. In order for a team to function, each team member should have a clear picture of who is doing what, who is responsible for what, and should know the extent of their authority (*as in, where is the line where you start intruding upon someone else's tasks*). Every team member should agree with their role and be satisfied with it, because this will create individual and collective accountability. If you agreed to take a certain task onto yourself, of course you are going to be more passionate and eager to complete it, and do it well. Defining roles well is a foundation of a clear process, when it comes to addressing, clarifying and resolving issues.

To understand what we mean by authority when talking about roles – this is the amount of freedom for a person to act within their role. Authority is the frame given to the space for action, initiatives or decisions made by a person in the role. Since roles give authority, they also demand responsibility – meaning that every team member should be held accountable for deliverables (*tasks*) that are defined by their role. It should also be clear whom your team members in each role should address if they experience any issues.

Processes

Processes are a tool to overcome inefficiencies in decision-making, control, coordination and communication. The GRPI model of team development proposes that if you clearly define processes early, you can support your team's goals, because interactions within the team are going to be determined. Amount of types of processes will depend on your team's task size and composition.

While talking about processes, the GRPI model touches upon topics of decision making, conflict management and communication. To address them one by one:

- Communication is essential. With everything we do or say, we communicate. It is very important to know what the communication channels within your team are, since it is vital for successful teams. If your communication is effective, every member of the team will know what everyone is doing, and this will give everyone an idea on how the team is progressing towards the final goal.
- Clearly defined roles are a basis for decision making. Decisions within your team need to be made collectively, and after they are made, you have to make sure that everyone is on the same page. This will make sure that every team member is responding quickly and encourage respecting deadlines,
- What makes a team are the people – which means that personal or interpersonal conflicts are potentially going to happen. This is a natural part of interacting with each other. According to the GRPI model, conflict management is all about following a clear process when conflicts occur. There should be a clear process to address issues, since this will allow you to solve them quickly and to avoid any kind of escalation.

Interactions

Interactions cover the interpersonal section of the GRPI model. Here, we outline relationships, individual styles, while focusing on establishing trust, open communication and feedback – since this is going to create a comfortable working environment. Like in other parts of this model we covered above, the Interactions part also needs to have clearly established, understood, shared and agreed upon rules. In order to improve this aspect of your team, we will propose five principles of interpersonal

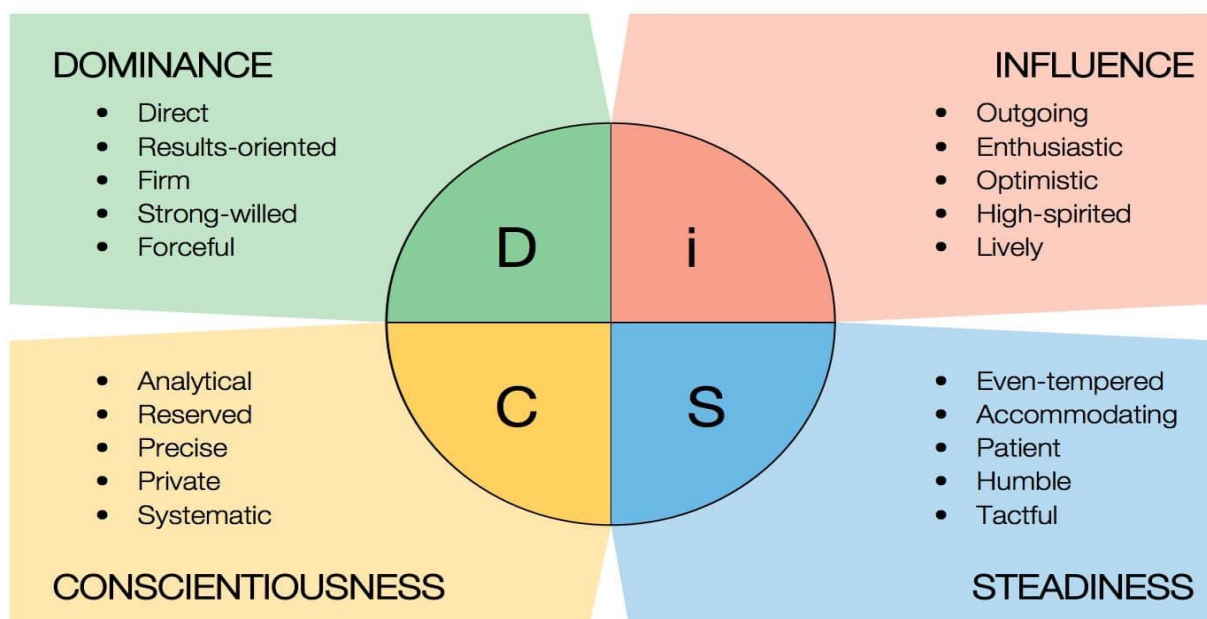
relationships. Those principles are based on the attempt to honestly seek to understand what is important to your team members, while keeping in mind what is important to you – and adjusting behavior where needed. The five principles are as follows:

- **Attend to little things**; meaning that it is recommended that you perform small acts of courtesy, such as smiling, giving a compliment or offering help;
- **Keeping commitments**; people believe in promises, and if you don't fulfill them, it could lead to them being irritated
- **Clarifying expectations**; meaning that you and your team mates should make sure that you understand each other (and each other's responsibilities).
- **Show personal integrity**; this means keeping your promises and deadlines, meeting expectations and showing respect – this is how you build trust.
- **Apologize sincerely when you make a withdrawal**; meaning that you should be sincere and explain your action to your team members (*in case you break deadline or don't fulfill the expectations*)

Of course, if you do the opposite of those five principles, you can expect interpersonal relationships between you and your teammates to worsen.

5.4 Disc Model

The last model of team building we are going to introduce to you is the DISC model. This model focuses on the personalities of your team members, and it stands for Dominance, Influence, Steadiness, and Conscientiousness. The aim of this model is to foster better communication, boost teamwork and create an environment where everyone in your team feels valued and understood.



source: <https://imsts.com/what-is-disc>

The DISC model sees your team as a puzzle, where each piece is a different personality. In order to see the complete picture, you will need to understand how those pieces fit together. Here you can find a link to a free DISC personality test: <https://discpersonalitytesting.com/free-disc-test/> In the next part of this chapter, we are going to explain all of the major personality styles (dominance, influence, steadiness, conscientiousness):

- **Dominance (D):** people with this personality style are assertive, result-oriented, and love to take charge. They are comfortable in fast-paced environments and they are great at making quick decisions.
- **Influence (I):** people with this personality style are social butterflies – they are usually enthusiastic, persuasive and great at communication. They are amazing in situations where interacting and collaborating with other people are the key. People with this personality type are also great at motivating others.
- **Steadiness (S):** people with this personality type are calm and dependable. They prefer stability, but they are consistent and excellent at supporting the team through their reliability.
- **Conscientiousness (C):** people with this personality type are analytical, precise and value accuracy above everything else. They are great at solving problems and making sure that the team doesn't overlook important details.

According to the DISC model, recognizing the personalities in your team is crucial, because it is all about understanding and appreciating unique strengths each person brings to the table.

In order to be able to lead your team effectively, you need to understand that communication is the key – and different personalities prefer different communication styles. For example, Dominance types prefer directness and brevity, while Influence types prefer a more friendly and collaborative approach. You should adjust your communication style to match what is required by your team members, because that will lead to better understanding and fewer conflicts. The same is true for motivation – different personality types are motivated by different things – and recognizing this motivation will allow you to lead your team in a way that resonates with each team member.

It is important to embrace the diversity within your team, because teams with a mix of DISC personality types can be very dynamic. For example, Dominance personality type's drive is progress, Influence personality types try to create a positive atmosphere, Steadiness types provide reliable support, and Conscientiousness types ensure accuracy and quality. If you are to be a team leader, your role would be to find balance between those traits, and ensure that each personality type is valued and utilized effectively.

Here are some recommendations on which types of team building activities to use with each DISC type:

- **Dominance** – activities like debates, problem-solving contests, sports events
- **Influence** – activities that allow them to express their creativity and social skills; such as brainstorming sessions
- **Steadiness** – group projects where they can contribute consistently and supportively; for example, a team volunteer day or a collaborative puzzle game
- **Conscientiousness** – activities that require attention to detail and precision; for example, team-based trivia quizzes and planning complex project timelines

If you decide to do some of those team building activities, don't limit them only to specific personality types – encourage everyone to participate in each. This will help team members understand and appreciate different personalities, and promote a well-rounded skill set across your team.

Of course, after you use DISC team building activities, you will want to measure their impact. How can you do that? Well, you can, for example, do regular feedback sessions during which team members can discuss their experiences with team building activities they were participating in. You could also observe changes in team interactions and dynamics – trying to note if team members are communicating more effectively or is there a noticeable improvement in how they resolve conflicts.

Remember, if you decide to use this model, the goal of integrating all the DISC personalities in your team building is not just about improving productivity or efficiency, it is also about mutual respect and understanding. When everyone feels seen, heard and understood, the chance for conflict will be lessened, and you will have created a comfortable environment for everyone. If there is no conflict, and your team members understand each other's strengths and weaknesses, they will be able to support each other better, and will be less likely to hesitate.

6. Is There A Pilot On Board? - Role Of The Leader

The needs of every group vary. Even inside the same group expectations towards the leader change with time. As you already know, the role of the leader differs depending on which stage of development the group is. Knowing how to adapt your leadership style is crucial. For this it's time to get familiar with the Situational Leadership Theory, developed by Dr. Paul Hersey and Dr. Ken Blanchard in the mid-1910s.

Situational leadership is all about being able to adapt your leadership style to fit what's happening around you and what your team needs at the moment. Instead of sticking to one way of leading, a situational leader knows how to change their approach based on the specific challenges the team is facing or the environment they're in. This isn't about how skilled a leader is in general, but rather their

ability to read the situation and respond in the best way possible. According to Blanchard and Hersey, a situational leader can choose from different leadership styles depending on what the situation calls for.

1. **Telling:** This style is when a team needs a lot of direction and guidance. Leaders who use the telling style usually make all the decisions and then explain them to the team. It's often used when the team is new or inexperienced, or when tasks need to be done in a specific, repetitive way.
2. **Selling:** This approach is used when the team or an individual isn't motivated to get the job done. The leader needs to convince and inspire them to take action.
3. **Participating:** Leaders use the participating style when the team knows how to do the tasks but might lack the confidence or motivation to get them done. The leader works alongside the team, helping them feel more comfortable and engaged.
4. **Delegating:** This style is for teams that are already doing a great job on their own. The leader steps back and lets the team take the lead, offering support only when needed.

