

# PERSONALISED YOUTH WORK

KA2-Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices  
KA204- Strategic Partnerships for youth

## Toolbox (I02)



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of the European Union

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# INTRODUCTION

## About the project and this document

The Personalised Youth Work project is a 20-month project, which is implemented by four (4) European organisations, Point Europa (UK), BEST Institut für berufsbezogene Weiterbildung und Personaltraining GmbH (Austria), DEKAPLUS Business Services (Cyprus), Your Ideas Matter Ltd. (Bulgaria).

It is aimed at enabling youth workers to apply a personalised learning approach when working with young people seeking to enhance their employability, with a particular focus on needs assessment and developing adequate intervention strategies.

This toolbox aims at supporting Youth Workers delivering labour integration measures/services to achieve better results and impact on young people's employability through applying various innovative techniques and strategies, based on the concept of personalised learning. The toolbox will contain a wealth of activities and techniques to be applied by youth workers.

The Personalised Youth Work Toolbox will be applicable to various settings and curricula, as it is focused on supporting the delivery, rather than the specific set of competences on a case-to-case basis. It will contain detailed description of each method, supply a number of activities per topic area with instructions on how to carry out these in daily practice, templates, links to additional materials. The Toolbox will contribute to supporting youth workers in developing and sharing effective methods, as well as equipping them with innovative tools and resources. Young people's employability skill gaps will be efficiently and effectively addressed, in line with the current context and emerging needs. Young people will be empowered to be proactive with regard to their own personal and professional development. Youth work will increase its quality, as well as the credibility of its methods and potential impact.

Youth workers across Europe will be able to directly apply the toolbox in their daily work, as it is not tailored to a predefined curriculum and its aim is to enhance the overall effectiveness of youth workers delivering labour integration measures. In addition, the Toolbox can complement the work of career counsellors in schools, as well as VET and HE professionals providing career guidance.

Within this Toolbox, the reader will find 8 modules / units with templates / annexes in module 9.



**It will be available also in German, Greek and Bulgarian.**

**Besides this output, the project also offers to public:**

PYW Methodology which will provide structured and comprehensive guidelines on how personalised learning can be applied in youth work in order to enhance labour market integration measures to boost young people's employability through the application of innovative practices and techniques. The methodology will help to guide youth workers through the whole process of: assessing young people's needs, facilitating the design of the training content, suggestions on how to schedule and perform the training process and much more.

The Project Website available at:  
<https://www.personalisedyouthwork.com>

The Social Media profile : Personalised Youth Work Project



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# USING TECHNOLOGY IN APPLYING PERSONALISED LEARNING



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# INTRODUCTION

Technology has taken over many of our daily functions and the dependency grows more and more every day. A technological explosion is being witnessed since the pandemic and the related user dependency has grown over a short time. Nowadays, educators need to cope with younger generations, who are ICT savvy and gain access to diverse information sources. The use of technology in education provides learners with more learning possibilities. In light of the changing teaching and learning landscape, this chapter aims to explore current educational approaches to enhance the teacher's ICT capacity.

Personalised learning experience (PLE) has become a popular concept in education since the mid-2000's. It has been implemented with great success in higher education through the collaboration of all actors, namely scholars, educators, administrative staff, and students. The consideration of pedagogy, technological interventions, students, and educators must be made when evaluating the opportunities and challenges emerging from this approach. The PLE is not a technical shift, but a pedagogical transition with the use of technology. The tools involved do not differ much from those of an LMS: blogs, wikis and office online.

Instructors have been searching for technological interventions since the beginning of the 21st Century to manage the conventional pedagogical challenges, such as personalisation. A course that would meet each student's individual needs is not easy to design, given the high number of students with different learning styles.

PLE increases the engagement of students, resulting to better performance. Teachers are expected to be engaged, manage the educational resources and implement technology in the classroom. Web-based learning services are available to teachers to improve students' learning. Such tools may be used individually or in collaboration with other students and educators.

However, teachers need to be technologically up-to-date with the latest developments to consider implementation.





# UNIT 1 : **Personalised Learning Environment (PLE)**

## PLE Tools



Many teachers have used Web services to build their students' Web sites, especially in cases where there was no Web hosting available or where Web posting restrictions impeded teachers' efforts to provide students with the appropriate resources. Teachers, schools and language companies should tailor the curricula for specific types of students.



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Recently created homepage services offer greater flexibility and functionality than previous options. The ability to incorporate flexibility is one of the core principles of PLEs. Many available tools and services, such as wikis, fora, Twitter, social networks, bookmarking, etc, are designed to promote the content created by individual users to be distributed by involvement, engagement and collaboration. These tools can help to improve engagement and performance through customised learning. Various types of PLE tools and services, adapted from a publication by Bartolomé and Cebrian-de-la-Sernaare, are included in Table 1 :

Tool	Services
Blogs	Blogger, Wordpress
Social bookmarking	Delicious, Diigo, Digg, Zotero
Social networks	Facebook ,LinkedIn, Academia, Plurk, Elgg, Basecamp
RSS	RSS Reader, Feedly, Bloglines
Microblogs	Twitter
Search engine	Google, Yahoo
Image sharing	Flickr
Videoconference	Skype, FlashMeeting
Video/repository	Youtube
Email	Email
Wikis	Wikispaces
Online office	Google Docs
LMS	Moodle, Sakai, Blackboard
Mail lists/news	Mail lists/newsletters
Slidecastmz	Slideshare
Wikipedia	Wikipedia
Start pages	Netvibes, Protopage, iGoogle
Chat/IRC	MSN
Calendar	Calendar
Podcast	Podcast
Music	Music
Currículum documents	Curriculum documents





Tool	Services
Virtual worlds	Second Life
Fora	Fora
Portfolios	e-portfolios
Files/document repository	Dropbox, Drive
Physical objects/sites	Libraries, books, etc
Books store	Amazon
Databases	Databases
Courses	Free courses
Address books	Address books
Webinars	Webinars
Drawings	Drawings
Other Media	TV, radio
Maps	Google Maps
Analytics	Google Analytics

**Table 1: Frequently used PLE tools - examples**



# UNIT 2 :

## Technologies Supporting Personalised Learning

### Adaptive Learning Tools

Technology is trendy in education because of personalised learning. It offers students choice in what to learn, how to receive this learning and how to implement it. Structured research, assisted by digital resources, assist teachers and students to react to vulnerabilities and developing strengths during the learning process. Examples of adaptive learning tools with explanations have been adapted from Groff and are included in Table 2 below.

Tool	Explanation
ALEKS - <a href="https://www.aleks.com">aleks.com</a>	Adaptive Web-based, artificial intelligence assessment, and learning programs that use an appropriate, open response question for students to evaluate their basic guidance on learning.
Area9 - <a href="https://area9learning.com">area9learning.com</a>	A platform suitable for learning and content creation.
Brightspace - <a href="https://d21.com">d21.com</a>	IBM Cognos® technologies integrate an adaptive learning platform with embedded predictive analytics.
Core Learning Exchange - <a href="https://core-bc.com">core-bc.com</a>	A set of teaching tools to build personalised learning materials in the classroom, find resources (Core Collection™) and use them on the mastery learning
DreamBox Learning - <a href="https://dreambox.com">dreambox.com</a>	An adaptive training framework for continuous learning assessment analysing over 48,000 data points per student per hour to ensure the correct time for the
Enlearn - <a href="https://enlearn.org">enlearn.org</a>	An adaptive platform that takes various problems and generates new content based on each student's requirements.



Tool	Explanation
FrontRow - frontrow .com	A platform to support mathematics, English language and social sciences students in adaptive learning.
Gooru - gooru.org	Easy, teacher-optimised search engine using digital tools, learning analytics platforms and K-12 lesson plans.
Inquire - inquireproject.com	An improved on-line textbook with interactive features that enable deep integration of AI technology.
Knewton - knewton.com	An adaptive educational platform to fit student requirements.
Lexia - lexialearning.com	Adaptive assessment and customised training in literacy.
Redbird Advanced Learning - redbirdlearning.com	This collection of resources is built to complement the individual speed and level of understanding of a student and builds on 25 years of research at the University of Stanford.
Sparkx - sparx.co.uk	A time-efficient platform to generate data.
Teach to One: Math - newclassrooms.org	On the unique learning of each A customised early secondary mathematics program.
Thinkster Math - hellothinkster.com	This tablet-based mathematical learning software integrates instruction with a real-life teacher and AI personalisation to monitor the child's response.

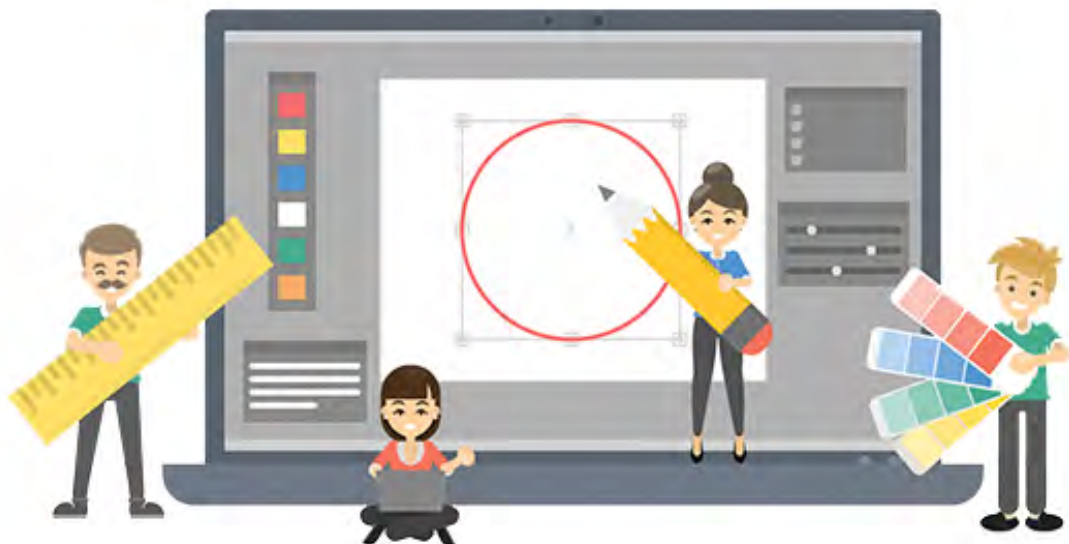
**Table 2: Adaptive Learning tools - examples**



## Authoring Tools

The authoring tool is the software that facilitates the generation of educational content, whereas the LMS is a platform where this content is published and is made available to learners to assess it. Authoring tools have a critical role in the eLearning industry. Without them, developing new course content will be difficult to deal with and the LMS system will remain without content.

However, such tools have made it easy to design course content even without any knowledge of coding or the existence of other dedicated tools. Authoring tools are utilised to make SCORM compliance courses.



<https://www.instancy.com/learning-content-management-system/>

To simplify this, let's use the library setting as an example. You can think of it this way: LMS is the library, the eLearning courses as the books in the library, and the authoring tools as the word processors which the books are written with.

The authoring tool will help you create the perfect course content but without the LMS, your learners will not be able to access it.

An LMS is a system that stores details about the learner's accounts, learning plans, learner usage history, and the courses themselves.

Examples of authoring tools are listed in Table 3 below.



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Tool	Explanation
Acrobatiq - <a href="https://acrobatiq.com">acrobatiq.com</a>	A digital framework for digital in conventional or skill-based interactive courses in higher education for software as a service (SaaS).
FishTree - <a href="https://fishtree.com">fishtree.com</a>	Alignment of content and main learning goals, skills and real-time feedback on learner improvements and outcomes, innovative training systems and versatile authoring tools to streamline course creation.
SmartSparrow - <a href="https://smartsparrow.com">smartsparrow.com</a>	A designer learning network for vibrant, immersive and adaptive e-learning programs.

**Table 3: Authoring tools – examples**

### Classroom Management Tools

Technology enhances classroom management strategies by easily assessing and addressing multiple learning styles, creating guided pathways to learning, and providing channels for individualized access to content and communication. On-going assessments, targeted learning experiences, and regular communication are core components of differentiated instruction.



To understand what a child knows at a given point in time to inform daily instruction, the teacher requires technology-based tools that can assess and analyse student skills and competencies on-demand. Likewise, teachers require the ability to identify and then channel targeted resources to individual students to support multiple levels of learning and presents challenges that are appropriate for each student. Throughout the learning process communication, strategies that are not disruptive to the classroom such as “messaging and chatting” provide teachers with the ability to reinforce and support students and encourage students to access their teachers as mentor and guide. In Table 4, there are some examples of Classroom Management Tools.

Tool	Explanation
Class Dojo - <a href="https://www.classdojo.com">classdojo.com</a>	A platform to foster constructive learner behaviours and cultures, on-line classroom management and conduct.
Gradescope - <a href="https://www.gradescope.com">gradescope.com</a>	Helps grade assessments or examinations through an on-line teacher grading process. It also helps teachers to monitor the entire class's statistics and inform students on. their studies.
LiFT - <a href="https://www.schoothackdo.com">schoothackdo</a>	A classroom management platform connected with competency-based graduation requirements for personalised student training plans.
MassiveU - <a href="https://www.massiveu.com">massiveu.com</a>	A network to promote collective learning based on projects.
MassiveU - <a href="https://www.massiveu.com">massiveu.com</a> Watson Element for Educators - <a href="https://www.ibm.com/us-en/marketplace/education-insights">https://www.ibm.com/us-en/marketplace/education-insights</a>	A platform to transform teaching offering best education approaches, skills development, challenges and much more that teachers can use to develop comprehensive teaching strategies in real time

**Table 4: Classroom management tools – examples**





## Learning management systems (LMS) tools

An LMS is an online software used for the creation, delivery, tracking, and reporting educational courses and outcomes. It can be used to support traditional face-to-face instruction, as well as blended/hybrid and distance learning environments. It is an application or web-based technology used to plan, and implement two elements: a server that performs the base functionality and a user interface that is operated by educators, students and administrators.

An LMS offers educators a means to develop and prepare content, manage student participation and evaluate their performance. It may also feature students with the ability to utilise interactive features such as threaded discussions, video conferencing and discussion forums.