Understanding the group development process helps leaders apply the right leadership style. For example, knowing that a team is in the Storming stage can guide a leader to focus on resolving conflicts and motivating the team, which aligns with the Selling style. Conversely, recognizing that a team is in the Performing stage encourages the use of the Delegating style to empower the team and capitalize on their high level of competence.

In summary, Tuckman's model provides insight into the developmental phases of a team, while Situational Leadership Theory offers strategies for adapting leadership approaches to meet the team's evolving needs throughout these stages. By integrating these two concepts, young leaders can more effectively guide their teams through each phase of development and enhance overall team performance. Is situational leadership always the best way? Imagine you're in a club at school, and you have a leader who's super flexible, switching up their approach depending on who's doing what. That sounds cool, right? But, like everything, there are some downsides to this style of leadership that you should know about. If a leader is constantly changing their approach to fit every individual's needs, it can get confusing. You might be unsure of what's expected of you or what direction the group is heading in because things keep shifting. This kind of leadership often focuses more on immediate tasks rather than long-term goals. So, if your group has a big project or vision for the future, this style might not always help you stay on track. Also, if a group has a lot of repetitive tasks, like organizing events or managing regular meetings, this flexible leadership style might not be the best fit. It's great for adapting to new situations but not as effective for tasks that need a steady routine. Lastly, situational leadership relies a lot on the leader's ability to judge how mature and capable each member is. If the leader isn't good at this, they might end up using an approach that doesn't really work for certain team members or the team. So, while situational leadership can be awesome in many ways, it's important to be aware of these

potential challenges!

7. How to Handle Mobbing and Bullying in the Team

A topic that we think is important to mention in this guide is mobbing. Of course, in order to understand it better, we first have to define it. According to a definition given by the International Labor Organization, mobbing or workplace bullying is offensive behavior through vindictive, cruel, malicious or humiliating attempts to undermine an individual or a group (of employees). Of course, using analogy, this can easily be transferred outside of the context of the workplace, and into other realities, such as school, university or another kind of activity that requires you to work in teams. Looking at this, and many other definitions (found in most national labor laws), it becomes clear that, in order for a behavior to be considered mobbing, it needs to be done:

- repeatedly,
- over a significant period of time,
- it has to be non-physical,
- and have a humiliating effect on the bullied person.

Mobbing is not a single action, but a series of one or more different actions over a longer period of time. The object of mobbing is most often the exclusion or punishment of a person. Prof. Heinz Leymann gave a list of 45 actions that are considered mobbing, if they occur over half a year or longer, and at least once per week:

1. Attacks on the possibility of expressing oneself

- Being limited in the possibility of expressing oneself
- Being constantly interrupted
- The possibility of expressing itself is limited by colleagues
- Being shouted at or told off
- Constant criticism of one's work
- Constant criticism of one's private life
- Telephone terror (*if you are getting unwanted calls, messages and other content over your phone*)
- Verbal threats
- Written threats
- Refusal of contact through devaluing views or gestures (*for example, if someone judges you because you come from a village or small town*)
- Refusal of contact by suggestions, without expressing anything directly

2. Attacks on social relations

- The person is ignored (*this usually implies being ignored by your superior at work, teacher/professor at school or college*)

- The person is not allowed to express themselves
- Transfer into a room far away from colleagues
- (Work) colleagues are not allowed to talk to the person
- Being ignored by colleagues

3. Effects on social reputation

- Bad-mouthing the person (*if members of your team are talking bad things about you*)
- Rumors are spread about the person
- The bullied person is made to seem ridiculous
- Expressing suspicion that someone is psychologically ill
- Seeking to force someone to undergo psychiatric investigation
- Scoffing at a handicap
- Imitating someone's walk, voice or gestures to make them look ridiculous
- Attacks on person's political or religious views
- Making fun of person's private life
- Making fun of their nationality
- The person is forced to carry out work which offends their self-confidence (*for example, you are employed as an engineer, and your boss is expecting you to make them coffee every day, or they always tell just you to take out the trash...*)
- The work input is judged in a false or insulting way (*if someone is trying to force you to take blame for something you didn't do*)
- Decisions are questioned
- Making the person the subject of obscene incentives or other degrading expressions (*for example, someone starts to use your name to insult other people "Don't be like John"...*)
- Making the person the subject of sexual approaches or offers (*for example, someone writes your name and phone number in the work toilet*)

4. Attacks on the quality of occupation and life

- No work is assigned
- Useless work functions given (*for example, if someone gives you two boxes of pens to test which ones are working, and when you are done, they mix them back together and asks you to do it again*)
- The person is assigned work which doesn't respond to their qualification (*for example, if you are employed as a lawyer, and your boss asks you to watch their kids while they are on a meeting*)
- The person is constantly assigned new functions
- The person concerned is given offensive work functions (*for example, you are employed as a software engineer, and you are asked to clean the toilets*)

- The person is given work functions which exceed their qualification in order to compromise their reputation (*for example, you are asked to lead a public procurement process, while you have no knowledge / education on how to do it*)

5. Physical attacks with an impact on the health of individuals

- Obligation to carry unhealthy works
- Threat of physical force
- Application of light pressure in order to “teach someone a lesson”
- Physical maltreatment (*this would be when someone hits you with hands or objects; punching, slapping, kicking...*)
- Costs are caused in order to harm the person
- Material damage is caused at home or on the workstation
- Sexual touching

It is important to mention that all those actions we mentioned will be considered mobbing no matter if they are caused by one person or a group of people.

We should make distinction between workplace bullying, conflict and harassment. The simplest way to look at conflict is to see it as a disagreement. It could be said that mobbing is “exaggerated conflict”, and that it “evolves” from conflict after a certain time – that sometimes happens very quickly, and sometimes it takes months. Of course, this doesn’t mean that every conflict will grow into mobbing – this is why it is important to address it early. The other term we mentioned is harassment. The verb “to harass” is defined as “to disturb or irritate persistently”, and mobbing almost always manifests as some form of harassment. As you can see from this, mobbing/bullying consists of both, conflict and harassment, and what makes it different from them is duration. If some of the actions we listed above happen once, they could be treated as conflict or harassment (which still can, and should, be addressed), but to be treated as mobbing, there would need to be a continuity of at least half a year.

There are multiple measures you can take in order to protect yourself against mobbing or bullying. We can separate them into two categories: preventive measures and intervention. When it comes to preventive measures, you could achieve this by learning more about mobbing and bullying, discussing it with your team, and giving them introduction to this topic – you can do it through leaflets, articles or even videos.

When it comes to intervention – it is important to stop the bully and to support the victim. Stopping the bully often requires help from outside of the team; it can be attempted by mediation, but also by taking legal action against the bully. If this is happening in a workplace or some other place that has hierarchy, it is recommended to communicate with your superior (teacher, professor, boss, coach) or with the Human Resource department. If you are being bullied, if it is possible and if it would not put you into

harm’s way, it is recommended to collect and keep evidence. When it comes to supporting the victim – this support can come through professional rehabilitation, psychotherapy, self-help groups and also medical therapy.

8. Conflicts in the Team and Conflict Resolution

In this part of the guide, we will give you more information about conflict and how to resolve it. When you communicate with other people, especially if you are in some way tied to them for longer periods of time (with bonds of family, school, work...- for the case of this guide, we’ll stick to talking about teams), disagreements are almost inevitable. Those disagreements actually are a definition of conflict. You can disagree with other people about small, unimportant things, or over topics that you find very important – and sometimes it is hard to find a common ground. Conflict is a natural thing, and it will happen as you go through life – so knowing how to approach it is a very useful skill to have! There are many tools for conflict resolution, and in this guide we decided to present you the Wheel of Conflict.

The Wheel of Conflict is a framework created by Dr. Bernard Mayer, a well-known mediator, facilitator and psychotherapist. Dr. Mayer stated that if we can understand and locate the sources of conflict, we can create a map to guide us through the conflict process. Dr. Mayer proposed that it is the human needs that are at the core of all the conflict. The Wheel of Conflict expanded the previous framework created by dr. Christopher Moore, adding to it five new factors that can help us understand how conflict unfolds, and those are: how people communicate, their emotions and values, the structures, interactions, and history.



source: <https://www.workplaceassessments.ca/blog/from-chaos-to-clarity-harnessing-the-wheel-of-conflict-for-resolutions>

Dr. Mayer defined the difference between needs and interests – according to him, needs are viewed as more fundamental and lasting, while interests are more superficial and passing. Resolutions that we make are not as meaningful when they rely only on interests that we have. If we want to understand the drivers of conflict, proposed by dr. Moore (*those being relationships, structure, data, values and interests*), we have to determine the level of needs that best explain the conflict in the following areas: Survival (*for example – food, shelter, security...*), Identity Needs (*for example – meaning, community, autonomy...*) and Interests (*for example – substantive, procedural, psychological*).

To give you more insight, we will cover communication, emotion, values, structure and history one by one.

Communication

As we mentioned at the beginning of this chapter – every communication has a potential for conflict. Disputes often arise from conversations in which you and the person who you are communicating with, generate your own set of assumptions – of how you hear and see whatever information is presented to you by the other person. Those assumptions are what often can lead us to take a negative stance in communication, and maybe even make us believe that the person we are interacting with has bad intentions. Some other things can also affect how you or members of your team impact how you communicate. For example – gender, age difference, different cultural backgrounds, stereotypes, and many more

Emotions

The next topic we are going to mention is Emotions. Dr. Mayer states that emotions are energy that fuels the conflict. They are, after all, a range of psychological states – from misery to anger. You may be wondering- what affects our emotions? Well, it can be some previous experiences we had – either with the person we are communicating with, or maybe not even related to them. We remember the experiences we had, because they make us who we are. Some of those experiences are, unfortunately, negative. If, during conflict, we start feeling any emotion intensely, we should take a moment to breathe and try to determine where it is coming from – is it something coming to us from the past, or was it caused by the conflict we are involved in now?

Values

Each person's values and beliefs can cause a conflict, since all of us are, for ourselves, trying to figure out what is important, what is right or wrong, what principles we should follow, and how we should

leave our lives. If this is the source of conflict, it is very unlikely that it will be resolved. Every time someone questions our beliefs and values, we feel unsure and attacked – because those things are, in a way, the essence of what makes us who we are. If we enter a conflict because of this reason, we should recognize our values, and try to steer the conversation in a constructive direction – instead of finding things that we disagree on, we should aim to find things we have in common.

Structure

Dr. Mayer says that we should analyze where and how the conflict we are in occurs, so that we can identify the structural components of the conflict. Those components could be available resources, time constraints, communication mechanisms, and many more. If you decide to do this type of analysis, make sure to try to look at the structure in the broadest possible sense, taking into account the dynamics of all the sides in the conflict (*for example – team dynamics (team member-team member, team leader-team member ...)*), since they can attribute to the conflict itself.

History

When it comes to history, dr. Mayer states that every person involved in the conflict brings their personal history and experience with them. We are all different people, with different backgrounds, different education, different views, different economic backgrounds... If there are historical relationships (of any kind) between the people involved in conflict, between the topic of the conflict, and the system we find ourselves in (*team, school, college, workplace...*), it could have a powerful influence on the direction of the conflict.

Resolution

To conclude this chapter, we will mention conflict resolution. There are many effective approaches to resolving conflict, and effective communication is essential to them all. Good communication is caring about what the other person has to say, while focusing your energy on cooperation, understanding and tolerance. What can be helpful with this is reframing the issues that caused the conflict. Every time you are engaged in some kind of conflict, try to have dr. Mayer's Conflict Wheel in mind, and try to take a moment to analyze where this conflict is coming from. Is it because of something that happened in your past? Something that happened in their past? (*maybe you were lied to, and that is where this suspicion you have towards your team member comes from*) Did something happen to you today, and that is the reason there is so much anger towards the person you are communicating with? (*There was an exam at college today, and you are quite sure that you are going to fail*) Are you struggling with deadlines in your private life? (*you have to turn in a 10-page essay by tomorrow*) Did the person you are now in conflict with approach you in a way that you perceived as too aggressive? All of these, and more, can affect how we behave during a conflict, and if we become aware of them, if we manage to find out why we are acting in certain ways, we will be able to moderate, first of all, ourselves, and ask the person we

are communicating with all the right questions.

If you would like to learn more about mediation and conflict resolution, you we recommend this YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@1mediate/videos>

You will be able to find many lessons and interviews with expert mediators there.

Sources and further reading list:

SALTO YOUTH: European Training Strategy II: Amended version of competences for trainers working at international level with criteria and indicators (https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-3862/ETS-Competence-Model%20_Trainers_Amended_version.pdf)

Hersey, P. and Blanchard, K. H. (1969). *Management of Organizational Behavior – Utilizing Human Resources*. New Jersey/Prentice Hall.

Hersey, P. & Blanchard, K. H. (1969). "Life cycle theory of leadership". *Training and Development Journal*. **23** (5): 26–34.

Tuckman, B. (1965). "Developmental sequence in small groups". *Psychological Bulletin*. **63**(6): 384–399.

Blanchard, K. and Parisi-Carew, E., *The One Minute Manager Builds High Performing Teams*, William Morrow, 2009.'

Belbin, M. (1981). *Management Teams*. London; Heinemann.

Belbin Team Roles". *BELBIN Associates*. Retrieved 20 February 2012.

Broadwell, Martin M. (20 February 1969). "Teaching for learning (XVI)". *wordsfithlyspoken.org*. The Gospel Guardian. Retrieved 11 May 2018.

Lencioni, Patrick, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 2002

The GRPI model – an approach for team development; Steve Raue, Suk-Han Tang, Christian Weiland and Claas Wenzlik, 18/02/2013

Lorho, Frank; Ulrich, Hilp; WORKING PAPER - BULLYING AT WORK, Social Affairs Series SOCI 108 EN, Publisher: European Parliament, L-2929 Luxembourg, 2001

Mayer, Bernard, *The Dynamics of Conflict, a guide to engagement and intervention*, 2nd edition, Jossey-Bass, 2012

Ravnić, Anton, *Osnove radnog prava - domaćeg, usporednog i međunarodnog (Principles of Labour Law-Domestic, Comparative and International)*, Faculty of Law in Zagreb, 2004

Front page image for theoretical part taken from: <https://pixabay.com/photos/teamwork-team-gear-board-chalk-2499639/>

Front page image for workshop scenarios taken from: <https://pixabay.com/photos/board-chalk-team-business-job-4862158/>

WORKSHOP SCENARIOS

Intro: The Structure of the Workshop

Cooperation and teamwork are complex topics that can be approached from different angles. For this workshop, we want to propose to you a variety of exercises that tackle different aspects of the topic. Each facilitator can choose which activities from the list below to use, and adapt each scenario to the needs of their target group. This will help you to make your workshops unique and effective. For each activity, there is a proposed duration. Depending on the time available, choose activities that fit the expectations of the group. You can focus on one part of the workshop and implement it entirely or choose few activities from different parts. Some activities require a theoretical input, do not skip it, if you decide to implement those activities. Activities marked with a “*” are recommended to be given a priority. We also recommend that even if you decide to skip some activities, to keep the order of the activities chosen according to this scenario. It is a good idea to start each workshop with an energizer. Energizers are also a great tool to “wake up” the group after a longer discussion or help the group to re-focus if it’s gotten distracted. The list of possible energizers can be found at the end of this scenario.

Part I: Understanding Group Development

Total Duration: 120 min

Exercise 1: WHO ARE YOU?

Duration: 10 min

Objectives: getting to know each other, breaking first ice

Required Materials: none

Preparation: write four questions listed below on the flipchart and hang them in a place visible for everyone

The process:

Participants are sitting in the circle. Facilitator asks them to introduce themselves one by one by answering following questions:

- saying their name,
- where are they from,
- what are they good at, and
- a random fact about them

If the group is very loud and tend to interrupt one another facilitator can introduce the concept of a

“talking stick” – chose any object (not too big or heavy so participants can hold it in hand) and pass it to the person on their right.

Exercise 2: MOLECULES

Duration: 20 min

Objectives: building bonds among the group members, getting to know each other better, locating persons with similar ideas

Required Materials: music and speaker

Preparation: none

The process:

Participants are walking freely around the room – as particles, while facilitator plays some cheerful music from a speaker. While the music plays facilitator can encourage the group to dance a little. After few minutes participant stops the music and screams a number from 1 to 6. Participants need to form a molecule consisting of that many particles (persons). When the groups are formed facilitator gives them a topic to discuss. The topics are completely up to the facilitator but should help the group to get to know each other better. Here are some examples of topics that we recommend:

- What are some common assumptions that people have about you?
- What must a city have to make it a good place to live in?
- If you would move to another planet with only one suitcase, what would you take with you?
- How would you like the world to end?
- What would you consider to be the toughest season of your life?
- If you meet 10-year-old you, what would you tell them?

Facilitator gives the group about 4 minutes to discuss the topic then plays the music again and repeat the process saying different number.

*Exercise 3: LEGO BRIDGE

Duration: 50 min

Objectives: practicing effective communication, establishing workflows in the team, discovering roles in the group

Required Materials: two similar sets of Lego bricks, toy car (can be built from Lego), two separated rooms, timer

Preparation: describe the rules of the game on a flipchart

The process:

This activity will help the group to develop effective means of communication. The aim of the group is to build a free-standing structure – a bridge of a minimum length of 40 centimeters that will hold a toy car.

The group should be divided into 2 teams, each team will be building a half of the bridge, without seeing the work of the other team. At the end of activity, the groups will join both parts of the bridge to check if it can function as one structure. The bridge should be at least 40 cm long and 20 cm high (in its highest point).

After dividing the groups facilitator should explain the rules of the activity, preferably having all the rules written down on a flipchart.

Each group gets a box of Lego bricks with the same number of pieces. Teams work in separate rooms. Each group selects a leader – a person who will have a chance to communicate with the other group. The activity starts with 5 minutes of discussion in the groups, so they can develop their strategy for construction of the structure and communication with the other team. Once the activity starts groups have 30 minutes to design their parts of the bridge.

Only the leaders of the groups can communicate. To do that they should leave their rooms and meet in a place where other participants cannot hear them (“communication zone”). The leaders have a total time of 5 minutes that they can spend in the communication zone. They should carefully plan how many meetings they want to have during this time.

After the time for building passes the groups should join their parts of the group. Each group can choose up to 5 Lego bricks that will be used to join connect the bridge.

After coming together into one room groups have 1 minute to join both parts of the bridge. They can only use Lego pieces that they brought with them. Facilitator should check if the structure can hold the toy car and if the minimum dimensions are reached.

Debriefing is the most important part of the activity. The facilitator should ask the group questions that will help them to formulate conclusions about the group work during this activity that can be applied to other tasks. Facilitator should make sure that everyone is equally included in the conversation.

Example debriefing questions:

- How satisfied are you with the result?
- How satisfied are you with the process in the group?
- How satisfied are you with your own involvement?

- Which roles did you take in the group? Did you feel involved in the process?
- How did the process go? Did you discuss and prototype or start building right away?
- What was the most challenging during the activity?
- Question for the leaders: How did your communication go? How did you prepare for each meeting?
- Was time pressure a thing for you?
- If you would do this activity again, what would you do differently?

During the discussion facilitator should write down all the tips for better group cooperation that were mentioned on the flipchart. They should be formulated as short, clear recommendations.

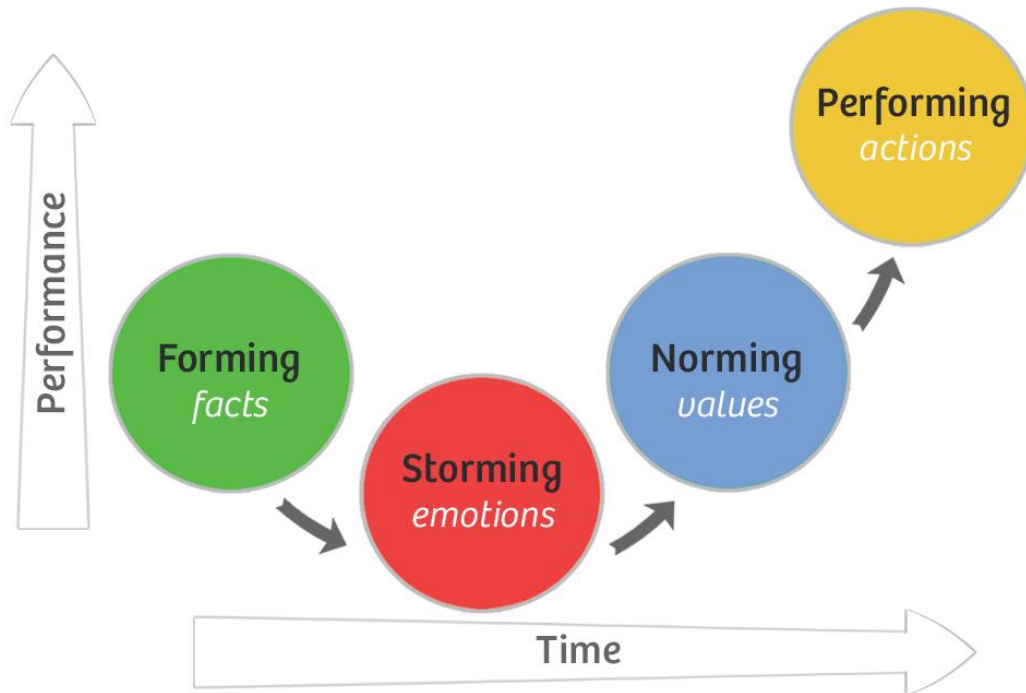
***INPUT: PRESENTATION OF THE GROUP DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

Duration: 5 min

Bruce W. Tuckman, along with other researchers and psychologists who study small group behavior, developed a model that identifies four distinct stages in a group's development. While various typologies have been proposed by other scholars, this particular model is valued for its simplicity.