The built-in multifunctionalities of LMSs lead to a variety of uses, which contribute to the successful management of a modern classroom. Such contributions can be:

- | Maintenance of attendance records
- | Storing grades
- | Calculation of grade point averages
- | Management of curricula and eLearning coursework
- | Editing and sharing professional development modules and resources
- | Performance of professional evaluations
- | Collaboration on remote and hybrid coursework
- | Video conferencing through LMS integrations
- | Asynchronous and synchronous communication and collaboration
- | Educational coursework, modules, materials and other resources
- | Deployment and tracking of online learning initiatives



### The benefits of LMSs are :

- Consolidation: ability to maintain a wide range of educational tools and resources centralised, simplifying the overall classroom organisation practices
- Easy access: by keeping all resources centrally, students and teachers do not worry about keeping track of logins and information for multiple online learning tools
- Virtual lesson building: for teachers who may face difficulties in adjusting to virtual learning materials, many LMS offer resources and tools to aid digital lesson creation
- Collaboration: remote and hybrid collaboration so students can easily connect with one another for group projects and everyday virtual classroom teamwork
- Increased engagement: we all know how difficult it can be to engage students in a virtual classroom, especially students who are new to eLearning, with the plethora of quizzes and educational games provided by many LMSs you won't have to worry about keeping your students engaged in classroom activities any longer
- Digital memory/organized digital library: with the right LMS, collaboration is also available between educators who can easily share educational materials and resources from current and past years to one another
- Assessments: many LMSs include an assessment tool that allows educators to create assessments to gauge student progress and the really intuitive ones even include recommendations based on the outcome of the assessments
- Automation: once you input all student grades into one source your LMS can calculate final grades for you, other automate administrative tasks that many LMSs offer is report generation and attendance tracking
- Caregiver involvement: for students who need caregiver support, you can provide caregiver login codes to allow parents to oversee homework and track their children's progress independently
- Accessibility: like any modern technology, the more accessible the software, the better. The vast majority of LMSs can be accessed from any device, at any time, giving students and teachers the opportunity to #LFA (Learn From Anywhere)



Examples of Learning Management System tools can be seen on the below Table 5.

Tool	Explanation
Altitude Learning – <a href="https://www.altitudelearning.com/">https://www.altitudelearning.com/</a>	This platform provides education providers with personalised services to assist student-centred learning.
Agilix Labs - <a href="http://agilbc.com">agilbc.com</a>	Encourages mixed classroom instruction.
Instructure - <a href="http://www.instructure.com">www.instructure.com</a>	An open source on-line LMS designed for the whole classroom management.
Schoology - <a href="http://schoology.com">schoology.com</a>	Includes an integrated evaluation framework on-line.
Spark Matchbook Learning - <a href="http://matchbooklearning.com/">matchbooklearning.com/</a>	A platform for the extraction and handling of mastery progression learning knowledge.
Summit Learning - <a href="https://www.summitlearning.org/">https://www.summitlearning.org/</a>	This personalised learning platform, developed by teachers, combines contents and technologies for on-demand assessment; it includes personalised instruction and guidance for projects.

**Table 5 : Learning management systems tools – examples**



## References and additional literature :

<https://wizcabin.com/how-to-differentiate-the-authoring-tool-and-lms/>

<https://www.instancy.com/learning-content-management-system/>

<https://proudtobepimary.com/classroom-management-tools/>

[https://www.faronics.com/assets/Insight\\_WP\\_Classroom\\_Management\\_Tools\\_for\\_Effective\\_Teaching.pdf](https://www.faronics.com/assets/Insight_WP_Classroom_Management_Tools_for_Effective_Teaching.pdf)

<https://resources.owllabs.com/blog/2021-learning-management-systems>

<https://stangarfield.medium.com/learning-management-system-lms-tools-c5204378d670>

Fiedler, S.H.D. and Våljataga, T., Personal learning environments: concept or technology?. Inter. J. of Virtual and Personal Learning Environments., 2, 4, 1-11 (2011).

Bartolomé, A. and Cebrian-de-la-Serna, M., Personal learning environments: a study among higher education students' designs. Inter. J. of Educ. and Develop. using Infor. and Communic. Technol., 13, 2, 21-41 (2017).

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# DESIGNING A PERSONALISED LEARNING PLAN



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# INTRODUCTION

Learners should know why, what, and how learning experiences will take place, allowing for flexibility and self-responsibility when it comes to their learning pathway. In order to adapt learning plans to individual needs and interests, the levels of their factual knowledge, as well as any existing skills and competences should be found at the beginning. Based on questionnaires and self-assessment, these initial test outcomes help identify any learning gaps to youth workers, educators and the learners themselves, then personalised learning plans can be developed.





# UNIT 1 :

## Identifying learning needs through initial tests

At the beginning of a training course or coaching in vocational orientation, the general learning needs and gaps have to be identified, as well as the personal skills and competences and the interests of learners. This is a prerequisite to design personalised learning plans. Based on the results of these assessments, participants, together with their educators, choose learning contents to achieve the greatest benefit possible from the course or coaching. Furthermore, the results make visible which other skills and competences can be developed during the course. There are three typical elements to cover these as described here:

### Basic placement test

In a basic placement test one could assess concentration and observation skills, logical thinking, arithmetic, language and digital skills on one hand side, and the specific vocational skills for the job or qualification the learner is applying for. This test can be targeted to the individual levels and tailored to the target group of the course, as well as to the contents of the training modules. The main aim is to ensure that learners will benefit from the modules, without being over or under challenged.

### Initial self-assessment questionnaire to identify work experience and learning gaps for future career paths

At the beginning of a training course for low-qualified young adults, learners are given the chance to honestly assess their existing skills and competences. The implementation of an initial self-assessment questionnaire helps to find out the individual work experiences, training needs, and expectations. They also help raise learners' awareness on the qualification.



### Test on vocational interests

To complete the initial self-assessment (phase), this test includes surveying interests, personality, personal strengths, and expectations of the future occupation. The personalised result provides career suggestions which the learners can compare with their existing experiences, expectations and interests.

The career suggestions provided can help to broaden a learner's horizon and foster their thinking "outside the box"; they often discover professions they had not considered or even heard of before.



## UNIT 2 :

# Shaping the personalised learning plan

With the learning needs detected through initial tests and self-assessment, the personalised learning plan can be developed. For this, it is very important that learners be involved as much as possible and the signing of an agreement on the foreseen learning is a recommendation in this phase.

### Personalised “learning agreement”

Reviewing the initial assessment test and questionnaires, individual plans for the training modules (i.e. basic skills in German and English language, mathematics, ICT and digitisation, as well as vocational orientation and empowerment training – and any other specific module based on learning gaps) can be developed in a planning meeting, written down in an agreement (in a concrete training plan) which shall be signed by both, the learner and the educator.

Doing this, the beneficiary feels more involved and willing to take responsibility for it. From experience, this is a prerequisite for self-involvement and motivation to learn, particularly low-skilled disadvantaged young adults have often negative experiences with learning and even refuse being open towards taking active part in learning at the beginning of new course.

The learning plan should include the following aspects:

- Defined learning goals
- Steps to meet the goals
- Indicators and evidence that can help show these goals are reached



### Monitoring and Follow-Up

During the training, the learning progress should be monitored regularly. This gives learners the opportunity to observe their learning progress as well as their improvements made at several steps. Learners will stay motivated and are supported to keep on focusing on the learning, they will also be able to learn how to assess learning progress on their own in the future.

Re-assessment can be conducted online or in group, depending on the specific skills being assessed. It can be done on regular basis or spontaneously, e.g. at the end of each training week, at the end of each training sequence within the course or after a new training input if re-assessment seems to be important. It will provide learners some feedback on their learning progress during a certain period and enable them to gradually gain self-confidence. The personalised learning plans can eventually be adapted.

Placement tests or short questions such as :

- | **What was the most useful thing you learnt today/this week/within this class ?**
- | **What was the learning goal of today/this week/this class and what did you learn from it ?**
- | **Which questions remain in your mind after today/this week/this class ?**

With a questionnaire and in a final interview at the end of the course, the assessment will be done towards the training's learning outcomes. Results shall be documented in a final report; results should also be shared and explained or accompanied with further recommendations towards the learners.



# EXAMPLE OF GOOD PRACTICE

## Placement test for basic skills

Online placement basic skills test.

### Description of the practice

The placement test is designed to be used in a training course for low-qualified young adults. It provides detailed information about specific knowledge, skills and competences of the participants regarding basic skills in German and English language, mathematics and ICT. It is targeting the individual levels and is tailored to the target group of the course, as well as to the contents of the training modules.

The participants can access it without time limit. It consists of 4 parts that are based on the Austrian curriculum for adult compulsory school qualification: German and English language, mathematics, ICT. Each covers 2 competence levels.

The following steps have to be followed :

#### Step 1

Each educator gets a personal administration access to the online placement test to open a “room” for the participants. Participants receive login data by their educators to enter their “room”. Then they do the assessment module by module. The test stays open until all participants in the same “room” will have finished all modules. This allows them to take their time to read and answer the questions and tasks carefully at their own pace. The educator can watch their progress online and support if any clarification is needed.

**Source: BEST Institut für berufsbezogene Weiterbildung und Personaltraining GmbH**



### Step 2

When all participants have finished the placement test, the individual results are downloaded or printed and reviewed together with the educator. This allows going into detail on individual results, explaining the learning gaps and how improvement will affect the individual career perspectives. It also helps raising awareness and motivation among participants.

Depending on the learning needs detected, the personal learning plans for learners are defined together with them.

The individual results are documented in individual folders.

### Step 3

In the specific good practice, there are 8 possible course modules to choose from. Each of these modules has a duration of 3 weeks (German 1+2, English 1+2, mathematics 1+2, ICT 1+2.)

In each module, a “learning objective test” is conducted at the end of each week. The results of the placement test are compared to the outcomes of these tests and help understand where the participants have improved, or where there are still major learning gaps.

The screenshot shows an example and provides a dummy access to the placement test.

### Placement Test

A smartphone costs 680€ for cash payment. You can also buy the smartphone in 6 installments of 120€ each. Do you have to pay more, if so how much ?

No, I don't have to pay more.

Yes 730€. That's 50€ more.

Yes, 720€. That's 40€ more.

Yes 700€. That's 20€ more.

Online tool for placement test: [Socrative.com](https://www.socrative.com)

References: <https://www.google.com/forms/about>



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## **ACTIVITY OR EXERCISE NAME**

### **Designing an initial learning plan for each learner of the training group**

#### **Timeframe**

120 min., depending on the number of participants

#### **Number of participants**

4-9

#### **Learning objectives**

The participants recognize their existing skills and competences, learning gaps and needs, and what they need to achieve for their career goals.

#### **Materials**

Flipchart or White Board, laptops with internet access, beamer, sheets and pens

#### **Implementation**

##### **Step 1 : Introduction of the topic and the learning outcomes to participants**

Brainstorming with learners. Example questions to ask: Do you have any career goals and if so what are they? Do you know your personal skills and competences or are you aware of any gaps? Do you know your learning needs? Do you already have any idea or plan how your career goals can be achieved?

The answers are collected on the flipchart or White Board.



**Step 2 :**

Participants fill in the initial questionnaire as a self-assessment exercise. Provide a printout version or an online access to it; whichever is at your convenience.

For new questionnaires, an example how to design an individual questionnaire can be found in the presentation on “Questionnaire Design” by Adell Amer which describes the steps in designing a questionnaire. The presentation is available at:

<https://de.slideshare.net/AdellAmer/questionnaire-design-73079588>

**Step 3 :**

When all participants have finished the task and answered the questionnaires, individual interviews shall follow to review their answers and subsequently create a personalised learning plan for the course.

The learning plan has to consider and highlight existing skills and competences, eventual gaps, learning goals, steps to take to reach these learning goals, foreseen evaluation steps during the course and what evidence is needed showing the learning goals were reached when the course ends.

The individual plans shall have a more formal appeal – hence look for a nice template - and sign it as the educator and have it signed by the learner, too. It shall show a sign of mutual consent. A copy stays with the educator, another with the learner to remember and always have access to the learning plan and its aspects.

**Debriefing :**

When every learner has signed the respective personalised learning plan, a debriefing session can follow in a group session.

The educator can ask guiding questions such as “Did this activity bring new perspectives to you?”, “What are your expectations in learning now?”, ...

**Further references:**

<https://www.edutopia.org/blog/student-centered-learning-starts-with-teacher-john-mccarthy>

<http://kathleenmcclaskey.com/tag/personal-learning-plan/>



# APPLYING LEARNING EXPERIENCE DESIGN IN YOUTH WORK



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# INTRODUCTION

Learning Experience Design (LX Design) is an approach that is based on the learner-centred methodology. It is an excellent way to personalise your work with young people, as LX Design helps learners achieve their learning outcomes in a goal-oriented manner. It makes the learning process to be both, fun and effective. It combines elements of several disciplines, such as philosophy, neurology, cognitive psychology, experiential learning, user experience design, game design, graphic design and many more. Simply said, LX Design combines EXPERIENCE, DESIGN and LEARNING.

The concept of LX Design was born in 2007 and the pioneer of this approach is Niels Floor - entrepreneur, trainer, teacher, creator of the learning experience canvas.



# UNIT 1 :

## The LX Design Approach Explained

### Focus on the Learning Experience

As already mentioned, at the core of the LX Design is the “learning experience”. To define what “learning experience” is, it is necessary to focus on what “experience” is.

**EXPERIENCE** is all about the various situations (personal and professional) that we encounter daily and which have some impact on our lives.



**LEARNING EXPERIENCE** is a cluster of situations that lead to gaining new knowledge, skills and/or competences.

- Learning experience can take place formally, non-formally and informally.
- Learning experience can happen in school, at home, in a youth centre, on the football pitch, or anywhere one can imagine.
- Learning experience can happen face-to-face, virtually, in a blended format.

Understanding the ample nature of learning experience with its unlimited forms, formats, timeframe and location allows us to design learning experiences for our target groups that are effective and make a difference.

### The LX Design Process

No matter whether learning takes place formally or non-formally, it still needs to be designed. Designing a learning experience is a creative process, which entails undertaking certain steps. The LX Design approach is based on the following stages:



### ASKING QUESTIONS

The whole design process starts with asking yourself an important question about what you want to achieve with your target group. For example: “How can I support a young person with low level of basic skills to enhance their employability?”. At first the question might sound too general and require rethinking. Formulating the most relevant question is one of the most important steps, hence, enough time should be spent on clarifying what you want to achieve with your learners.

### RESEARCH

In order to get the process going you need to research at least your learner and the desired result (learning outcome).

Studying the people you will support (those who will learn from the experience you create) is vital for the design process. The easiest way to do this is by conducting a conversation prior to designing the learning experience. This can take the form of an informal discussion, interview, observation, or any other relevant method for extracting the necessary information.

The learning outcome is the result you want to achieve with the learner and how this will positively affect their life. Once you know the desired learning outcome, you can define the learning objectives (the aims of the learning experience).

### DESIGNING A PROTOTYPE

Developing ideas about the learning experience is the first step in the creative process. The most suitable way to do this is through brainstorming. It can be very useful to also ask other people on your team, or stakeholders, to support you in this task. The next step would be to turn your ideas into a concept, which is basically transforming your ideas into a more structured plan on “what”, “how” and “with what resources” you will develop the learning experience.

### DEVELOPING THE EXPERIENCE

During this stage you transform the concept into a prototype. The prototype can be extremely detailed or less so, depending on your specific aims. The easiest way is to create a so called “paper prototype”. You can start by listing all the resources that will be necessary for the learning experience, e.g., physical space, electronic device, pen and paper, etc. Secondly, you have to figure out what else is required apart from the resources to be used during the experience, e.g., guidelines, list of assignments, etc. Then it is important to choose the methods you will apply and the learning resources to be used.





### TESTING THE PROTOTYPE

Once the prototype is developed you should test it with a group of people. These could be either your peers (team members) or representatives from your target group. The testing stage should entail getting the “test learners” to experience the prototype. This could take the form of explaining to them what you are planning to do or apply some of the key stages of the learning experience in a simulated environment. Finally, you should ask their opinion on what works well and what needs to be rethought to make the experience even more effective. The most important aspect of this stage is to make sure you collect and analyse all the feedback provided by the “test learners”. If it turns out that the prototype still needs refinement, which is what normally happens, you go back to the design stage until satisfied with the end result.

### LAUNCHING THE EXPERIENCE

Once you are happy with the prototype, it is time to turn it into REAL learning experience!

### What it takes to be a LX Designer

The good news is that anyone can become a LX Designer! You just need to be aware of the competences you need to nurture to design effective learning experiences for your target groups.

#### **Be creative !**

To design a learning experience, you need to unleash your creative self. Use your creativity as the “food” you give to the process.

#### **Be analytical !**

To develop a truly effective experience, you need to be able to analyse and reflect on contexts, attitudes, specific backgrounds, needs and many more...

#### **Forget what you know !**

Preconceived notions and ideas of what learning should look like will not help a LX design process. You need to let go of template-based models and create unique experiences.



**Focus on the learner !**

To focus on the learner, you need to switch the “empathy mode”. A personalised experience can be only created by constantly repeating to yourself that the learner is the most important aspect of the whole experience.

**Learn how the brain works !**

When designating a learning experience, try to incorporate practices that explain the way and the reasons why human brain reacts one way or the other.

**Be practical and imaginative at the same time !**

Effective learning designs are innovative but also simple. Therefore, try to balance out between creativity and practicality.

**Choose the technology wisely !**

The technology you choose (or the lack of technology) should be based on what is best for a given learner to achieve their desired outcomes. Technology should be the means and not the goal itself!

**Align perspectives !**

You should always try to map the variety of needs and perspectives to create a learning experience that works for the involved stakeholders.

**Applying the LX Design in Youth Work**

As already mentioned, LX Design is a great way to “personalise” anyone’s work that involves passing on knowledge, skills and competences to other people. Youth work makes no exception, and, despite its less formalised approach, it also involves providing young people with a personalised learning experience to address their specific needs.

No matter the context, all youth workers ask themselves the same question – “What can I do to support the young people that I serve to achieve their dreams/goals/aspirations?”. Creating the most suitable learning experience is part of youth workers daily job, and even if this process is not always intentional and structured, it is at the core of the youth worker’s mission and role.

LX Design can be easily applied in everyday work with young people to boost their employability, as it offers a framework to guide the design process.





Therefore, when a youth worker embarks on a journey to enhance a young person's chances to find the right job or professional career, LX Design is a good tool to support other methods and practices. Among its most prominent positives are:

- It is a “horizontal” approach that can be applied in any context.
- It has a simple and easy to follow theoretical basis.
- It is rather intuitive and relies on the “designer’s” own creativity and style.
- It takes into consideration the many aspects of the learner experience but most importantly – the needs of the end user.
- It leads to developing engaging content.



# EXAMPLE OF GOOD PRACTICE

YIM (one of the partner organisations in the PYW project) is actively engaged in skills development to boost employability. Our team has taken part in various activities to support young people in achieving their best.

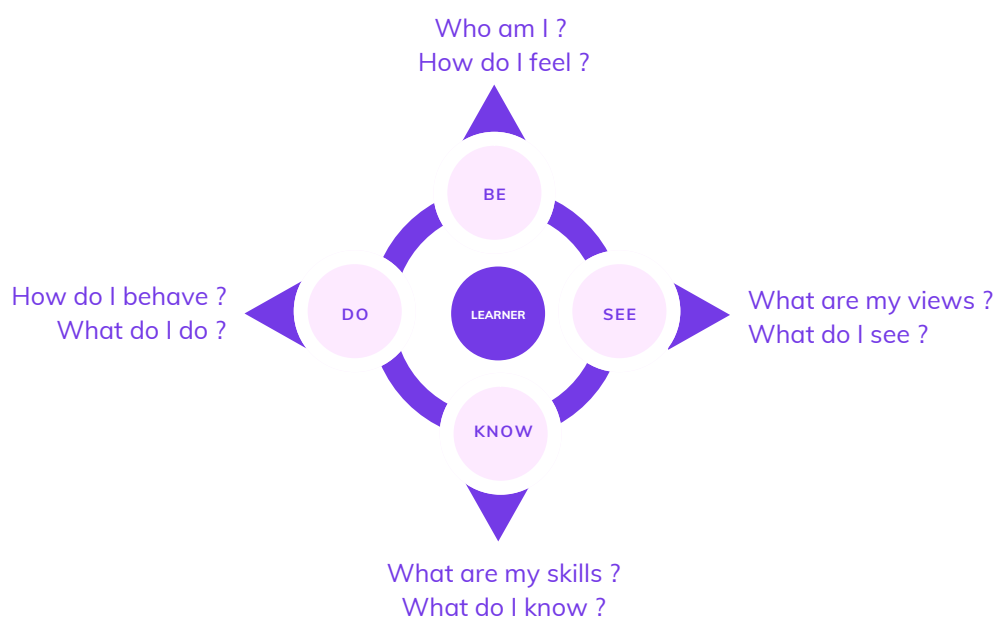
One of the methods that we often apply and is also a key component of the LX Design process is the so called “Empathy Map”. The Empathy Map is a tool created by Dave Gray whose mission is to “to help people imagine and create a better world, individually and together”.

The Map that we use in our daily practice has been adapted for learners by Niels Floor.

At YIM we use the Empathy Map to define the profile of the young people that we support, which is a key stage (part of the research phase before creating the LX Canvas) in designing a learning experience. It helps us see the world through the eyes of our learners and better understand their needs, aspirations and uniqueness.

To capture effectively the data that we need for designing a personalised learning experience, we develop an Empathy Map together with the learner.

The process entails asking the learner a number of questions. The answers are written down in the Empathy Map, which contains 4 main quadrants: **BE**, **SEE**, **KNOW** and **DO**, divided into 2 triangular parts, each containing a specific question. By getting answers to all 8 questions, our youth workers get a detailed profile of their learner. An example of the map could be seen below:



What motivate me to learn ?

What demotivate me to learn ?



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The first step of completing the Map is to identify the learner through asking the question “Who am I?”. This is a factual query that is aimed at the learner presenting themselves.

**Example: I am Ivan Dimitrov, 20-year-old, unemployed, from Sofia.**

All the other questions should be posed and answered in a clockwise order. It is important to note that each question should be related to the learning outcome.

**This would mean that, for example, the “How do I feel?” question could be asked as “How do you feel about presenting your strengths and good qualities to other people?”. The “What do I see?” question could be formulated as “What do you see as an opportunity/challenge that could emerge from this learning experience?”**

After writing down the answers to all the questions, our youth workers analyse the collected data and formulate answers to the 2 additional questions on what motivates and demotivates the learner to learn.

Getting the answers for all 10 questions helps us define the strategy of our learning experience, some of the possible constraints, as well as assists in designing an effective learning process.

We also tend to put a picture of the person at the centre of the map, which helps us memorise the learner and empathise with them.

We also try to do the Empathy Map exercise at least one more time, with the same learner, towards the end of the learning experience. This helps us analyse how the learning process transformed the learner and see what new perspectives have been born as a result from the personalised experience.



## ACTIVITY OR EXERCISE NAME

### Get Started with LX Design (Build your own LX Canvas)

The LX Canvas was created by Niels Floor in 2013. It is a great tool for anybody interested in creating better ways of learning. It helps structure your design process and helps you make the best choices along the way.

#### Timeframe

At least 60 minutes

#### Number of participants

Individual or group work

#### Learning objectives

Learn how to design unique and personalised learning experiences for young people

#### Materials

Piece of paper and pen

**NB:** You can find the LX Canvas Template, as created by Niels Floor, at the end of the Toolbox, chapter 9. Please, note that the template is offered for free by its developer and cannot be used for commercial purposes.



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## Implementation

### STEP 1:

Before you start creating your LX Canvas you need to ask yourself the following 4 critical questions and put down the answers on a piece of paper. Make sure that you answer all the questions before you go to STEP 2.

- Q1. What's your perspective of effective youth work ?
- Q2. What role do you play in the learning process ?
- Q3. What's the goal you want to achieve with this learning experience ?
- Q4. What path (sequence of activities) do you follow in your work with young people ?

### Step 2:

*Reflect on your answers.*

#### Q1. What's your perspective of effective youth work ?

What you put on your Canvas depends on your perspective. Therefore, if you want to design an effective learning experience for the young people you serve, you need to rethink your perspective. Your perspective is the mixture of knowledge and assumptions that you have on what makes a good learning experience. If your answer to Q1 sounds too conventional, then maybe it is time for you to get rid of the common notions of what an effective learning method is and imagine what learning in youth work context “should look like” to make the experience effective for the young person.

#### Q2. What role do you play in the learning process ?

Remember that the learning experience you create is not about you, but about the young person you will support. Therefore, consider your role in the process as facilitator of the learning experience, rather than as an instructor. Your Canvas should always reflect the needs and aspirations of the learner (young person); it should be positive, personal and profound.

#### Q3. What's the goal you want to achieve with this learning experience?

If your answer to this question is focused on what you will do, rather than what the young person will achieve as a result from the learning experience that you will design and take them through (for example: “To train young people how to perform well at job interviews”), then you need to rethink your perspective again. Changing your focus from “training”, “instructing”, “teaching” and even “supporting” young people to the “learning process” itself is of key importance. Ask yourself why performing better at a job interview will be beneficial about the young person and how this would affect other areas of their personal and/or professional life. Then maybe the answer to the question might transform to “To ensure young people learn how to present the best version of themselves when applying for a job”.





#### Q4. What path (sequence of activities) do you follow in your work with young people ?

Carefully read your answer to this question and, when you start filling in your Canvas, try to do things differently this time. Creating a LX Canvas is a creative process and you have to make your own path that is personalised as possible.

#### Step 3:

Create your LX Canvas

1. Using your own customised version of the Canvas or the template provided in [Annex X](#), create a draft design by spending no more than 30 minutes to get your initial concept defined.

#### LEARNING OUTCOME

List down the learning outcome/s that the young person will achieve as a result from the learning experience.

**For example: to effectively present personal qualities and professional competences during face-to-face job interviews**

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Write down the learning objectives in terms of behaviour, insight, skill and knowledge.

**For example: Behaviour – to act professionally and according to situation and context; Insight – to be aware of employers expectations, prejudices and assumptions; Skill – to be able to analyse own competences and strengths; to be able to present relevant competences and strengths in a convincing manner...; Knowledge – to understand the principals of job interviews,...)**

#### PEOPLE:

List the name/s of your learner/s (the young people that you will take on this particular learning experience). Here you can also mention their number, if you are planning a group experience.

#### CHARACTERISTICS:

Summarise your learners' features, such as: background, profile, specific needs, age, etc.

#### ENVIRONMENT:

Decide how you will deliver the learning experience, i.e., physical (face-to-face format), virtual (using distance learning methods and technology), or blended.



**LOCATION:**

Detail the location where learning will take place, as this is an important component both for face-to-face and virtual formats (e.g., it might be that your learners are learning online but located in a different country, or where there is little access to internet, etc.)

**CONSTRAINTS:**

List down all the limitations that might occur to challenge the learning process.

**For example: Low language skills; No access to technology; Low motivation level; Limited time to spend on learning; etc.**

**RESOURCES:**

Write down everything that you have at hand to enable the learning process. This includes your time, financial resources, infrastructure, technology, etc.

**STRATEGY:**

Design your strategy by writing down how you will deliver the learning experience step by step (using the information you have already provided on the other aspects above).

**ACTIVITIES:**

List all the activities that you intend to do with your learners. Make sure these are aligned to their needs, background, the constraints you have identified and the resources you have.

**For example: Activity 1 Introduction to self-reflection techniques and exercises; Activity 2 Compiling a professional CV; Activity 3 Presentation skills training...**

**PROCESS:**

Describe the learning process by highlighting the key milestones along the way.

**For example: Week 1: Activity 1 + 2 take place via online distance learning, comprising of 2 1-hour sessions each (total of 4 academic hours of learning); during the sessions I will: perform an ice-breaker exercise; explain why self-reflection matters; conduct a self-reflection exercise that will ask the learner to think about their strengths and weaknesses; 10-minute coaching session....**

It is always a good idea to share your Canvas with peers and ask for their opinion and feedback. This might help you crystallise your concept and start developing a prototype of the learning experience. The Canvas will not only allow you to see the full picture and focus on a creativity process that is aligned to the process of learning based on specific needs and objectives but will inspire youth workers to develop unique and more effective learning experiences for the young people they serve.



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# COACHING TECHNIQUES



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# INTRODUCTION

Coaching is a PROCESS which assists individuals and organisations to achieve the best version of themselves. It is focused on change and is result-oriented. Coaching is aimed at the effective use of various tools and methods to support the achievement of the desired outcomes through undertaking activities that lead to transforming aspirations into reality.

Coaching is a field that borrows from and builds upon theories and research from related fields that have come long before it. It is a multidisciplinary, multi-theory synthesis and application of applied behavioural change.