1. **Forming:** In the first stage, group members are uncertain about what they are expected to do and how they will achieve the group's goals. They focus on understanding the group's objectives and their roles in achieving them. Members are concerned about being accepted by the group and often seek guidance from a leader. In student projects, where no leader is designated, the question arises: how will leadership emerge?
2. **Storming:** The second stage is characterized by efforts to unify and define roles within the group. This phase often involves conflict, both subtle and overt, between members and sometimes between members and an emerging leader. Through these conflicts, the group starts to take shape and define its identity.
3. **Norming:** The third stage follows storming, once the group has succeeded, at least temporarily, in resolving its conflicts. Members begin to feel more secure with one another and any established leaders. They effectively negotiate roles, task assignments, decision-making processes, and practices related to planning, task management, and leadership.
4. **Performing:** In the fourth stage, group members work together maturely and focus on achieving their goals. Communication becomes open, direct, and honest, with members paying attention

to both task completion and the emotional well-being of the group. There is a balance between productivity and sensitivity to interpersonal dynamics.



source: <https://agilecoffee.com/toolkit/tuckman-model/>

*Exercise 4: THE GROUP PROCESS

Duration: 15 min

Objectives: understanding the group development model, breaking ice between group members

Required Materials: none

Preparation: prepare a flipchart with a short description of Tuckman model

The process:

Begin by writing the four original stages of the Tuckman model on the flipchart. Briefly introduce the model by mentioning that in the early 1960s, Bruce Tuckman was hired by the US Navy to study team dynamics. He developed the four stages of team development: Forming, Storming, Norming, and Performing. This is the original version of the model. In 1977, Tuckman, along with Mary Ann Jensen, added a fifth stage called Adjourning, which describes the team's disbandment phase. However, in this session, we will focus only on the first four stages.

Invite participants to come to the floor, ensuring there's plenty of space for them to move around.

Explain that you'll start by demonstrating the Forming phase, and provide the following instructions:

Forming (Attack & Defense): Without telling anyone, choose one person in the group to be your enemy (Person A) and another person as your shield (Person B). When I give the signal, position yourself so that your shield (B) is always between you and your enemy (A).

To facilitate, demonstrate this exercise with two people from the group. Highlight that once you position yourself, you'll have to continually reposition as Person A and Person B move.

After allowing them to move around for a bit, stop the group and explain:

In the Forming stage, the team is in search of answers to fundamental questions: Who is involved? What are we going to do? How will we do it? Who do we look to for guidance? At this stage, the leader role is to help introduce participants to one another and clarify basic terms, objectives, vision, and values. Rather than prompting with questions like "What do you think?" we provide direct guidance and instructions.

Next is the Storming phase (Protect the team member): Use the same two people as before. Now, you and your shield switch roles. This time, your job is to protect Person B from Person A, meaning you must always position yourself between your enemy and the person you are shielding.

Demonstrate this by standing between the two people you used in the previous exercise.

You'll notice that the group remains unstable, and participants begin jostling in the center of the space.

After a short time, stop the activity and explain:

In the Storming phase, teams encounter difficulties in coordinating and resolving conflicts as they try to establish a shared understanding, roles, and processes. Some members may become frustrated with others for offering opinions or interfering with how they carry out their tasks ("I've always done it this way, and I know it works. Now you're telling me to do it differently!"). Others may begin forming alliances within the team. At this stage, the leader's role is to focus on resolving or diffusing conflicts and helping the team develop a common understanding of roles, routines, and ways of working together.

Next is the Norming phase (To be done in silence): Now, your goal is to maintain an equal distance between yourself and the two other people. When I give the signal, you should always keep the same distance from both Person A and Person B as you move. Even if I interfere with you, continue maintaining equal distance between them.

Demonstrate this exercise again using the same two people as before. Allow them time to move until they reach a stable state where everyone maintains equal distance and stands still.

While they are moving, observe who most people have selected as Person A or Person B. Identify the individual who seems to have the most influence on the group's dynamics and consider what would happen if you moved that person to another corner of the room.

Once the group has stabilized, say: "I'm your department head and I've noticed that one of my other teams is struggling with their project. They need an expert, and that expert is you" (point to the person you identified). Continue: "You need to come with me to help the other team, while the rest of you should keep doing your work."

Take the identified person and walk them out of the room. Pay attention to whether the rest of the group repositions themselves, and if some even follow the person out of the room. If anyone follows, stop them and ask, *"What are you doing? I just need this person to help me. You should continue your own work!"*

Afterward, bring everyone back and explain:

In the Norming phase, teams begin to establish a shared understanding of roles, procedures, and cooperation through self-assessment and agreements. A sense of community forms, and individuals adapt to their roles. What did you notice when the group reached a stable state? And what happened when I used "Drag-and-Drop" management by moving the expert to another team?

Discuss the negative impact of removing the team's expert, noting that while the manager may have solved a problem for one team, they created a new one by weakening the original team. Highlight how teams regress in maturity when key members are removed.

Also, emphasize that during the Norming phase, the leader should focus on nurturing team-specific understandings, roles, and behaviors.

Finally, move on to the Performing phase (Work together): Ask the entire group to form equilateral triangles with two other people, working together as a team.

This should happen quickly, and you'll see them communicating to complete the task.

Afterward, discuss the characteristics of the Performing phase: At this point, the team is primarily focused on getting the work done rather than worrying about processes or cooperation. Collaboration flows smoothly, and there's less need for discussions about procedures or self-assessment.

In this phase, the leader should focus on encouraging high performance, potential growth, and setting new goals.

Lastly, it's important to adjust your interaction with the team depending on their stage:

- In the Forming phase, direct more.
- In the Storming phase, focus on resolving conflicts.
- As the team progresses through the Norming and Performing phases, shift to a coaching role by making observations, asking insightful questions, and allowing the team to find their own solutions.

***Exercise 5: THE GROUP PROCESS**

Duration: 20 min

Objectives: analyzing the Group Development Model, learning how to recognize the stage of development of the group, practical application of the model

Required Materials: paper with statements printed for everyone

Preparation: none

The process:

Facilitator presents the Tuckman model of group development. If possible, write all stages and its characteristic on a flipchart.

After the presentation facilitator divides the group to the groups of 5 participants. Each group receives a *Group Behaviors List*. As a group, participants see if they can reach agreement as to which stage each of the 20 behaviors belong. If the group members disagree, work at listening and understanding each other’s point of view. After a couple of presentations of positions, check again for consensus. If not, the group can vote on which stage.

When the groups come together again discuss the most difficult issues to categorize, and check with the facilitator if the answers were correct.

During the debriefing discuss how knowledge of the four stages can help groups be more effective. Suggest which behavior a member can use at each stage to help a group evolve.

ATTACHEMENT ONE: LIST OF STATEMENTS

GROUP BEHAVIOURS LIST:
1. Members are listening and seeking to understand one another.
2. Members seem distracted and aren’t focusing on the core group project.
3. Members are not fully committed to talking about the group goal.
4. Members refer to their group with obvious pride and enjoyment.
5. Members comment that they are glad things are finally progressing smoothly.
6. Chairing of meetings is shared among different members.
7. Leadership role is rotated among appropriate members for certain tasks.
8. Members anxiously believe their assigned tasks will be completed by other members.
9. Members seem more involved and connected to sub-groups than to the whole group.

10. Members are satisfied with the group progress.
11. Members argue with one another, even when they agree on the basic issues.
12. Members attempt to figure out their roles and functions.
13. Members begin to enjoy team activities.
14. Members challenge, evaluate and destroy ideas.
15. Members choose one position or another in an argument.
16. All members participate in some fashion in all group activities.
17. Disagreements become more civilized and less angry and emotional.
18. Divisive feelings and sub-groups within the group increases.
19. Meeting mechanics and agenda following become smooth and automatic.
20. Group members follow a self-appointed or designated leader's suggestions without enthusiasm.

ATTACHEMENT TWO: CORRECT ANSWERS

STATEMENT:	STAGE
1.	PERFORMING
2.	FORMING
3.	FORMING
4.	FORMING
5.	NORMING
6.	NORMING or PERFORMING
7.	NORMING or PERFORMING
8.	FORMING
9.	STORMING
10.	PERFORMING
11.	STORMING
12.	NORMING
13.	PERFORMING
14.	STORMING
15.	STORMING
16.	PERFORMING
17.	NORMING
18.	NORMING
19.	PERFORMING
20.	FORMING

Part II: Me as a Team Worker

Total Duration: 120 min

Structure: This session consists of two activities. Both of them take about 60 minutes but can be shortened or prolonged depending on the number of participants and time available.

*Exercise 1: COOPERATION CASINO

Duration: 60 min

Objectives: introducing the concept of “organizational culture”, learning different methods of communication, understanding how to reach high performance in a team

Required Materials: 3 decks of cards, rules of the game and a score board printed for each team

Preparation: prepare three tables in with enough of chairs that everyone can sit around in three corners of the room

The process:

The aim of this game is to learn how oneself operates in the situation of change and uncertainty. Facilitator divides the group into three teams. Each team sits in a separate table in different part of the room. Each groups receives a deck of cards and rules of the game. They have 10 minutes to learn the game – read the rules, discuss all questions and play few test rounds to memorize the rules. Each table receives slightly different set of rules.

After this time is over, facilitator collects the papers of with the rules and give each team a scoreboard instead. From this moment on participants are not allowed to have any verbal communication. The game consists of four parts. During each part layers play the game for 10 minutes (or up to four games) and count their points after every game. At the end of the part each table should have one winner and one loser.