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# UNIT 1 : Coaching Explained

## The Difference between Coaching and other Support Methods

To define what coaching IS, it is important to highlight what it is NOT.

Coaching is not consulting someone on what is best for them, as coaching is based on the notion that the coachee (the person in receipt of coaching) is the one to set the goals, take the decisions and follow an action plan.

Coaching is not a therapy and its core focus is on how to effectively use the available resources that we have.

Coaching is not mentorship, as the coach should always refrain from guiding and advising the coachee.

Coaching is not training, as it is focused on the strengths already possessed by the coachee and developing mental habits on how to consciously apply these strengths in practice.

Coaching is not teaching, as it helps learners learn and does not instruct them.

Some of the most prominent characteristics of coaching are :

Coaching focuses on the “here and now”.

The coach is a facilitator of learning.

Coaching helps people learn.

Coaching helps find the answers that we already know but might be unaware of.



## The Coaching Process

Most often coaching heavily relies on verbal communication. The process entails the coach and the coachee maintaining a dialogue, aka “coaching conversation”, during which the coach applies various communication techniques.



### OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Choosing the right questions is probably the most important aspect in the coaching process. It is important that you ask open-ended questions where the answer cannot be just “yes” or “no”. It is important to try and use as much “why” and “how”, as well as to encourage the coachee to elaborate further on their initial response. Moreover, questions should not be suggestive and provoke the coachee to give a specific answer.

### SUMMARISING AND RE-FRAMING

This technique is used to initiate further reflection on what has been said. Stepping back and summarising what the coachee has said gives them a chance to see things differently. Re-framing means to place the coachee in an alternative scenario and ask the same question, e.g., “What is you had the skills to become a hairdresser?”





**ACTIVE LISTENING**

A good coach listens carefully to what someone is saying and attends to the coachee's words, body language and emotions. This is realised through responding to concerns and feelings, as well as through paraphrasing without changing the meaning. This helps the coachee to self-reflect on what they said and analyse their emotions.

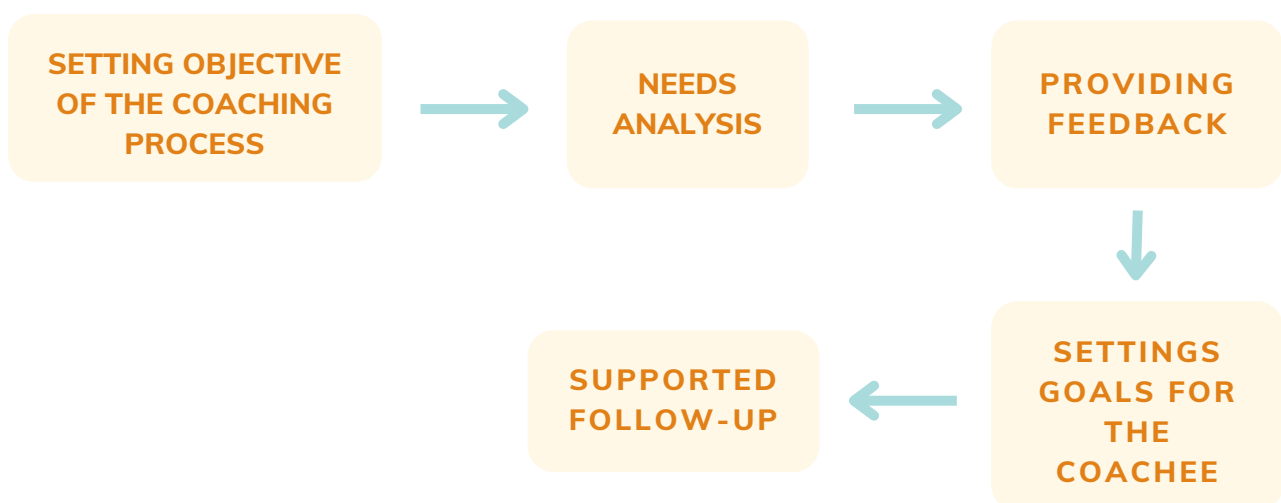
**MAINTAINING SILENCE**

It is as important to keep silent as is to ask questions. This gives the coachee space and time to think, as well as demonstrates interest in what the coachee has to say.

**INITIATING ACTION**

Helping the coachee to take action entails challenging their beliefs and perceptions. This involves asking the coachee to share ideas, help them set goals, encourage alternative way of thinking.

The coaching process itself can be summarised in 5 key stages :



The beginning of a coaching conversation needs to start by establishing a clear purpose. This could be developmental (to optimise the coachee strengths), change management (to build resilience), or performance (to boost better results). Setting the objective could entail asking questions such as:

***What do you hope to achieve with the support that we offer? How do you imagine the time spent in our youth centre?***

To provide adequate support, the coach must understand the needs of the person to be coached. This stage involves asking questions to define why and how the coachee reacts to various situations. Suitable questions could be:

***What three skills do you consider your top strengths? If you had a second chance what would you do in such and such situation?***

During the “providing feedback” stage the coach is supposed to share observations. This should be done very carefully, as the coach must never be judgemental. The feedback provided by the coach should give space for self-awareness, hence it should comprise of positive statements and constructive account focused on the impact from certain actions of the coachee.

The needs analysis combined with the feedback should lead to setting the coachee’s goals. These are individual and should be defined by the coachee and not the coach. The coach’s role is to assist the coachee to set realistic aims that would be feasible to follow and achieve. The following questions can help the process:

***What are the three things that you can do in the next one month to feel more confident during your next job interview? How will you achieve this goal? Why would performing well at this interview make you happy?***



### What it takes to be a Coach

To label yourself a “Coach” you need to undertake special training and in some cases certification. However, anyone can apply coaching techniques to support their daily work which involves supporting people to achieve their best. In this sense, coaching could be a great method to use when working with young people, especially when it comes to helping them boost their employability. You just need to helping them boost their employability. Below are listed some of the desired characteristics of an effective coach.

#### Be positive !

The coach is not to correct mistakes and be critical. You should always try to be positive if you want to succeed in getting the best out of the young people you support.

#### Be enthusiastic !

A good coach is enthusiastic about helping people to unlock their potential. Enthusiasm will provoke better response from the young people you support.

#### Be supportive !

Coaching is about getting people what they need to perform better, including emotional support, empathy, tools, time, etc.

#### Build trust !

To make young people share their dreams, fears and perceptions requires a great deal of trust. You can only apply coaching techniques to people who trust you, as part of the process is about revealing one's inner self.

#### Focus on achieving goals !

Remember that coaching is result-oriented! Never forget that your key role is to support the young person in achieving their goals.

#### Be observant !

Being observant means more than just keeping your eyes and ears open. Coaches need to be aware of what is not said, as well as what is, and pick up on body language and tone of voice.



### Applying Coaching in Youth Work

As already mentioned, coaching could be an excellent method to use when working with young people to boost their employability. Applying coaching techniques is not new for youth work and there are many ways you can do this on a daily basis.

It is one of youth workers' main responsibilities to help young people understand how to achieve their goals and succeed in their personal and professional life. Therefore, coaching, with its focus on helping the coachee realise and intentionally use their strengths, is a method whose benefits are hard to dispute.

It is important to note that youth workers may find it useful to apply certain coaching techniques in combination with other useful tools and methods. In the end, what matters is that the young people you support receive the most suitable support they can get, depending on their specific needs and aspirations. It is without doubt that coaching is closely related to ensuring a personalised experience.



## EXAMPLE OF GOOD PRACTICE

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YIM's team is comprised of experts, some of whom certified coaches, who often apply various coaching techniques to complement their work with young people. From experience we know that game-based approaches provide excellent opportunities for supporting our target groups, hence we try to combine coaching with engaging ways of interaction, where young people are stimulated to self-reflect and increase their self-awareness.

One such tool that we use and is based on the main principles of coaching is the so called "YOCO Cards". The YOCO Cards were developed as part of the Erasmus+ "Active Youth Participation through Empowered Leadership" project. This is a game-based approach to support youth workers in their work with young people. The YOCO cards are aimed at developing young people's self-awareness and the achievement of the envisaged learning outcomes (goals).

The deck of cards contains 5 clusters (four ready to use and one blank), containing an area for discussion and reflection. Each card has 2 sides – one focused on the analytical part of the brain and is represented by a word or question and the other is focused on the creative part of the brain and represented by a picture.

Find the templates at the end of the toolbox, chapter 9.



The principle is that all the cards are spread and the young person is asked to choose 3 cards that most resonate with the way they feel about a given aspect. Then the youth worker (by applying the principles of coaching) start a conversation about what made the young person choose these particular cards, how they interpret their meaning and how these cards relate to the aspect in question, e.g., *lack of confidence to present own strengths during an interview for a new job*. Then the young person is asked to examine the back side of each card and elaborate further on the aspect in question. Finally, the youth worker supports the young person to draw some conclusions and make a plan of how to address the aspect they wish to change/enhance.

More details on the YOCO cards can be found at:

[https://www.apel-project.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/ENG\\_A4\\_template\\_YOCO.pdf](https://www.apel-project.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/ENG_A4_template_YOCO.pdf)

A digital version of the YOCO cards is accessible for free at:

<https://www.mc-celje.si/yoco/en/>



# ACTIVITY OR EXERCISE NAME

## Case Clinic

Case clinic is a tool, developed by Otto Scharmer and is linked to the so-called U Theory. It helps people adopt a new way of taking decisions for important life aspects. It is based on the assumption that we are inclined to base our thinking model to what we have experienced in the past, which makes us “blind” for more effective solutions. The case clinic aims to allow people to focus on the “here” and “now”. It allows personalised work within a group, where all participants act as coaches. This is an excellent activity for engaging the whole group of young people and at the same time ensure addressing individual needs and circumstances.

### Timeframe

60-80 minutes

### Number of participants

Group work

### Learning objectives

Learn how to identify opportunities and intentionally take advantage of these with the support of peers

### Materials

*Physical or online collaborative space, piece of paper to document the identified solutions*





**Implementation****Step 1 :**

The youth worker acts as facilitator of the clinic and explains the purpose of this activity, i.e., through structured and supportive group discussion to identify potential solutions to a given challenge. The youth worker also set the rules for the tone and approach, by highlighting that feedback and opinion should be provided in a non-judgmental, polite and empathic manner. In addition, the youth worker encourages the group of participants to use open-ended questions and be active listeners.

**Step 2 :**

One young person (who plays the role of a “case giver”) from the group is asked to choose a challenge that they would like to overcome.

**Step 3 :**

The case giver should outline their challenge in 2 minutes by using short statements to present:

- the challenge;
- the steps already taken to overcome the challenge;
- the reason why their strategy fails to achieve success so far;
- the desired state of things (what they aim to achieve).

All other participants should listen attentively, without interrupting and asking questions during this initial presentation.

**Step 4 :**

Participants (acting as coaches) are invited by the youth worker facilitating the clinic to provide short feedback (for no more than 2 minutes each) on what they have heard. The feedback should not be judgmental but give an opinion on the challenge, the strategy applied, the reasons for its low effectiveness, and the desired result.

**Step 5 :**

The case giver should spend 3 minutes to reflect on what everyone else said.

**Step 6 :**

The youth worker initiates an open dialogue to further elaborate on the feedback provided by the participants. This dialogue should focus on clarifying certain aspects that the case giver found useful/interesting/unclear, as well as to deepen the self-reflection process. The facilitator of the clinic (youth worker) should make sure that the dialogue is supportive, focused and does not lead to conflict. The facilitator should also act as timekeeper and not allow for the dialogue to take too much time.



**Step 7:**

All participants, incl. the case giver, are given one minute each to provide closing remarks.

**Step 8:**

The case giver is given 10 minutes to conduct individual journaling (to write down key messages to take back from the clinic), which capture learning points for further self-reflection.

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# DESIGN THINKING ACTIVITIES



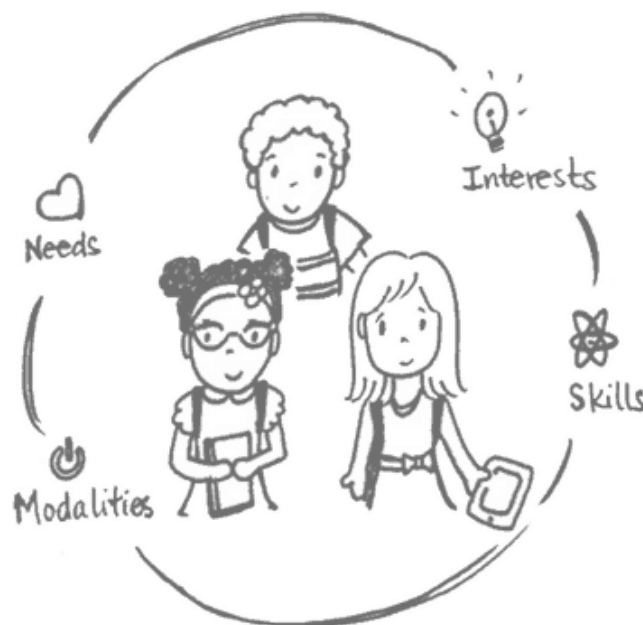
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# INTRODUCTION

Technology has changed drastically and quickly the way we live, work and play. It has also opened new doors for how we learn, teach and engage. Developing a personalised path for students that engage them more deeply and accelerate their learning is not only possible, but necessary to improve the way that we currently do school.



*What is  
PERSONALIZED LEARNING?*

We may not be able to list the jobs that will exist 30 years from now, but we can assume that critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, empathy, communication and passion will be in high demand. Personalised Learning allows schools to be more responsive to the future needs of society by engaging students in the right lesson at the right time, encouraging them to take ownership over their learning and placing an emphasis on interest that is often missing in more traditional models.



# UNIT 1 :

## Design Thinking Strategies

### Use of Empathy

Design requires empathy. Try to understand your students' position. In business, when it comes to product design, companies put on priority the user experience. In education, teachers are required to do the same for their students. Being thoughtful about what we want students to do, engage with, be surrounded by, etc supports the development of a quality Learner Experience (LX). Kim suggests really putting yourself in their shoes. "Sit in their chairs, follow their timetables and instruction. Track your engagement, excitement, boredom and learning."