Facilitator asks all winners to move to the next table clockwise. Another part starts. Groups play again for 10 minutes (or up to four games). Players that just joined the table don't know which set of rules is used at the table and as the groups is still not allowed to talk, they need to figure out the rules differences as they play.

After 10 minutes or 4 games the part is over, this time losers are moving to the next table counterclockwise. The process repeats.

After the third part the winner moves to the next table clockwise and the loser moves to the next table counterclockwise.

Players play the last (fourth) part, then the game is over.

Everyone gathers in a circle for a debriefing.

Possible debriefing questions:

- What happened during the game, what was the biggest difficulty?
- How did the groups deal with unclear points in the rules?
- Did any of the initial rules remain at the table, or it was completely changed during the exercise?
- How did each person behave during the game? Could you identify any clear roles?
- How did the people who move to another table feel?
- Did the groups take any effort to introduce new people to the rules?
- Who had a competitive approach to the game and who was focused on the group having fun?
- What do you think, in the real-life situation, is the best way to introduce a new person into existing organizational culture? Whose responsibility it is?

RULES OF THE GAME:

GROUP 1

RULES OF THE GAME:

1. You are not allowed to talk for the whole duration of the activity.
2. You have 7 minutes to memorize the rules of the game. This paper will be taken away when the activity starts.
3. Choose one person to keep track of points. This person can change every game.

THE GAME:

1. The youngest person in the group is the first dealer. For every next round, the dealer is the person who got the highest score in the previous round.
2. The dealer shuffles the deck and distributes 4 cards to each player.
3. The aim of the game is to collect as many cards of the same color of your choice as possible. The number of cards of the color you have the most of are your points for the round.
Example: Monica collected 4 hearts, 5 spades, and 2 diamonds. Since she has the most spades (5), she scores 5 points for this round.
4. The player to the right of the dealer starts the round by playing a card. All players must play a card of the same color if they have one.
5. If you don't have a card of the color that was played, you can play any other card.
6. To beat a card, a player must play a higher card of the same color as the one that was played.
7. The player who played the highest card of the color that started the round collects all the cards on the table and starts the next round.

8. Hearts are the strongest color – a heart card can be played at any time to beat any card. A heart card can only be beaten by a higher heart card.
 9. After each round, players draw a card from the deck until the deck is empty.
 10. When all cards have been played, the game is over. The person keeping score writes down the points for each player for that round.
-

GROUP 2

RULES OF THE GAME:

1. You are not allowed to talk for the whole duration of the activity.
2. You have 7 minutes to memorize the rules of the game. This paper will be taken away when the activity starts.
3. Choose one person to keep track of points. This person can change every game.

THE GAME:

1. The person who traveled the longest distance to this meeting is the first dealer. For every next round, the dealer is the person who got the lowest score in the previous round.
 2. The dealer shuffles the deck and distributes 4 cards to each player.
 3. The aim of the game is to collect as many cards of the same color of your choice as possible. The number of cards of the color you have the most of are your points for the round.
Example: Monica collected 4 hearts, 5 spades, and 2 diamonds. Since she has the most spades (5), she scores 5 points for this round.
 4. The player to the right of the dealer starts the round by playing a card. All players must play a card of the same color if they have one.
 5. If you don't have a card of the color that was played, you can play any other card.
 6. To beat a card, a player must play a higher card of the same color as the one that was played.
 7. The player who played the highest card of the color that started the round collects all the cards on the table and starts the next round.
 8. Spades are the strongest color – a spades card can be played at any time to beat any card. A spades card can only be beaten by a higher spades card.
 9. After each round, players draw a card from the deck until the deck is empty.
 10. When all cards have been played, the game is over. The person keeping score writes down the points for each player for that round.
-

GROUP 3

RULES OF THE GAME:

1. You are not allowed to talk for the whole duration of the activity.
2. You have 7 minutes to memorize the rules of the game. This paper will be taken away when the activity starts.

3. Choose one person to keep track of points. This person can change every game.

THE GAME:

1. The oldest person in the group is the first dealer. For every next round, the dealer is the person who got the lowest score in the previous round.
2. The dealer shuffles the deck and distributes 4 cards to each player.
3. The aim of the game is to collect as many cards of the same number as possible. The number of cards of the number you have the most of are your points for the round.
Example: Monica collected 2 aces, 3 cards with the number 2, and 3 fours. Since she has the most twos (3), she scores 3 points for this round.
4. The player to the left of the dealer starts the round by playing a card. All players must play a card of the same color if they have one.
5. If you don't have a card of the color that was played, you can play any other card.
6. To beat a card, a player must play a higher card of the same color as the one that was played.
7. The player who played the highest card of the color that started the round collects all the cards on the table and starts the next round.
8. Hearts are the strongest color – a heart card can be played at any time to beat any card. A heart card can only be beaten by a higher heart card.
9. After each round, players draw a card from the deck until the deck is empty.
10. When all cards have been played, the game is over. The person keeping score writes down the points for each player for that round.

SCORE BOARD:

PART 1:

NAME:					
GAME 1:					
GAME 2:					
GAME 3:					
GAME 4:					
TOTAL:					

PART 2:

NAME:					
GAME 1:					
GAME 2:					
GAME 3:					
GAME 4:					
TOTAL:					

PART 3:

NAME:					
GAME 1:					
GAME 2:					
GAME 3:					
GAME 4:					
TOTAL:					

PART 4:

NAME:					
GAME 1:					
GAME 2:					
GAME 3:					
GAME 4:					
TOTAL:					

*Exercise 2: ME IN A TEAM

Duration: 60 min

Objectives: discovering one selves role in a team, understanding own strengths and needs while working in a group, understanding, getting to know different archetypes of team workers

Required Materials: printed descriptions of the team roles (each on a separate paper), printed picture of a person for each participant

Preparation: none

The process:

This activity aims for participants individually reflecting of their performance as a team worker. Facilitator will guide their reflection with questions and different methods. For this activity facilitator needs to create a relaxing atmosphere in the room. They can invite participants to sit comfortably on their chair or on the floor, play some relaxing music. Facilitator should invite participants to think of different situations they were working in a team, they roles in those tasks and emotions that were present in that situation.

After few minutes of silence facilitator start to read questions from the list before. After each question there should be a 1–2-minute break for participants to think and take notes if they want.

List of questions:

1. I think I can quickly see and take advantage of new opportunities.
2. I can work well with a wide range of people.
3. Producing ideas is one of my natural assets.
4. I can manage to be temporary unpopular, if it will give results in the long-term perspective
5. I am not at ease unless meetings are well structured and controlled and generally well conducted.
6. I am sometimes seen as forceful and authoritarian if there is need to get something done.
7. My colleagues tend to see me as worrying unnecessarily over detail and the possibility that things may go wrong.
8. I have an aptitude for influencing people without pressurizing them.
9. I am always ready to back a good suggestion in the common interest.
10. I believe my capacity for cool judgement is appreciated by others.
11. I have a quiet interest in getting to know colleagues better.
12. I think I have a talent for making things work once a plan has to be put into operation.
13. I bring a touch of perfectionism to any team job I undertake.
14. I am ready to make use of contacts outside the group itself.
15. I am interested in finding practical solutions to problems.
16. I like to feel I am fostering good working relationships.
17. I believe I would keep cool and maintain my capacity to think straight.

18. I would be prepared to take a positive lead if I felt the group was not making progress.
19. I am apt to show my impatience with those who are obstructing progress.
20. I tend to get bored rather easily and rely on one or two stimulating members to spark me off.
21. I find it difficult to get started unless the goals are clear.

After all questions are over, participants are invited to sit in pairs for another round of self-reflections. Participants should again find a comfortable place in the room, the music should be more quiet, as they will be discussing in pairs.

In this part of the activity facilitator should write down questions listed below on a flipchart and display in the visible place in the room.

Questions to discuss I pairs:

- What am I good at?
- How do I perform in a group?
- What do I value?
- What are my weaknesses?
- What makes working with me difficult?
- What kind of behaviours of others trigger me?

For the last part of the activity, participants are invited to read the short descriptions of the team roles that shall be hung on the walls around the room. After 10 minutes of individual exploration, participants receive a paper drawing of a person. Their tasks are to think about how much of each role they can find I themselves. They should divide the person on a drawing proportionally to see which roles “they consist of”. At the end of the activity, the groups sit again in a circle and present their drawings one by one with a one-sentence explanation.

Team Roles Descriptions:

Shaper:

Drives the team forward, challenges norms, and thrives under pressure. They are dynamic and often push for progress but can be argumentative.

Strengths:

- Dynamic and motivated; they push the team to achieve results.
- Good at overcoming obstacles and driving progress.
- Competitive and thrives under pressure.

Weaknesses:

- Can be prone to frustration or aggression, especially under stress.
- Might come across as confrontational or insensitive to others' feelings.
- May push too hard, risking burnout for themselves and the team.

Implementer:

Turns ideas into practical actions. They are disciplined and reliable, but sometimes resistant to change.

Strengths:

- Highly organized and disciplined; they get things done efficiently.
- Practical and reliable, they turn ideas into actionable plans.
- Good at managing day-to-day operations.

Weaknesses:

- May resist change, preferring familiar methods and routines.
- Can be inflexible, sticking too rigidly to plans.
- Might struggle with creativity, preferring clear instructions and processes.

Completer Finisher:

Focuses on detail, ensuring tasks are completed to a high standard. They are meticulous but can be overly perfectionistic.

Strengths:

- Detail-oriented and meticulous; they ensure high-quality work.
- Good at meeting deadlines and ensuring nothing is overlooked.
- Persistent and committed to finishing tasks to perfection.

Weaknesses:

- Can be overly perfectionistic, struggling to let go of tasks.
- May worry excessively about small details, slowing down progress.
- Sometimes finds it difficult to delegate, preferring to do everything

Coordinator:

Acts as a leader or chairperson, delegating tasks and helping the team focus on objectives. They are confident and good at decision-making but may be seen as manipulative.

Strengths:

- Strong leadership skills; they know how to delegate effectively.
- Good at organizing team activities and ensuring everyone's contributions are valued.
- Calm and confident, they help keep the team focused on objectives.

Weaknesses:

- May be perceived as manipulative if they overly rely on others to do the work.
- Can be seen as controlling or bossy by team members.
- Might struggle with hands-on tasks, preferring to manage rather than participate directly.

Teamworker:

Promotes team cohesion, supporting others and smoothing over conflicts. They are cooperative and diplomatic but can be indecisive in crucial moments.