Nowadays, creative approaches are required to learning design in order to meet the needs of the modern workplace. Furthermore, creativity has become a necessity on a daily basis to meet challenges at work and at home. In light of these concerns, you may find that a Design Thinking model suits your needs. Design Thinking is an approach for deeply understanding the audience and their challenges, in order to generate creative and effective solutions. It resembles Agile models in its methods of prototyping and testing. It differs in its emphasis on human-centred solutions.



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### Learn from your own learning experiences

Technology has changed how we seek and receive information. Think about your most meaningful learning experiences :

- | What got you motivated and excited to learn ?
- | What were your steps in the learning process ?
- | What tools, resources, peers, and experiences did you utilize ?
- | What combination works best for you ?
- | Where and when did you get stuck along the way ?
- | At what point did you feel like you mastered it, or are “good enough” at it ?
- | How does this reflection affect your understanding of your students’ learning approaches ?
- | What changes would you consider ?

The above questions are a great resource for thinking through your own learning process, but they could also be used to help students reflect on their learning process. Part of increasing student ownership is helping them to understand how they learn best.

### Redefine goals

Staying flexible is key and redefining goals for each individual student is extremely important to their success. You need to have a good understanding of where students are at and where they need to be. Reflecting and redefining these goals should be done regularly.

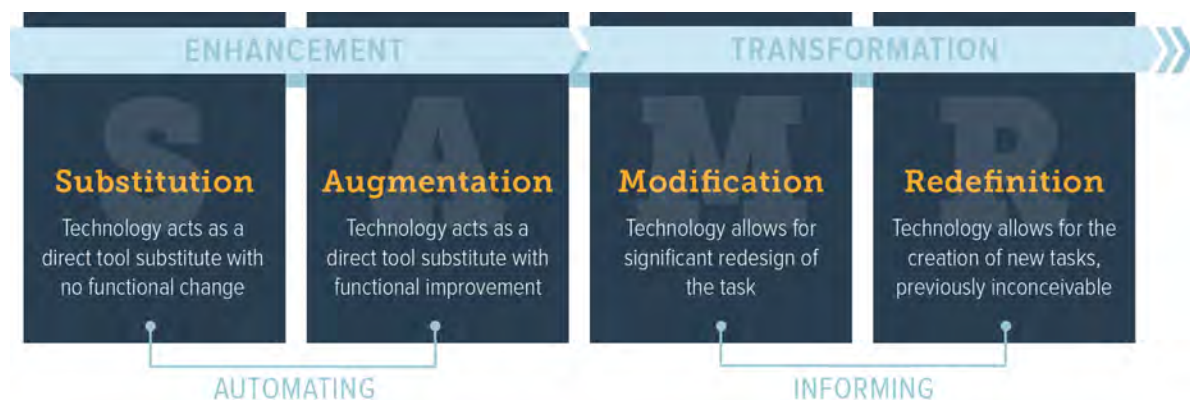
But how can this be realised in a personalised learning environment? With an average class size of about 30 students, educators know how difficult it is to personalize learning in the classroom. Some students are performing at a higher reading level, some are at a higher math level, and some need a little more help in science. The current approach to education includes textbooks that serve as a one-size-fits-all approach. A teacher stands at the front of the classroom with textbook material and is probably only fully stimulating 2-3 students.



Technology can be the key to solving the above in today's classrooms. Students can be introduced to technological interventions in an efficient and effective manner to highlight each student's skill level and personality. In the past, technology had been inadequately used. For example, replacing a typewriter with a computer but only using the computer as a word processor underutilises the full capacity of the computer.

It was Dr. Ruben Puentedura, the Founder and President of Hippasus, a consulting firm based in Western Massachusetts, who first looked deeply into the role of technology in education. Dr. Puentedura developed the Substitute Addition Modification Redefinition, also known as SAMR model, which is an innovation continuum. The SAMR model states that technology that acts as a Substitute or Addition to today's classroom doesn't engage students in a different or unique way. It can have some usefulness and it can be enhancing; however, technology that Modifies the learning process or Redefines the activities involved in learning can be transformative and can change the learning experience altogether.

### PUENTEDURA'S SAMR MODEL



New technology, when utilized to its full potential, has the ability to stimulate every type of learner by delivering visual or verbal stimuli or asking students to draw response to questions. Having different ways for students to interact with technology guarantees that students with different learning styles are being engaged in a way that meets their personality and learning style.





### Flexible learning environment

The image of a traditional workplace has changed substantially, what school looks like has changed too, especially after the pandemic. Learning is no longer restricted to a desk, or in a classroom, or in a school between the hours of 8am and 3pm. Set the stage for powerful learning and create an environment that fosters that culture.

Flexible learning and the design of flexible learning environments are strategies that can help educational organisations to support more personalised learning for students. These environments are also grounded in research on how people learn.

Today, a flexible learning environment does not refer to the physical space or the furniture inside it. Educational organisations may find that starting with attention to the physical (or virtual) space that students learn, may have a ripple effect result on how they think about staff requirements, peer-to-peer interaction, scheduling, allocation of resources and technology, and the design of professional development.

Thinking about how to create the learning environments for students in order to be more engaged and collaborative learners, requires a shift from conventional teaching practices. This will create a learning environment that is based on inquiry and personalised to meet the needs of both teachers and students.

**In flexible learning environments, pedagogies are driven by:**

- Students' independence to make choices and to take an active role in learning
- Encouraging collaborative learning
- Considering teaching as a process of building-up knowledge, making meaning, and making connections across learning areas.

Why should educational institutions focus on designing flexible learning environments? The introduction of flexible learning approaches has left positive indications for improving academic and non-academic outcomes for students, including :

- Supporting active and collaborative learning
- Addressing learner variability and students with a variety of learning needs and preferences



- | Preparing students with skills for work and education in the 21st century
- | Improving learner motivation and engagement
- | Increasing collaboration, cooperation, and communication
- | Improving classroom culture, management and student behaviour

### Develop a mindset of iteration

Design thinking is dependent on the idea of trying new things, reflecting on their success and making the adjustments necessary for the next attempt. Adopting this mindset encourages a dramatic shift in practice while allowing a safe place to try new things without a fear of failing — this is important for leaders, teachers and students. Don't spend so much time planning that you forget to act. Try something and change it up as needed.

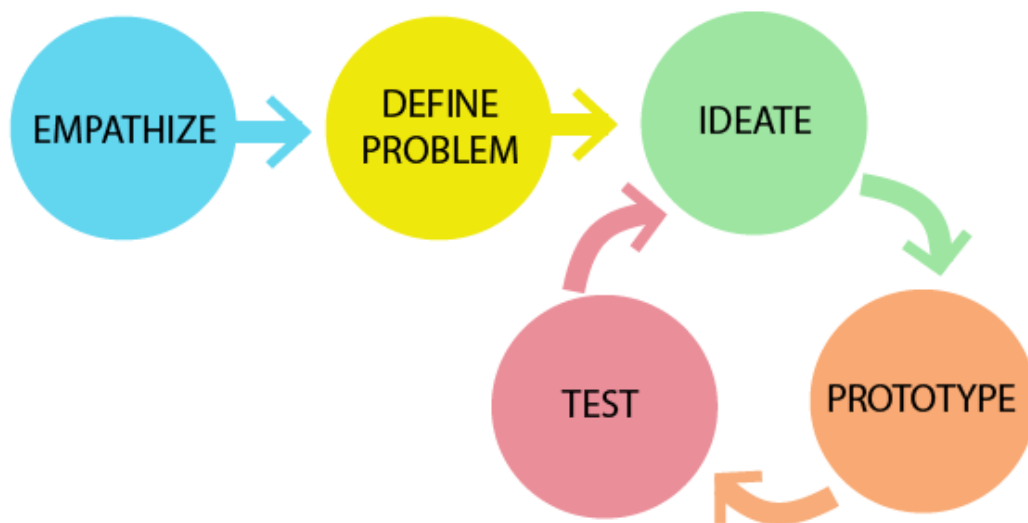
Anthony Kim, a reputable leader and speaker in education technology, school design, and personalised learning and founder and CEO of Education Elements, has been involved in helping hundreds of schools and districts change the way they think about teaching and learning. Anthony Kim said :

“New ideas get traction, they are used and refined by users (and students) and gradually they become so familiar and intuitive that we don't remember the origins of the process or the product. It takes time, experimenting, iteration, and evolution to get new processes to reach their potential and become nearly automatic.”

The work of transforming opportunities for students is difficult yet exciting. As we seek to better prepare our students for tomorrow and beyond, it is important that we utilize the tools that we have with talented and dedicated teachers that make learning exciting and engaging for students. Education Elements is dedicated to empowering teachers to personalise learning and helping district leaders scale across all schools. They have built a large network of partners that support this mission and create a comprehensive experience for educators and students.



## UNIT 2 : A Design Thinking Process



### EMPATHIZE

Empathy goes beyond the analysis of an audience or users and this is one of the keys to Design Thinking. Empathy is about experiencing the feelings of others. You are attempting to understand what it is like to be in their job and to have their challenges.

You are researching the audience as an ethnographer, studying and recording the viewpoint of a group of people. In the workplace context, it is to discover the needs of a target population and to explore their universe.

Through an empathetic experience, you feel more capable of creating more effective solutions than when you are simply an order taker. Empathy may even involve collaborating and co-designing with the audience.

Industrial designer and design educator, Paul Backett, writes that, "Great designers are great empathizers. It's what separates a design that has soul from one that's simply well-realized."



Tools that will help you research users and their challenges :

### Field Research

Talk to and observe audience members in their jobs and imagine what it would be like to have that job. Discover problems that may not be obvious.

### Interviews

Speak with both supervisors and staff to understand the issues they face and the characteristics of the people you want to help.

### Personas

Fictitious person with the collective characteristics and attributes of your audience or a subgroup of your audience (see Learner Personas for Instructional Design)

### Empathy Maps

A visual tool to collect what the persona thinks, feels, says and does when faced with the challenge of your focus

### Attitude Research

Run focus groups to find out what motivates the audience and what demotivates them.



## DEFINE THE PROBLEM

Research, complimented by empathy, will lead you to define the real problem. How often have days of training been developed based on an incorrect understanding of a problem? In Design Thinking, the problem space begins to evolve by understanding the challenges of the target audience.

If you spend time specifically defining a problem, you may discover that a simple solution, like one training course, will not be effective. That's why defining the problem through research—looking at it from many angles and perspectives—can set you on the right track. Without correctly defining a problem, it's nearly impossible to generate a corresponding solution.

After defining the problem, it is advised to describe it as a measurable performance goal. Then you can determine if training is an appropriate solution or partial solution. If so, apply your go-to instructional design method, such as SAM, Action Mapping or ADDIE to tease out the learning objectives that will help people reach the performance goal.

### Tools that will help you define the problem :

#### Root Cause Analysis

**“How Might We” statements:** these are statements that give the problem another definition, from another viewpoint, such as “How might we help staff remember to use a sanitiser?” or “How might we help salespeople to access the information as they need it?” or “How might we help foreign students feel comfortable at our school ?”

**Instructional design analysis practices** that lead to measurable performance objectives, such as Action Mapping, Dick & Carey method, etc.

## IDEATE

The practice of generating ideas, or ideation, is an important step in Design Thinking. This is where you and ideally, a multi-disciplinary team, develop potential solutions to the performance problem defined during research. Although many companies won't allow for this, getting ideas from audience members is very valuable. Try to generate as many ideas as possible because more ideas mean more potential solutions. All ideas are considered and there are no constraints or restrictions.



Tools to help you produce possible solutions include :

### Brainstorming with Sticky Notes

Brainstorming involves conceiving lots of ideas while suspending judgment. Team members note potential solutions on sticky notes and post them on a board or wall. The process of writing and posting continues until there are no more ideas left. This approach is more anonymous than brainstorming, as everyone is busy writing and posting. At the end, the team organizes the sticky notes into some type of coherent structure and discusses all of the ideas. It's a fun and energetic approach to finding solutions.

### Sketching

Sketching short-circuits uses that side of the brain responsible for judgment. This helps them to tap into a flow of ideas. Sketching is another form of brainstorming, a visual one. It uses stick figures and geometric shapes to get the job done. Sketching is exploration.

### Manipulative Verbs

From the creator of brainstorming, Alex Osborn, comes an exercise using a list of action verbs that are applied to various ideas or problems. This works particularly well when using the sketching technique. You can put together a long list of verbs and generate lots of ideas from them.

### Mind Maps

Mind maps, which are radiant drawings showing connected ideas, are good for exploring many aspects to a problem. You can create these alone or with a team.

### "How Might We" statements (see above)



## PROTOTYPE

A prototype is a preliminary model of an approach. Prototyping involves hands-on exploration. It provides a way to try out ideas rapidly without a large investment of time and money. Think of a prototype as a low-resolution or low-fidelity version of an idea.

In the world of industrial design, a prototype might be constructed from cardboard. For graphic design, a prototype might include a series of sketches. In learning experience design, a prototype could involve storyboarding an interaction. They say it's better to fail early and often with your prototypes because with each failure comes a better understanding of what will work.

**Some ways to prototype or create form include :**

### Sketching

To produce prototype sketches use pencil and paper or a digital drawing tool. Prototype sketches are more involved than in the previous phase. They might include storyboarding a scenario or visualizing all possible responses to interaction.

### Mock-ups

A mock-up is a simulation of a raw idea, that replicates how it will look and behave. These can range from a Styrofoam model to a working user interface.

### Small Implementation

If the produced idea involves something not tangible, such as learning with social media or a face-to-face instruction, then your prototype would involve building a very small and rough implementation of the approach that would work for a small group of people. Or in the case of face-to-face instruction, create a short pilot program and test it on sample audience members.





**TEST**

Testing is a simulation of how the idea will work in the real world, receiving feedback from learners and stakeholders, and refining (or ditching) prototypes. It's important to test your innovative approach with the target population through all of its iterations. You can see how Design Thinking is an iterative process that involves lots of testing and adapting.

Some ways to test include :

- | Provide learners/users with a task and watch as they perform it
- | “Ask users to think aloud as they work
- | Prepare a list of questions and discuss the person’s reactions to a program

Design Thinking is a model for dealing with the “be creative on demand” requirements. It is part of the broader project-based learning educational model. It uses a creative, systematic approach to teaching problem-solving. It aims to create and facilitate future innovators and breakthrough thinkers. And it might provide valuable solutions to the learning problems of the 21st Century.



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# ACTIVITIES TO BOOST SELF DIRECTION



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# INTRODUCTION

What is Self-Direction and how can it help? Self-direction is the capacity and tendency to act without being directed. It's a soft skill that serves as a foundation for leadership. It's also linked to things like productivity, research, creativity, and making decisions.