Strengths:

- Cooperative and diplomatic; they help maintain harmony in the team.
- Good at listening and mediating between team members.
- Flexible and willing to adapt to meet the team's needs.

Weaknesses:

- Can be indecisive, especially when tough decisions need to be made.
- Might avoid confrontation, even when it's necessary.
- Sometimes places team harmony above task completion.

Resource Investigator:

Explores opportunities and develops contacts. They are enthusiastic and communicative but can lose interest once the initial excitement fades.

Strengths:

- Excellent at networking and building external relationships.
- Enthusiastic and outgoing; they bring energy to the team.
- Good at exploring opportunities and gathering information.

Weaknesses:

- May lose interest once the initial excitement fades.
- Can be overly optimistic and may not always follow through with ideas.
- Might spread themselves too thin, focusing on too many things at once.

Plant:

Generates ideas and solves difficult problems. They are creative and innovative but may be impractical or ignore details.

Strengths:

- Highly creative and innovative; they think outside the box.
- Good at solving complex problems.
- Can come up with unique ideas and approaches.

Weaknesses:

- May be too preoccupied with their own ideas, leading them to ignore practical details.
- Sometimes struggle to communicate their ideas clearly.
- Can be absent-minded or forgetful about everyday tasks.

Monitor Evaluator:

Analyzes options and makes balanced decisions. They are strategic and impartial but can be overly critical and slow to act.

Strengths:

- Logical and analytical; they make well-thought-out decisions.
- Excellent at evaluating ideas and options objectively.
- Reliable when it comes to providing balanced judgments.

Weaknesses:

- May be overly critical, focusing on negatives rather than positives.
- Can be slow to make decisions, needing time to consider all angles.
- Sometimes lacks enthusiasm, which can dampen team morale.

Specialist:

Brings in-depth knowledge in a specific area. They are highly skilled and dedicated but may focus too narrowly on their expertise.

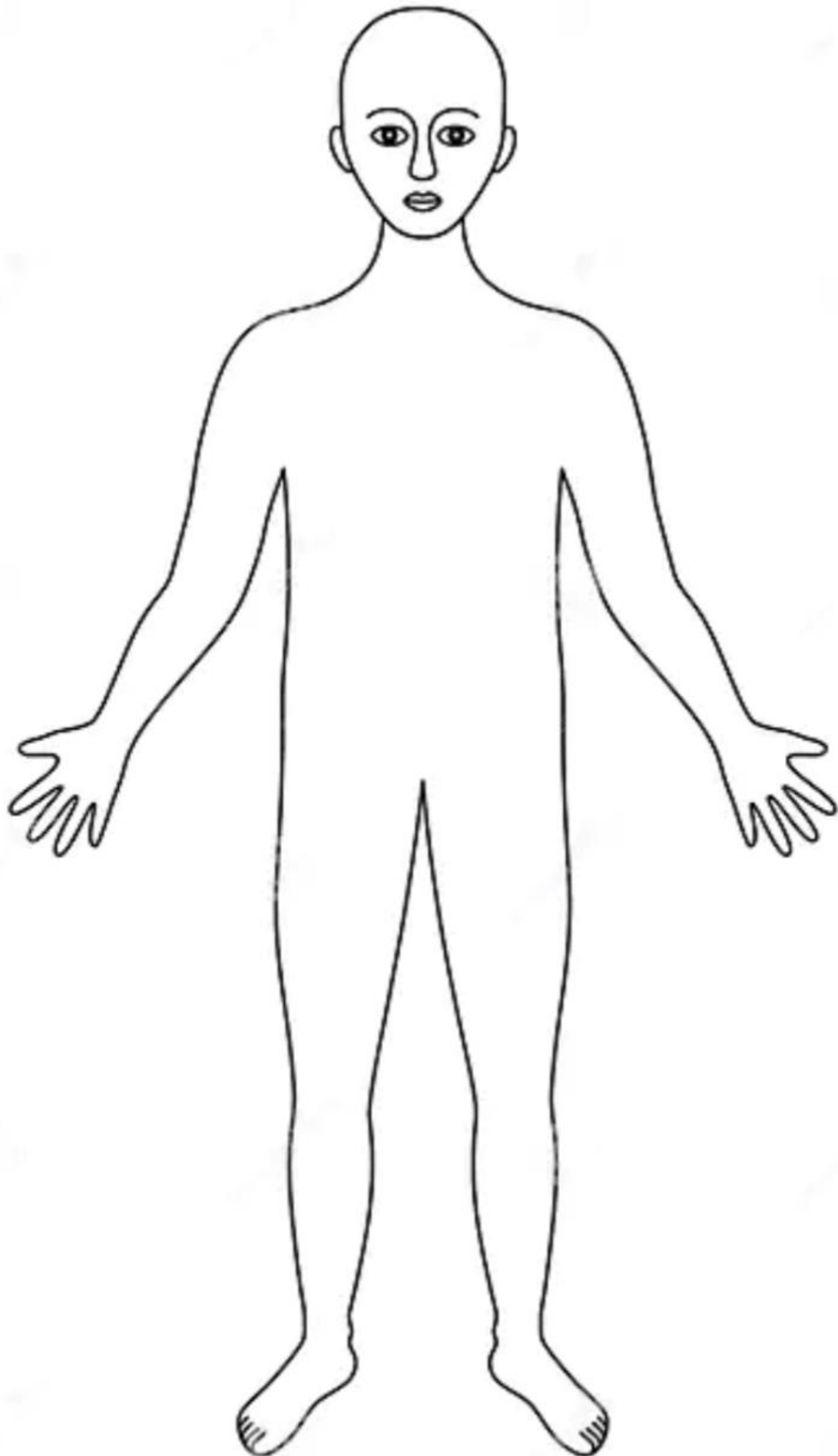
Strengths:

- Highly knowledgeable in their specific area; they bring expertise to the team.
- Focused and dedicated to their field of interest.
- Provides valuable insights that others may not have.

Weaknesses:

- May have a narrow focus, sometimes missing the bigger picture.
- Can become overly absorbed in their specialism, ignoring other aspects of the project.
- Might struggle to communicate their knowledge to non-experts, leading to misunderstandings.

Materials to print:



Part III: Lencioni Teamwork Model

Total Duration: 75 min

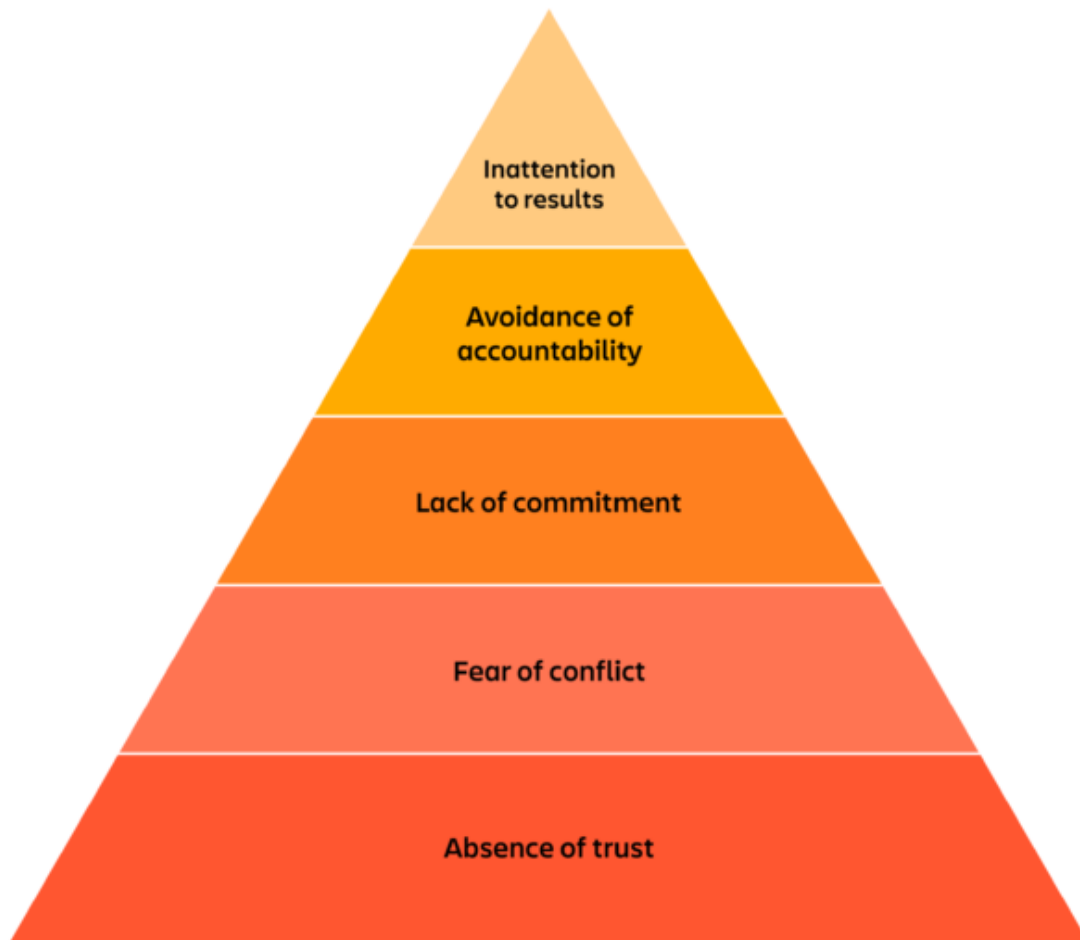
NOTE: Length of every exercise can – and should - be adapted according to the group you are working with.

*INPUT: INTRODUCTION AND BASIC INFORMATION

Duration: 20 min

Lencioni's pyramid of dysfunctions of a team

The facilitator should either show Lencioni's pyramid of dysfunctions (image below) on a projector/presentation or print it for all the participants.



Lencioni's pyramid of dysfunctions of a team, source:

<https://www.atlassian.com/blog/teamwork/what-strong-teamwork-looks-like>

The facilitator should give introduction into this model of team building, while explaining each of the

dysfunctions -bottom up. For structure, they can use the information below:

Lencioni model of team building was presented by American writer, Patrick Lencioni, in his book “The Five Dysfunctions of a Team”. Lencioni’s model doesn’t exactly tell you what to do when leading or creating a team, but it identifies some of the problems that can appear during the process. As you can see **on the image on the screen / that was handed to you**, there are 5 major dysfunctions of a team, which, if not addressed, can lead to a team’s failure.

Absence of Trust: it comes from the unwillingness of the team members to be vulnerable within a group. The logic of this is that if members of the team can not be truly open with one another about their weaknesses and mistakes, it becomes impossible to build a foundation of trust. If there is no trust within a team, other problems are more likely to appear;

How does this dysfunction manifest?

- Team members are hiding their weaknesses and mistakes from each other
- Team members are hesitating to ask for help
- Team members are hesitating to offer help outside of their own tasks
- Team members are jumping to conclusions about the intentions of the others

Fear of Conflict: when there is not enough trust between the team members, it becomes harder to engage into open debates of ideas – meaning that you would be more restrained and hesitant to point out ideas that could potentially be harmful for the team, just so that the team member who proposed them doesn’t take it the wrong way;

How does this dysfunction manifest?

- Your team has boring meetings, where there is no discussion
- Your team has created an environment in which gossip and personal attacks are common
- Your team is ignoring topics that are critical to team success
- Your team is failing to consider all the opinions and perspectives of team members

Lack of Commitment: usually follows the Fear of Conflict. If, during discussion, you didn’t point out the ideas you think make no sense and just agreed to everything that was said, it will be hard to believe in the plan of action – and it is quite hard to commit to something you don’t believe in;

How does this dysfunction manifest?

- Your team allows for more than one interpretation of direction and priorities
- Your team breaks deadlines because of excessive analysis and procrastination
- Your team shows lack of confidence and is too afraid of failure
- Your team discusses the same decisions multiple times
- Your team encourages second-guessing among team members

Avoidance of Accountability: if you don't believe in the plan of action and just want the task to be over with, you are less likely to call out your team members on actions and behaviors that might be counterproductive to the good of the team;

How does this dysfunction manifest?

- There is resentment among team members who have different standards or performance
- Your team is encouraging and being satisfied by mediocrity
- Your team members are missing deadlines
- Your team is placing unnecessary burden on the team leader to be the only source of discipline

Inattention to Results: is the result of avoidance of accountability. If you decide to focus just on your own task, without caring for what (or how) other members of your team are doing, you are putting your own, individual needs (recognition, ego, career development) above the collective goals of the team – which will, even if you do your task perfectly, lead to failure.

How does this dysfunction manifest?

- Your team fails to grow
- Your team rarely defeats competitors
- Your team loses achievement-oriented members
- Team members are encouraged to focus on their individual goals

Those dysfunctions that we mentioned above usually build up on one another, but if even a single one of them is allowed to flourish, the teamwork will deteriorate.

In order to understand some concepts that Lencioni presents, let us practice some of the tools that are going to help us deal with, and prevent, some of the dysfunctions mentioned during this session.

Exercise 1: CIRCLE OF INTERESTS

Duration: 15 minutes

Objectives: building trust in a group, understanding the value of communication for building relations

Required materials: chairs

Preparation: none

The Process:

The facilitator instructs the participants to form a circle with their chairs. There should be enough chairs for everyone, except the facilitator. While standing in the middle of the circle, the facilitator proceeds

to explain the exercise: “We are now going to practice trust-building. In order to start building trust, we should learn a bit more about each other, and that is the point of this exercise. As you can see, there is not enough chairs for everyone to sit on. The exercise will start by me saying one of my interests. Everyone who has the same interest as me needs to get up and try to find another chair to sit on. I will also try to get the chair. Whoever is left without a chair has to say one of their interests, and we will repeat this process for some time.”

The exercise ends either after 10 minutes, or after the facilitator notices the participants losing interest.

After the exercise is over, the facilitator proceeds by asking the participants questions proposed below.

Note: of course, the facilitator is welcome to propose their own questions or adapt/remove the ones written below.

Debrief:

- How do you feel after this exercise?
- Do you feel like you will have some new topics to talk about?
- Do you feel like you know and understand each other a bit better now?

Conclusion:

Lencioni believes that in order to be able to start building trust, we need to get to know each other a bit better first. After we realize that we have same or similar interests as other people in our team, we will be more open to approach our team members to talk about our shared interests – and this is the start of the process of trust building.

***Exercise 2: BLIND DRAWING**

Duration: 15 minutes

Objectives: learning how to explain various concept to the others, developing communication, building group commitment to the team’s goal

Required materials: papers, pens/pencils, chairs, printed illustrations of various objects and animals

Preparation: before the exercise, the participants should take their chairs, pair up with another participant, and turn their chairs back-to-back, so they are facing away from each other while sitting

The Process:

Once the participants have paired up, they have to decide which side is going to explain what needs to be drawn, and which side is going to draw. Once this is done, the facilitator explains the rules of the exercise:

“I am now going to hand out some illustrations to the parts of your pair that decided to give instructions. You will have to explain to your partner what they need to draw, without telling them what it is exactly. For example, if you get an illustration of a house, you can not tell them that it is a house, nor a building. You need to find a way to communicate to them what to draw, so that, in the end, their drawing is as close as possible to the illustration you were given.”

After 10 minutes, the facilitator ends the exercise, and tells the people who were drawing to show their drawing to their partner

Debrief:

The first part of the debriefing is done in the same pairs. The participants will have 2 minutes to discuss:

- How it was to be the person giving instructions
- How it was to be the person listening to the instructions and having to draw

After this part, everyone returns to the main group, and the participants are invited to share their drawings and tell the group how was the experience for them.

Conclusion:

This exercise is intended to help us practice avoidance of “Lack of commitment” dysfunction. The person who is giving instructions is supposed to represent a team member or a team leader who is trying to explain tasks to the other team members. Sometimes it is difficult to explain what we are really expecting of the people we are working with, and this exercise is supposed to help you practice this communication.

Exercise 3: WORST CASE SCENARIO

Duration: 25 minutes

Objectives: building group commitment to the team’s goal, learning how to develop a contingency plan, strengthening self confidence of the group members

Required materials: papers and pens

Preparation: The facilitator invents 2 or more scenarios that they will give to participants to analyse.

For example:

- *As part of your project, your team has to organize a music festival for all age groups. What are all the things that can go wrong?*
- *You and your team are members of a student council in your college, and you are organizing a 3-day hike trip for other students. What are all the things that can go wrong?*

The Process:

The facilitator explains the exercise:

“One of the tools that Lencioni proposed in his book, “The Five Dysfunctions of a Team”, is called Worst Case Scenario. You will now split into groups (2 or more, depending on the space you have available) and you will be given a case. Your task is to think of all the things that could go wrong, and to try to determine what is the worst thing that could happen. After we are done with this, we are going to group up here again and present our cases to the whole group.”

The participants split into 2 or more groups. When they are done with this, the facilitator gives a case to each of the groups (it can be done on print outs).

After 10 minutes have passed, the participants are invited to come back to the circle and present their case.

Debrief:

Debrief happens after everyone has presented their case, and the participants are back in the main group.

The facilitator can ask them the following questions:

- How did you find this exercise?
- Was it hard to think of all the things that could go wrong?
- Looking at your lists, would you be able to find a contingency plan for all the things you wrote down?
- Now that you know the things that could go wrong and potentially have a contingency plan in order to be prepared for them, how do you think organizing this event would be for you? (easier, harder, the same...)

Conclusion:

Lencioni believes that any kind of action is better than no action – and, sometimes, if you find your team hesitating to make a decision, it could be a good idea to see what can go wrong and what is going to potentially be the worst case scenario for your task or event. Once you do this, you will be able to come up with a contingency plan, which is going to reassure you and prepare you, so that you are able to react if any of the things you predicted come to pass. This, in turn, is going to make it easier to make a decision, and actually start working on a task.

Part IV: Mobbing Within a Team

Total duration: 60 minutes

INPUT: INTRODUCTION AND BASIC INFORMATION

Duration: 20 min

We thought that during this workshop, it is important to explain the concept of mobbing. In order to understand what exactly it is, we will provide you with the definition given by the International Labour Organization. According to them, mobbing or workplace bullying is offensive behaviour through vindictive, cruel, malicious or humiliating attempts to undermine an individual or a group (of employees).

Of course, using analogy, this can easily be transferred outside of the context of workplace, and into other realities, such as school, university or another kind of activity that requires you to work in teams. If we look at this, and many other definitions, it becomes clear that in order for a behaviour to be considered mobbing, it needs to be done:

- repeatedly,
- over a significant period of time,
- it has to be non-physical,
- and have a humiliating effect on the bullied person.

Mobbing is not a single action, but a series of one or more different actions over a longer period of time.

Mobbing can be separated into two main categories:

- horizontal mobbing, and
- vertical mobbing

Horizontal mobbing is a type of mobbing that is happening on the same hierarchical level – for example, mobbing between co-workers or between members of a team – but also for example, between members of the board of directors.

Vertical mobbing is happening on different hierarchical levels – it can happen both, from higher level towards lower level (manager is mobbing their employees, team leader is mobbing the members of the team), and from lower level towards higher level (employees are mobbing the manager; team members are mobbing their team leader).

What behavior can be considered mobbing? Prof. Heinz Leymann gave a list of 45 actions that are

considered mobbing, and here are a few examples:

- being constantly interrupted
- being shouted at or told off
- constant criticism of one's work
- constant criticism of one's private life
- the person is ignored (by superior or colleagues)
- the bullied person is made to seem ridiculous
- Imitating someone's walk, voice or gestures to make them look ridiculous
- The person is given useless work functions
- Threat of physical force
- ...

How can you protect yourself against mobbing? There are multiple measures you can take, and they are separated into two categories: preventive measures, and intervention. When it comes to preventive measures, it is achieved by learning more about mobbing, discussing it with your team, and giving them introduction to this topic (leaflets, articles or videos).

When it comes to intervention – the most important thing to do is to stop the bully and support the victim. For stopping the bully, you will most likely need help from outside of your team – in some cases, mediation will be possible, but in the others, legal action will need to be taken. If mobbing is happening in workplace or some other place with hierarchy (school, university, sports team), you should communicate with your superior or with your Human Resource Department (if there is one), in order to make them aware that it is happening and that they should take action. If you are being bullied, if it is possible and if it would not put you into harm's way, it is recommended to collect and keep evidence. When it comes to supporting the victim – this support can come through professional rehabilitation, psychotherapy, self-help groups and also medical therapy.

Exercise 1: FORUM THEATER

Disclaimer: This exercise can be potentially triggering for some participants, since it involves acting out stressful situations.