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# UNIT 1 : What is self direction?

Self-direction improves your health and quality of life. You live a better life when you have the freedom to live your best, independent life. You are the driver of your life because you have the power of choice. Self-direction has a great impact on your physical and emotional wellbeing.

It is based on rehabilitation, independence, self-sufficiency, and choice principles. It acknowledges that anybody can set and attain their own goals. Self-direction also assumes that everyone has basic human needs for fulfilment, as well as distinct interests and preferences for living a fulfilling life. Self-direction might imply independence rather than dependence; the ability to make decisions without relying on others and govern our actions and lives without being influenced or dictated by other factors. Individuals that are self-directed have a high level of autonomy and self-sufficiency in their thoughts and behaviour. When it comes to employment, self-direction is a desirable trait. People that are self-directed are more involved, motivated, and committed.



According to the self-determination theory, the needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness must be continually satisfied for people to develop and function in healthy and optimal ways (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

The self-direction concept can be classed as "related" to other concepts such as : Motivation, Self-Knowledge and relationships.

Motivation is the power that pushes us to make the right decisions, set meaningful goals, and effectively plan for and achieve our objectives.

Self-Knowledge allows us to gain a better understanding of our strengths and interests, as well as how to manage and regulate them. It also assists us in accurately attributing the causes of our achievements and failures.

No one acquires self-direction alone, therefore relationships are essential to becoming self-directed. Others contribute to our abilities to grasp and self-direct ourselves. In social circumstances, self-direction is increased, and we require social skills to engage with individuals who can assist us in achieving self-direction through supportive partnerships.



**SELF AWARENESS**

Reflecting on past experiences to evaluate one's own strengths, limitations, motivation, interests and inspirations within different learning contexts.

**INITIATIVE AND OWNERSHIP**

Taking responsibility for learning, finding purposeful driving questions, shaping opportunities to fit personal interests and learning style and seeking input from others.

**GOAL-SETTING AND PLANNING**

Developing long-term goals, establishing meaningful learning targets, identifying effective strategies, and planning our steps.

**ENGAGING AND MANAGING**

Seeking out relevant resources and information to support learning goals and refining strategies. Maintaining effective pace, reaching short-term benchmarks and long-term goals.

**MONITORING AND ADAPTING**

Evaluating progress, adapting strategies, seizing failures in order to grow from mistakes, and attributing success to effort and motivation.

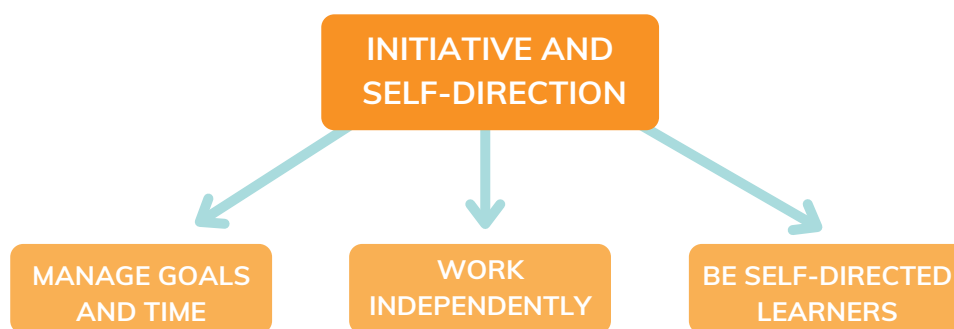




## UNIT 2 :

# Self direction and self motivation

Self-motivation is a critical component in achieving and progressing toward our objectives. It all boils down to our ability to think of new ways to create demanding objectives for ourselves, as well as our belief that we have the necessary talents and abilities to achieve those goals. We frequently have a need for self-motivation.



**When looking for employment, employers will often ask about what motivates you ?**

They want to learn what drives you and whether your motivators are a fit for what they are seeking in the ideal candidate for the job.

Employers will want to know that you will be an enthusiastic employee who is committed to your work. They want to know that you will do your best work, even without a boss asking you to do so, or the promise of a reward.

**Are you able to act without direction ?**

This is an essential skill for gaining and retaining employment where organisations expect their employees to find their own solutions to problems and negotiate their own path.

**Therefore, are you self-motivated or have self-direction ?  
Do you wish to gain new skills in order to find employment ?**

If so, self-directed learning can help you, we will cover self-directed learning below.



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## UNIT 3 :

# Self-directed learning

### What is Self Directed Learning ?

The key to gaining new skills and information is self-directed learning.

You've employed self-directed learning if you've ever taught yourself a new skill, such as how to bake, grow tomatoes, or play a musical instrument.

Self-directed learning can be used for anything you want to learn especially work / employment related.

Self-directed learning necessitates the following abilities :

- The ability to think critically
- Organizing your time
- Self-Management
- Research
- Communication

### Why should you try self-directed learning ?

A self-directed learning experience may be the best option for you if you enjoy taking charge of what you learn and master.

Independent learning allows you to learn something new or difficult whenever and however you want. You also have control over the timeline. Many people find time blocking to be a useful tool for balancing their commitments and personal development.

But it's more than just a matter of taste. You must be involved and engaged in self-directed learning in a way that is rarely seen in training. Moving at your own pace, pursuing your own interests, and applying what you've learned in your own context can all assist to solidify and make what you've learned more relevant.

You'll see what's possible when you apply yourself as you discover your potential and face the challenges of active learning. Consider writing a personal mission statement to help you keep on track as your sense of meaning and purpose deepens.



### How can I develop my own self directed learning ?

This method isn't difficult to devise. Some people require formal instruction, but the following methods will help you in the development and understanding of this strategy.

#### **Make a list of your learning objectives**

You'll never be able to do anything until you've first imagined it. First, decide what you want to learn. Set particular learning objectives that you can track over time.

#### **Examine the Importance**

Make it a practise to not believe everything you hear. Always ask questions that make you care about the answer, as if you were a cat. By asking "why" and "how" questions, you may get past the easy answers and focus on discovering the answers.

#### **Seek out challenges**

While challenges can be unpleasant at first, they can also be thrilling and gratifying. Look for a challenge that relates to a problem you'd like to solve. It will then seem significant to overcome it, motivating you to continue studying.

For example, if you want to find a job in a particular area (working in a cafe), visit some cafes in your area and ask if they are hiring.

#### **Check your learning process**

It's easier to learn when you've established your own learning criteria. Measure your progress against personal learning goals, regardless of outcomes.

#### **Motivate yourself from within**

Intrinsic motivation is a type of motivation that is fueled by internal benefits. Although it appears to be a simple notion, many individuals struggle with it. Fortunately, it is something that can be learned. Sharing what you've learned with others is one example.

If you want to develop intrinsic motivation, try not to be too hard on yourself. Too much self-criticism will discourage you from achieving your goals.



### **Have realistic learning goals**

Self-directed learning is built on a system that we create. To ensure that you achieve your goals, you want to make sure that the targets you have set are realistic and achievable. The last thing you want is to feel discouraged from learning and lessen your self directed learning. Starting small and working your way up is a good idea.

### **Ensure that you have friends / family around to support you**

You should have a group of people or someone with whom you can look to for support. These people will encourage and support you in order you achieve your goals.

### **Final thoughts**

The key to a more enriching learning experience is self-directed learning. While everyone's enthusiasm for learning appears to have waned, this is due to an outdated and inadequate system that does not stimulate deeper learning or help individuals in setting higher learning goals that are meaningful to them.

Self-directed learning is beneficial since it teaches people how to be more self-reliant and responsible. They learn how to be self-motivated, self-sufficient, and ask relevant and impacting questions, among other things.

### **There are many benefits of self directed learning such as :**

- Curiosity
- Willingness to try new things
- Viewing problems as challenges
- Desiring change
- Enjoying learning
- Motivated, independent, persistent and effective learners
- Self-discipline
- Self-confidence
- Goal-orientation
- Ability to represent ideas in different forms.

Now is the greatest time to boost your self direction, especially when it comes to finding employment or re-training.



## EXAMPLE OF GOOD PRACTICE

“Max” was born in Cornwall in 1994. The second of 4 boys living with his mother only in a 2 bedroom house with his mother not working and claiming benefits. His grandparents lived close by but again had never worked and also claimed benefits. He grew up with very little money and relying on food banks and the support of others. When he turned 15, he “got in with the wrong crowd” and starting using drugs. By the age of 18 he was in a “bad place” and could see no way out. Thanks to a local youth worker, he started attending a gardening project, where he enjoyed being outdoors and working with his hands. Through the project he developed his own self direction and goals for his future. He started horticulture college and now has his own successful gardening business, employing 2 local young people and also voluntarily giving back to his community by tending to older residents gardens free of charge.



# ACTIVITY OR EXERCISE NAME

## Personal Goal Action Sheet

### Timeframe

30 – 60 minutes

### Number of participants

Could be a group or individual activity

### Learning objectives

The participant(s) will:

- Set short and possibly long term goals
- Question themselves as to why they want to accomplish their goal(s)
- Understand how they will accomplish their goal(s)
- Set a time frame of when they will achieve their goal(s)
- Develop a plan of how they will achieve their goal(s)

### Materials

Personal Goal Action Sheet (attached)  
Pencils / rubbers

### Implementation

#### Step 1:

Provide to the participants the Personal Goal Action Sheet and pencils. Pencils are preferred as the participants can rub out and make changes



**Step 2:**

Discuss with the participant or group if they are comfortable to share their goals with yourself or others once they have set them.

**Step 3:**

Explain to the participants that the sheet is for them individually to set themselves a minimum of 2 goals. They can be short or long term goals. Preferably they would set 2 short term goals and 1 long term goal. The goals can be centered around anything they wish but ideally the short term goals would be their choice and the long term goal would be for their future employment or training.

**Step 4:**

Inform the participants that there are no right or wrong goals. It is completely individual and nothing they write down will be seen as "silly".

**Step 5:**

Leave them for 30 minutes and then ask if they need more time.

**Step 6:**

Once completed, if agreed at the beginning of the session, ask the participants to share their goals.

**Step 7:**

Provide positive feedback

**Step 8:**

Ask the participants to check the progress of their goal action sheet regularly and feedback once a goal has been completed.

Find this template at the end of the toolbox, chapter 9.





# ACTIVITY OR EXERCISE NAME

## Career Bingo

### Timeframe

30-60 minutes, or as long as the discussions last

### Number of participants

Ideally maximum of 10 participants

### Learning objectives

The participant(s) will:

- Understand what jobs/careers are an option
- Discuss various jobs/careers and possibly introduce new ideas to others
- Use the game to think about possible jobs/careers for them individually and what would be required from them

### Materials

Career bingo sheets  
Career bingo cards  
Flip chart / White board and pens

### Implementation

#### Step 1:

Leader / Youth Worker to print off the Career Bingo cards and cut them into separate boxes.



**Step 2:**

Each participant to be given a Career Bingo Card

**Step 3:**

Youth Worker to put cards into a bag / box

**Step 4:**

Youth Worker to take 1 card out of bag/box and read it aloud.

**Step 5:**

Once a participant can see the card (which has been read out) on their sheet, they shout bingo. The participant will then answer the question which was on the card. For example: A job that works with animals – Vet, Dog walker, zoo keeper etc.

**Step 6:**

Once the participant has answered the card, open the discussion up to the group to receive as many answers as possible. Write all answers down on a flip chart or white board so the group can see.

**Step 7:**

If the youth workers „pulls out“ the FREE card. Ask the participant to say what their ideal job would be. Again open the discussion up to the whole group.

**Step 8:**

After all cards have been completed, go through the list on the flip chart/board with the group and discuss what/if any jobs interest them. If so, what would be needed to gain that job/career.

\*\*\*\*\* Each topic must have a number of activities with instructions on how to carry out these in daily practice, templates, links to additional materials.

Find this template at the end of the toolbox, chapter 9.



# ACTIVITIES TO FACILITATE SELF ASSESSMENT AND SELF REFLECTION



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# INTRODUCTION

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Self Assessment and Self Reflection, what do they mean and how can they help when searching for employment?

Self-reflection is the process of examining your thoughts, attitudes, and behaviours in order to better understand how they affect you and others. Self-assessment is the ability to scrutinise yourself in order to determine how far you have progressed. It's a skill that allows people to keep track of their own work or abilities, identify their own strengths and limitations, and self-diagnose appropriate solutions.



# UNIT 1 : Self Assessment

Self-assessment is used to help an individual understand the scope of their abilities and how to enhance them. It involves asking questions like, "What are my strengths?" and "What are my obstacles?".

Careers are shaped by individual talents, interests, personality, and values.

**Which would you prefer to do on a day at the beach: surfing or lying around reading?  
Would you rather go to an exercise class or follow an online class at home?  
Do you prefer to work on a project on your own or in a group?**

These questions have no right or wrong answers. Your responses simply reflect your preferences - which leisure activities you appreciate and which you don't, which duties you enjoy and which you avoid, and how you prefer to work.