Duration: 50 minutes

Objectives: learning how to recognize symptoms of mobbing, breaking a taboo about mobbing, practicing how to react in situation of possible mobbing at work place

Required materials: none, but you should have enough space for each group to act out a scene

Preparation: preparing topics for the group to act out

Suggested topics for Forum Theater:

1. Team members are interrupting and „talking over“ their colleague every time they want to say something.
2. Team members are imitating the way their team leader walks and speaks, in order to ridicule them.
3. Team leader is giving useless work to one of the team members, and the rest of the team is encouraging it.

The Process:

The facilitator explains the exercise. „Now we are going to practice recognizing mobbing and intervening into it. We are going to split into groups, and each group is going to get a situation they will have to act out. You will have 10 – 15 minutes to prepare your scene. After we have seen the scene once, we you are going to repeat it, and at any point, any one of the observers will have the chance to say STOP, and replace the mobbed person in the scene. Remember, the point of this exercise is to practice reaction and intervention to mobbing. The person who replaces the mobbed person will react to the situation they were put in, trying to make it better for the mobbed person, and your group will have to adapt to the scene. To explain it a bit more clearly – while you are acting out the scene, and you hear STOP, you stop the scene and allow the new person to replace the person who was a victim of mobbing in your scene. When the new person is ready, you continue acting out the scene, while adapting to what the new person is doing. After we went through all the groups twice, we will have a debriefing.“

The facilitator splits the participants into groups (4-6 people per group is ideal) and gives them their topics. They will have 10 to 15 minutes to prepare their (max) 2 minutes scene.

After the preparation time is up, the facilitator starts inviting the groups to act out their scenes in front of everyone. Remember, the first time the group acts out their scene without interventions. After that, they repeat the scene, and all the other participants are invited to intervene by saying STOP. The structure should be like this: Group 1 – scene, Group 1 – repeat, Group 2 – scene, Group 2 – repeat, Group 3 – scene, Group 3 – repeat, ... , debriefing.

Debrief:

Debrief happens after all the groups have presented their scenes both times.

The facilitator can ask the following questions:

- How did people who were playing mobbed person in the scene feel?
- How did people who were doing mobbing feel?

- How did you feel while observing the scene – first without having the ability to intervene, and then when the ability to intervene was given to you?
- Did you ever witness a similar situation in your real life?
- Do you think that this exercise has shown you some of the ways you can help people who are being mobbed, or some tools you will be able to use if you find yourself in similar situation?

NOTE: More questions are always welcome – depending on how interested and motivated the participants are

Conclusion:

Mobbing is, unfortunately, quite a frequent occurrence in our society – starting with bullying in schools, and spilling over into the reality of our workplaces. The best way to deal with it would be prevention – educating and informing ourselves on what it is, and spreading awareness to our colleagues. Other than that, it is important to react as soon as we notice this kind of behaviour, by notifying our superiors (if we are in a group that has hierarchy) and offering support to the victim. Every country has organizations that work on increasing awareness about the topic, and that usually published informational materials and provides information and support. If you would like to learn more about this topics – those would be the places to look for information.

Part V: Energizers

1. A RAM SAM SAM

Duration: 3 - 5 minutes

Required materials: a speaker (boombox)

Preparation: Before the session, the facilitator has to invent 3 movements – one for each part of the song (they can look for inspirations for the movements in the link posted below). Parts of the song are as follows:

- *A ram sam sam, a ram sam sam*
- *Guli guli guli guli guli*
- *A rafi, a rafi*

The Process:

The facilitator explains the rules of the energizer, by showing the movements they invented for every part of the song (for example, clapping your knees with your hands for “a ram sam sam part”, swinging arms for “guli, guli, guli, guli, guli” part, raising arms above your head and lowering them for “a rafi, a rafi” part), telling the participants that every time they hear siad part of the song, they have to repeat the adequate movement.

Once the facilitator makes sure that everyone understands the rules, they play the song from the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bJEO2NCqWAU>

The song is repeated multiple times, and each repetition is faster than the previous one. The energizer is over once the song is finished.

2. FOLLOW THE LEADER

Duration: 5-10 minutes

Required materials: a speaker (boombox)

Preparation: Before the session, the facilitator prepares 2 to 3 songs that are going to be used for the energizer

The Process:

Facilitator instructs participants to stand in a circle.

Facilitator proceeds to explain the rules of the energizer, by saying the following: “This energizer is about dancing. One person will leave the room, and while they are gone, the rest of us are going to select a leader among us – the person we select is going to be responsible for leading the dance. Once the leader is decided, we are going to start the music, and invite the person who left the room to join us and stand in the middle of the circle. During the dance, we should copy dance moves of the leader, while trying to not look directly at them, so that the person in the center of the circle doesn’t notice. The task of the person in the center of the circle is to determine who is the leader. For this, they have 3 tries.”

If the person in the center guesses who is the leader, or if they give the wrong answer 3 times, the music stops, and it is time for the next round. This process can be repeated 2-3 more times.

3. SAMURAI

Duration: 10 – 15 minutes

Required materials: None

Preparation: None

The Process:

This game has 3 sounds, accompanied by 3 movements. Each participant should put the palms of their hands together, to resemble a sword. The sounds and movements are as follows:

- **HI** – the participant loudly says HI, while keeping an eye contact with another participant and lowering their arms down. This movement is used to “attack”.

- **HA** – the participant who is a target of the HI move in response loudly says HA, while lifting their arms up. This movement is used to “block”.
- **HU** – this move is used by the participants standing on the both sides of the person who is being attacked (the person who is blocking with HA). Both of them say HU, while slashing their “sword-positioned-arms” diagonally towards the person in between them (the one who is saying HA).

The game works in the following way: the facilitator starts by targeting someone with HI – they make eye-contact and lower their arms down quickly. In response, the target of the attacks says HA, lifting their arms up quickly. The participants standing next to the person who is saying HA “slash” their arms diagonally towards the person, while saying HU. Any participant who fails to react quickly, or says the wrong sound, is eliminated, and the game continues. The person who successfully blocked (with HA) is now the one to initiate the next attack, in the same way the facilitator did at the start. The game continues until there are 2 participants left – they are the victors.

It is recommended to do at least one practice round, to make sure that everyone understands how the game works.

4. SCREAMING GAME

Duration: 5 – 10 minutes

Required materials: None

Preparation: none

The Process:

The facilitator asks the participants to form a circle in a way that they can all see each other. Participants lower their heads, looking at the ground. The facilitator counts to 3 – and when they say 3, the participants lift their heads, looking at another person in the circle. The participants shouldn’t move their head or switch the target of their gaze. If, while lifting their heads, the participants made eye contact, they scream and are eliminated from the game. The process continues by participants lowering their heads, and the facilitator counting to 3 again. The game stops when everyone is eliminated.

5. POTATOES & MOSQUITOES

Duration: 5 – 10 minutes

Required materials: None

Preparation: forming a circle out of chairs or some other objects – large enough for the participants to be able to move within it

The Process:

The facilitator instructs the participants to enter previously prepared circle and explains the energizer: “Now we are going to play a game called “Potatoes & Mosquitoes”. How is it going to work? Most of you are going to be potatoes, and some of you are going to be mosquitoes. When the game starts, you will keep your eyes closed and start moving in the circle – when you feel that you have reached someone, moving to the right side, whisper to them “I’m a potato” if you are a potato, or “I’m a mosquito”, if you are a mosquito. If two potatoes meet, they are going to be very happy for meeting each other, and they should produce a happy sound (for example: “hihihihih”). If a potato meets a mosquito, they will yell “Noooooooooo”, open their eyes and leave the circle. When two mosquitos meet each other, they will produce some sort of an evil laugh. The game ends when there are no potatoes left in the circle.”

After the explanation was given, the facilitator says: “Now everyone move closer to the edges of the circle, and close your eyes. I am going to touch shoulders of some people, and those people are going to be mosquitoes – everyone else is going to be a potato.”

After the participants have closed their eyes, the facilitator subtly touches shoulders of 4-5 participants (depending on the size of the group). When the facilitator has chosen the mosquitoes they say: “I have chosen the mosquitoes. The game can now start!”

6. EVOLUTION

Duration: 10 – 15 minutes

Required materials: None

Preparation: Showing everyone how to play rock, paper, scissors (On the count of 3 (after 3 was said), everyone needs to show one of the three signs with their hand – open palm is paper, closed fist is rock, and “peace” sign (the middle finger and the index finger are open, and the rest of the fingers are closed) is scissors. Paper beats rock, rock beats scissors, and scissors beat paper.)

Facilitator invents movement styles for 5 evolutionary stages, that are going to be used for the participants to “recognize” each other. For example:

- Amoeba: putting hands in front of your mouth and wiggling your fingers
- T-Rex: putting elbows close to torso and imitating the way T-Rex moves with its small hands
- Chicken: putting fists to the torso and moving elbows to resemble chicken wings
- Human: looking at your hand and pretending that you are using a smartphone
- Superhero: Superman pose

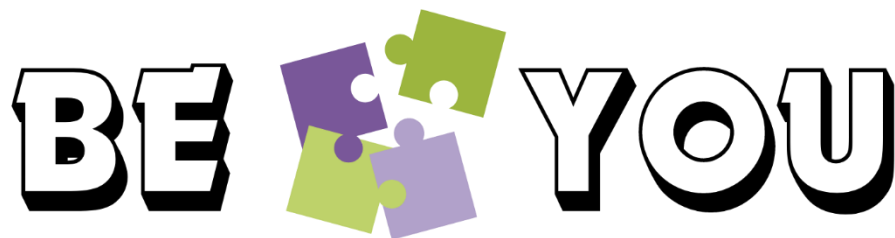
The Process:

The facilitator invites everyone to stand up and form a circle

“Now we are going to play a game called “Evolution”. We are going to start (while mentioning each of the evolutionary stages, the facilitator should also imitate movement that they came up with) as amoebas, moving to t-rex, than to chicken, human and finally superhero. How do you evolve? You play rock, paper, scissors. (This is the point where the facilitator should check if everyone knows the rules of rock, paper, scissors and, if needed, explain them) We are all going to move in space, using the movement that I showed you a few moments ago, depending on which evolutionary stage we are at. When we come across someone who is of the same evolutionary stage, we challenge them to rock, paper, scissors. The person who wins evolves to the next stage. It is important to mention that you can challenge only the people who are at the same evolutionary stage as you. Once you win as a human, you win the game and you can sit on your chair.”

The facilitator checks if everyone understands the rules, shows the 5 types of movement again, and the game starts. The game ends when there are people who are “stuck” at their evolutionary stage.

ERASMUS+ KA2 PROJECT



BUILD EFFICIENTLY YOUR OWN UNDERSTANDING

PROJECT PARTNERS