## **What is the importance of self-assessment, and what are the benefits ?**

Self-assessment is important to everyone. It is essential for not only personal but professional development. With regards to seeking employment or retaining jobs, self-assessment will:

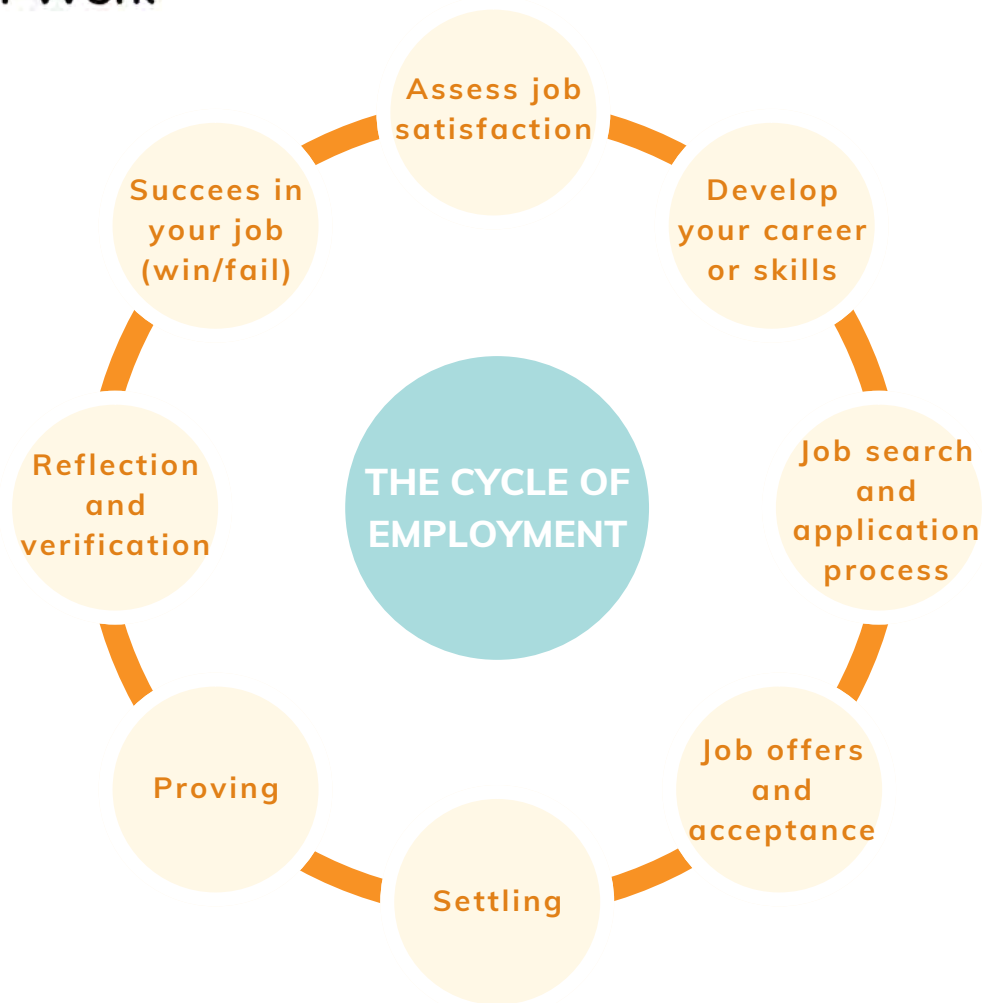
Provides assurance and confidence in individuals' talents. It eliminates or decreases fear and uncertainty at work or when job hunting.

It allows individuals to evaluate themselves, make quick corrections, and develop abilities. In other terms, it promotes capacity development.

It assists people in determining which jobs or careers are ideal for them. For example, if someone discovers that they are a socially awkward or antisocial person, they can discover that a career in marketing is possibly not for them.

It supports the individual in creating resumes / CV's and cover letters that are specific to their abilities and emphasises their unique features. This distinguishes their cover letter from the rest.





### How to improve self-assessment skills?

Self-evaluation is a simple skill that anyone can learn. This skill can be developed and improved using an orderly manner. Aside from that, common sense techniques and practises can be beneficial.

Here are a few suggestions to help improve this skill:

#### Ask Questions

The ability to ask questions is a crucial part of self-evaluation. Improveability to ask specific and relevant questions. Ask the question: what, how, and why you're having trouble completing something, or what, how, and why you're succeeding at anything.

#### Make a list of specific goals

The most difficult component of the entire procedure is being able to give an honest and objective assessment. Make a list of the most significant components or goals and evaluate performance against each of them.



Individuals who are deciding on a career or searching for a job often ask if they can take a test that will tell them which profession is best for them. Unfortunately, there isn't a single test that will tell you what you should do for the rest of your life on its own. However, a combination of self-assessment tools will aid in the decision-making process.

Gather information about yourself throughout the self-assessment part of the career planning process so you can make an informed selection. A complete examination of your values, interests, personality, and ability should be part of a self-assessment.

### Values

Important things such as achievement, status, and independence.

### Interests

What you enjoy doing.

### Personality

Characteristics, motivating drives, needs, and attitudes.

### Aptitude

Skills in areas such as writing, computers, and teaching. They could be natural abilities or ones learned via education and training.

When it comes to picking a career, values are perhaps the most important factor to consider. If consideration is not taken when planning a career, there's a good possibility that you will dislike what you're doing and hence fail. Someone who prefers independence, for example, might be unhappy in a position that does not allow him or her to be self-sufficient.

Intrinsic and extrinsic values are the two sorts of values. Intrinsic values are associated with the work itself and the contribution it makes to society. External factors such as physical location and economic potential are examples of extrinsic values. The following are some of the questions that you can ask yourself:

Is it critical for you to interact with people as part of your job ?

Is it important for your work to make a positive impact on society ?

Is it crucial to you to have a prestigious job ?

Is a high salary important to you ?





**Self assessment before searching for a job :**

In order to achieve your job search goal, you should have a well-thought-out plan. Prior to job hunting, it is critical to conduct a self-evaluation. You may already have a clear idea of what you want to do, where you want to work, and what you can give. They'll want you to be able to tell them who you are, what you know, and what you can contribute when you sit down for an interview. You won't obtain the job if you can't immediately describe your talents and abilities, hobbies and ambitions, goals and aspirations.

In these times of fierce competition, far too many job seekers rush into the search without first analysing what they have to offer. Marketing yourself without knowing what makes you the ideal "product" is inefficient. Identifying your unique skill sets will put you ahead of the competition and make you considerably more appealing to a potential employer.

To get a head start on your job search, figure out what your key abilities and competencies are — what you excel at. Learn how to identify your strongest skills and how to effectively communicate them. Consider your passions and how they relate to your abilities. Combining your passions and talents can boost your drive and make you a stronger candidate - something that is vital in any employment market, but especially so in this one.

**There are 3 points you should consider with regards to self-assessment before seeking employment :****Personality**

If you were asked what your best personality qualities were, what would you say? Understanding your personality will assist you in narrowing down your job search and selling yourself during interviews. Your personality has both general and work-related aspects :

General personality qualities, provide insight into your general personality. General personality strengths include words like positive, creative, people-oriented, competitive, driven, sympathetic, assertive, flexible, and motivated.



Work related personality qualities are more affected by personality qualities connected to work. Job-related personality strengths include being team-oriented, goal-oriented, a strategic thinker, a natural leader, conscientious, detail-oriented, and a problem solver, to name a few.

### **Technical abilities**

These are abilities that are related to a certain technical skill. Competency in computer software programmes, fluency in a foreign language, or the ability to operate a specific sort of mechanical equipment are all examples. Make a list of your main talents and knowledge in this area.

### **Transferable Skills**

These are abilities that have to do with how you connect or communicate with others. Presentation skills, managerial abilities, and writing skills are just a few examples. Because they are required in a wide range of work contexts and career disciplines, transferable talents are also known as "soft" skills.

Cognitive capacities explain your mind's and personality's capabilities and provide insight into your thought processes. Problem-solving abilities, interpersonal abilities, and creative abilities are just a few examples. What you are physically capable of performing on the job is referred to as functional skills. People management, saving money, budgeting, quality control, report generation, sales, graphic design, and customer service are just a few examples.

Half the battle is won by recognising your positive qualities. The capacity to convey how they will help your future employers is the second aspect. Consider some of the occupations you might like to interview for. Put yourself in the position of a potential interviewee. What qualities and abilities would you want your ideal applicant to have if you were the interviewer? Why? Then consider how these abilities and skills would assist the organisation. What do you think you'd come up with?



## UNIT 2 : Self Reflection

By looking within, we develop empathy for others and have a better awareness of how our actions affect others around us, both positively and adversely. This allows us to become more self-aware and evolve as a result. If "insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results," as Albert Einstein famously put it, then self-reflection is the first step toward reaching a new and desirable outcome.

### Why is self-reflection important ?

Life is never actually as straightforward as we would want. In both professional and personal situations, there are always fresh obstacles to tackle, and these experiences are what create us as people. It's natural to be concerned about these difficulties because they include change, which may be daunting at times.

Self-reflection is a useful strategy for dealing with these situations. Remember that you can only truly examine your own thoughts, beliefs, and actions. With this in mind, you'll have a better idea of what you're capable of at any given time. This could include having a productive talk with a coworker, family member, or partner, or simply giving oneself care and self-love to feel more empowered in the circumstance.

We are more impatient than ever before in the modern world, thanks to the speed and accessibility of technology, and this can have a negative impact on our personal development. We can go one step closer to where we want to be by slowing down and taking a step back to fully reflect.

Self-reflection can give you perspective. It can allow you to take a step back and gain perspective on what really matters to you. As a result, you'll be able to make more informed judgments about pursuing life objectives that meet your requirements and interests.

It can also help you to respond more effectively. We may more easily make changes that allow us to respond to circumstances in more effective ways when we have a greater understanding of who we are and why we do what we do. Hopefully, this will prevent us from saying or doing things that we may later regret.

It allows us to gain a better understanding of ourselves as well as others.



Self-reflection can assist you in discovering who you are at your core. As a result, you'll have an easier time finding yourself, pursuing your mission, and being more authentic. It is an essential skill for personal and professional growth. This in turn will help with seeking employment and through your chosen career.

### What are the benefits of self-reflection ?

Having a goal or question in mind to solve is a terrific place to start with self-reflection. This can help you maintain objectivity and influence your emphasis on reflection. Instead of focused on the current trip, goal-oriented people are more inclined to be open-minded about alternative solutions. There's a risk of becoming overly critical if we don't set a positive outcome objective for ourselves.

### How can I practice self-reflection ?

While there is no fixed rule for practising self-reflection, no cheat sheet, and no one-month programme, we do it more frequently than you may imagine. It could be on your way home, while exercising, at work, or in bed - our minds are constantly analysing the events of our days, and you may find yourself questioning your thoughts, sentiments, and emotions.

We are continually evolving by the second, but if we do not devote time to genuinely listening to our minds, it may take us longer than expected to achieve our goals. This can lead to dissatisfaction and hostility toward events that could be better managed with a bit more attention. To simplify the process, follow these three simple steps:

#### 1. Identify important questions :

You've probably found yourself asking questions about your own views or qualities to try to solve a problem, whether in real life or in your head. Maybe you've pondered, "Why do I avoid confrontation?" or "Why do I have trouble controlling my emotions under duress?" You might wish for a new or different characteristic, such as "I wish I was more confident having difficult talks" or "I hope I could stay cool when I'm up against the wall." In either case, consider exploring a little further under the surface, looking for examples of your past-behaviors and occasions when you have accomplished what you set out to do.



## **2. Remain open and objective :**

Self-reflection may be a frustrating process, even when you have a clear purpose in mind, as you unearth numerous aspects about yourself. We can quickly become engrossed in made-up scenarios and misinterpreted memories, leading us astray; therefore, remaining open and objective is critical in assisting us in getting to where we want to be.

### **Remain open :**

By looking inward at our thoughts, beliefs, and emotions, we are examining our current footprints rather than plotting a direct path to our next destination. You may discover that things may not turn out the way you expected, but this does not have to be a bad thing; maintain an open mind and explore new ideas and views; you never know what you might discover.

### **Recognize what you see :**

It's tempting to get caught up in the flaws of what you see and fixate on perfection. Because no one is flawless, you will be more likely to see the bright side of your findings if you recognize who you are and the people/things around you in your life. Begin with the basics, such as a roof over our heads and food in our tummies, then work your way up. We can create new habits and a more positive mindset by going through this process of self-acceptance.

### **Adopt a new perspective:**

When you ask yourself a question, attempt to imagine yourself from a different point of view. This could be a colleague, acquaintance, family member or spouse. Put yourself in their shoes and examine yourself through their eyes. While confronting unpleasant feelings might be challenging, this will offer you with specific steps to help you feel better. This might be things like asking more questions, being more straightforward or demonstrating more sympathy. Try out these new perspectives and see what happens; you might get a more positive response than you have in the past.

## **3. Providing both good and negative points of view, as well as suggestions for improvement :**

When asked to name three positive qualities about ourselves, we are more likely to struggle than when asked to name three bad qualities. This can also be a simple path to take through the process of self-reflection, as we unearth aspects of ourselves that we may not like or agree with, but recognise the importance of overcoming.



It may be helpful to use the SMART objectives while setting these goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely). This will assist you in identifying your existing strengths so that you can concentrate on areas where you can improve. This is an extremely useful tool to use when looking at job searching or even if you are currently employed.

From toddlers to adults, we develop as people by learning from our mistakes and listening to what others have to say. So, why does actively practising peering inside our heads seem so daunting?

The possibility of finding something that we don't like is daunting, yet it's something we must face.

**Think of some key questions to ask yourself**

**Set aside a time in the day to check in these questions**

**Commit to doing it by scheduling it into a specific time, for example for 5 minutes on a morning walk**

**Start small**

Self-reflection is a necessary skill for personal and professional development. We wander around unconscious and often react to others and even ourselves if we don't have it. If you've ever had an emotional reaction to anything or said something you afterwards regretted, you can understand how self-reflection may help you choose healthier answers and change behaviours (even thoughts) that aren't serving you well. Reflective practice can be developed as a shared activity. In fact, psychologists have expressed that learning is most effective when thoughts are put into language either in spoken or written format.



## EXAMPLE OF GOOD PRACTICE

During my time at ADPS, I had the opportunity to see and learn many different aspects of what goes into a project, including the basic process of how a project is planned, developed, and completed, as well as the amount of work and detail that goes into each stage. Another key lesson I learnt over the course of the 12 weeks was the many different sorts of work that an Engineer is responsible for, which has given me a better understanding of the various tasks and responsibilities that I may undertake as a Civil Engineer, which is my dream job.

Looking back on my first day at ADPS, I can say that it was one of the most memorable days of my career. After being introduced to everyone, I was given a tender to work on, in which they asked for suggestions on how to improve various areas of the project as well as my overall thoughts on the project.

They were really kind and willing to let me participate as much as I wanted, and they were receptive to any thoughts and ideas I had. This immediately made me feel at ease and as if I were a valued member of the team.

During the first week I was overwhelmed by the work and the responsibilities that were placed on me. Luckily one of the supervisors saw me struggling and told me about self-reflection (which was something I had never done before). I looked online and found a sheet to help me and took some time to write down my thoughts and feelings. Once I had done this, I thought again about how I could change this. I decided to speak to the supervisor who had seen me struggling and asked him to sit down with me and go through the work I had completed so far. I was really surprised and happy to hear that I was doing really well and he was very impressed with me. All of my insecurities and doubts were unfounded and I realised that I was more capable than I thought.





# ACTIVITY OR EXERCISE NAME

## SWOT Analysis

### Timeframe

30 – 60 minutes

### Number of participants

Individual activity, but can be done in a group setting

### Learning objectives

The participants will:

- Understand more about their strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
- Reflect on what steps can be taken, or things changed in order to gain employment
- Assess what is needed or expected from them by themselves and others.

### Materials

SWOT analysis worksheet.  
Pens / writing materials.

### Implementation

#### Step 1:

Explain to the individual or group that they will be completing a SWOT analysis worksheet. Explain to them what it is and what is expected from them. The aim of the worksheet is for the participant(s) to think of a job they would like to apply for.



Once the participant(s) has decided on a goal, ask them to list down the strengths and weaknesses that may prevent them from achieving it.

Once they have written down their strengths and weaknesses ask them to list down the opportunities that can help them achieve their goal. Next, ask them to check the threats that could stand in the way of them achieving their goal.

**Step 2:**

Inform them that when completing the worksheet think of the following :

**Strengths :**

What do you do better than anybody else? What do people praise you for? Tell them to spend some time thinking about what they have done well, what tasks were well within their comfort zone and any times they had exceeded expectations. Strengths can be anything from work experience achievements to being a good listener.

**Weaknesses :**

Think about things you find difficult to achieve, areas you don't feel confident in. Let the participant(s) know that weaknesses should always be things they have control over and that they can change. Tell them not to be ashamed of talking or writing about their weaknesses. When applying for a job it shows authenticity and trustworthiness. Weaknesses could include negative attitudes they know they need to work on, or lack of access to equipment they need for searching for a job.

**Opportunities :**

Think of possible opportunities available to you? If not why? These could be job vacancies or advice, tips and offers of help from people they know.

**Threats :**

Write down any threats you feel may be a barrier in searching for employment. Inform the participant(s) that any challenges faced will make them stronger. Threats could be issues they need to deal with right now, like sourcing training or job hunting opportunities in rural areas.

**Step 3 :**

Handout the worksheets and ask the participant(s) to complete them. Ask them to focus on job searching as a topic for the sheet.

**Step 4 :**

If appropriate go through the worksheet (after completion) with the participant and provide some constructive feedback.

Find this template at the end of the toolbox, chapter 9.



# ACTIVITY OR EXERCISE NAME

## Self-Reflection Circle

### Timeframe

15 minutes

### Number of participants

Individual or group activity

### Learning objectives

The participant will:

- Increase their self-awareness which will assist them to understand and use their emotions in a positive way (Emotional Intelligence)
- Develop meaning and purpose in life (important for mental well being)
- Improve their performance for the future
- Be able to set more realistic and achievable goals.

### Materials

Self-Reflection Circle sheet.  
Coloured pens , pencils, crayons



### Implementation

#### Step 1:

Inform the participant(s) that they will be given a sheet which contains a self-reflection circle and coloured pens, pencils, crayons etc.

#### Step 2 :

Ask them to use a different colour for each section and colour in as many segments, based on how fulfilled / satisfied they feel. Tell them to start from the centre of the circle.

#### Step 3 :

After they have finished ask the participant(s) to take a moment to appreciate and reflect on their circle. What does it look like? Are there any surprises to them?

#### Step 4 :

Discuss with them their feelings on their circle.

#### 1.

If they have coloured in 1 or 2 segments they will not feel satisfied in this area and they will need to explore ways of enhancing their satisfaction there. Encourage them by telling them that these are fantastic opportunities and they can grow the most in these areas.

#### 2.

If they have coloured in up to 3 segments, they are reasonably satisfied in this area, but there is definitely opportunity to explore ideas to move up the scale.

#### 3.

If they have coloured in 4 or more segments in a particular section, they are very satisfied. It is important to inform them to maintain what they are doing to ensure they remain satisfied, however, not to overlook that there maybe areas for improvement. It is important to inform them that they are not limiting their potential for even further growth and satisfaction in those areas.

Find this template at the end of the toolbox, chapter 9.



# PEER LEARNING



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

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This project (no. 2020-3-UK01-KA205-094063) has been funded with support from the European Commission. This document reflects the views only of the author and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which might be made of the information contained herein.

# Introduction

Human beings are social creatures, they can learn on their own but even more so also in groups, and from one another. We can see cooperative and collaborative learning e.g. Peer learning offers personalised approaches but also brings a change in roles of involved parties. This educational practice can be implemented in formal to informal learning settings, in smaller and larger groups with experienced or less-experienced participants in a topic or subject. This chapter explores benefits, differences to traditional learning settings and basic factors one should consider for this element of personalised youth work.



# **UNIT 1 :**

## **Collaboration of all involved parties**

Peer learning in education refers to learning among learning participants, among learners or students, instead as from an instructor or educator (mainly). It means learners themselves learn from one another, guide one another to achieve a certain learning goal or improve some skills e.g. Most importantly, there is a shift in roles. The teacher/ trainer/ educator/ youth worker leading the group becomes a facilitator of learning rather than an instructor or person who provides theory, activities or assignments, answers to all questions. The learners themselves have more influence and constructive power over their learning process, they become leaders in turns or e.g. one of them who is more experienced, provides explanations or leads even the full set of training activities instead of the educator.

The methodological proposal of peer learning implies first (and foremost) an awareness of the need to “activate” the participants and to ensure their active participation in the learning process. This, with more or less guidance by the educators like youth workers, can start at a very low level, e.g. giving explanations in own words on a simple mathematical process or even refer to the development of some tasks to help develop different mathematical learning path evidences. Any other example could be applied, here to start with.

For the learners involved, it means active participation and deeper reflection upon the topic and subject; to think of individual steps in understanding background and context, to know possibly also examples and tips on how to remember or to connect events and knowledge to other, suggest and discuss different learning aspects and exercises to memorise or practice knowledge and skills. They are no longer only recipients of (new) knowledge but active agents and possibly “donors” of knowledge themselves. When it comes to skills and competences, this approach may even have more impact then, since they are all involved from concept to implementation and application of teaching/ learning activities.





Side effects are improved language skills, social skills, some possible additional motivational aspects gained (from successful teaching others and learning new aspects, achievement of tasks, acting as a role model etc.). For the peer whose role is rather the one of a “recipient” party maybe, it sometimes helps to receive this learning session from peers of the same age or with the same background and in different words used than maybe by a teacher or youth worker.

In general, when conventional education practices focus on a topic or subject and want to provide related knowledge, skills and possibly competences, the peer learning approach opens besides this WHAT factor, also the HOW factor, helps to learn how to achieve and acquire these.

Clearly defined tasks and roles for each individual or within the group help when implementing this type of learning. Empowering participants in collaborating on this endeavour can be an important element in proceeding an individual learning plan.

#### The educator's or youth worker's part

Trainers and educators or youth workers have knowledge and experience that usually goes beyond that of the participants in a specific subject they shall work on together, but it is necessary to open one's mind-set towards new perspectives and new views, new approaches. For this reason, each training session should be structured in advance, consider enough time for flexibility, change and improvisation, depending on the needs of the participants. Also, the preparation of each activity should start with clearly defined teaching outcomes - what we want to achieve in the training before we choose a particular methodology – and allow to be adapted to the individual learner's skills. The educator acts as facilitator and guide, shall mainly help clarify open questions at any time.

The learning facilitators should also be prepared for participants who, because of their inexperience, do not know how to react in interactive situations. Always prepare detailed instructions and consider how you can implement them most efficiently.



### The learners' part

Learners shall work together to solve problems, offer advice and help one another when needed. The results of numerous surveys show that learners who are given the opportunity to learn according to this approach can learn faster and easier; they remember acquired knowledge longer. The peer learning approach encourages every member in the peer group to be an active player. The learners decide when things need to happen and how to achieve the goals. Furthermore, learners are encouraged to consider alternatives, learn different learning approaches, how to involve others and how to address others.

In the case of (young) adults, we see they learn best when they :

1. Work on solving and addressing current, real-life challenges
2. Exchange feedback with others in similar situations.



## UNIT 2 : Elements to peer learning

### Structural elements

When it comes to start peer learning, a short instruction should be given by the youth worker or teacher to learners. This should include particularly information about expectations like the general outcome, the duration and general communication and collaboration rules. For successful peer learning a balance between guidelines and self-responsible activities is needed, as well as a clear time frame including reflection time and debriefing. Then, the youth workers shall be available with pieces of advice and suggestions where to find answers if necessary e.g. without providing “a solution”, to ensure that learners comprehend their tasks and are not lost in overwhelming tasks.

### Learning environment

A training room should provide enough space for participants to work on their individual or group tasks in peace. It is also a good idea to think about how the classroom tables are placed in the room, if they are needed at all, since they can create barriers between the participants and the educator. It might be a better solution to sit or stand together in a circle. This way, the meeting space can also encourage having dialogues. Where possible, learning activities should also be implemented outside a conventional training or classroom. It is recommended to set up intermediate stations where the results achieved then can be presented and discussed with the teacher or youth worker, or even with other peer groups.

As an alternative, peer learning can also be implemented online, on the internet. Communication and collaboration platforms may help and provide the “online room” for this. The educator should organise a plenary room for the whole group and some break out rooms for individual peer learning, attend them in turns to see progress and provide support where needed. Where participants may not be experienced in online collaboration, the platform features should be shortly explained, rules how and when to give feedback, when and how to ask questions or for advice, where to find general rules of netiquette should be given before peer learning activities are started. In case the selected online communication and collaboration platforms does not offer a timer, clear indications on when to come back to the plenary room should be given by the educator.



### Activity types

Based on an initial learning needs analyses, the personalised youth work builds upon, youth workers would see strengths of individual learners and could guide them to form groups with less experienced in a specific topic to peer learning or become learning buddies and solve specific tasks. In a next step, other topics might be chosen to also give other learners a chance to show specific knowledge and explain how they managed tasks or activities maybe. In many peer learning activities, this may then rather go into a cooperative working mode where social and group learning then takes place. Very often, where participants solve problems in groups, informal peer learning and teaching takes place and wherever group work has been fostered, learners might find it easier to engage in dedicated peer learning activities.

In a larger group, ice breaking activities like providing a list of prompts to initiate discussion or providing a current simple general societal challenge followed by then group forming, might help. However, it will be good to encourage turns of roles – to engage and empower all participants become donors and be recipients of knowledge and show and practice competences.

Activities could range from peer assessments, any smaller problem solving to larger collaborative projects. When more advanced and mature participants join the peer learning, they could also become “learning buddies” or “junior mentors” in a specific topic – e.g. helping younger ones in CV related topics and describing competences in a CV.

### Other elements

One could also consider if extrinsic motivation elements (e.g. badges, group goodies, voting of best solutions etc.) might be needed to encourage learners in peer learning. However, intrinsic motivation may play a more important role when it comes to seeing a task through (i.e. task persistence) and empowering participants to transfer knowledge and skills into their work and social life.



# EXAMPLE OF GOOD PRACTICE

#New Spirit – competent in the job by BEST Institut für berufsbezogene Weiterbildung und Personaltraining GmbH

This course targets job seeking young adults (aged between 21-25 years) with the aim of a successful reintegration into the labour market. It is an alternative programme to formal school. It is financed by the Austrian labour office (Arbeitsmarktservice) based on current, individual (learning) needs of participants. Participants do not learn or work in traditional classroom settings but attend so-called “learning stations” to which they “devote” themselves according to their needs and interests. Subjects covered in this course are demand-oriented and would particularly contain various digital skills and contents and any typical employability related competence. Peer learning is the core educational approach in this course.

What is specific is, that at the beginning of each course week, the main subjects that had been generated mainly based on initial needs and interest analysis at course start, are presented. Each course day, the different integrative learning offers are explained and participants can decide which learning station to choose. At these (learning) stations, they find packages of pre-designed tasks they can work on alone, in peer groups or with a “buddy” learner. The educators support them providing further (learning) suggestions and assistance. Learning exercises offer largely independent work experience and rapid sense of achievement.

Different (learning) stations for peer learning provide a new, innovative approach to learning to the participants. They allow continuous working on competences in which participants showed deficits and/ or particular interest in to improve in. This approach can help overcome negative experiences and attitudes towards learning, open participants’ mind-sets towards a joyful learning and higher motivation in self-guided learning.



# ACTIVITY OR EXERCISE NAME

## Critical reflection

### Timeframe

appr. 120 min. but depending on number of participants

### Number of participants

6-12

### Learning objectives

The participants will be able to reflect critically and lead rational discourses on perhaps controversial topics.

### Materials

PC or laptop with internet access, flip chart or White Board, sheets, pens.

Prior to this activity, learners should have elaborated a list of questions or topics for discussion based on the current training focus during the last group training.

### Implementation

#### **Step 1 : Ask learners to present their lists.**

They can express their opinions, but have to formulate analytical questions that are based on the issue.

The topics are collected on the flipchart or White Board.



**Step 2 :**

Learners are divided into small groups to share their ideas, having them prioritise two or three for discussion, and then talking about them amongst themselves. The objective is to determine the most interesting ideas that emerged from their discussion and organising these thoughts so that they could be shared with the class as a whole.

**Step 3:**

Sharing ideas in a small group without the trainer or youth worker, helps learners to realise that other peer groups might very well experience a similar forming and storming process. The educator walks from one to the other small groups, having the role of a listener who would only occasionally support or guide them as a facilitator to ensure that learners' ideas are really tied to the subject's topic.

**Debriefing :**

Have each group present their work by writing their ideas on the board so that the class can identify commonalities among them and prioritise topics for large-group discussion, which would then take place during the training unit.

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# TEMPLATES AND WORK SHEETS



Co-funded by the  
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This project (no. 2020-3-UK01-KA205-094063) has been funded with support from the European Commission. This document reflects the views only of the author and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which might be made of the information contained herein.



# **PERSONALISED LEARNING VISIONING TOOL**

## **Who can use this tool ?**

Anyone interested in implementing personalised learning, including educational institutions, community, schools, and individuals

## **What can this tool do ?**

Help create, refine, clarify, or communicate your vision for personalised learning.

## **How can this tool help us ?**

Create consensus around the vision for personalised learning in your institution; create draft communications to share with your institution.

Successful implementation of personalised learning requires clear and strategic communications. Given the wide variety of personalised learning models and approaches, it is important that stakeholders understand not only what changes will take place, but also how those changes will align with the overall institutional priorities and why they warrant investment. Crafting a vision for personalised learning can help you to more clearly define the “why” behind your efforts for all stakeholders.

For parents, teachers, and students, a clear vision statement can foster a better understanding of personalised learning shifts and lead to more institutional support. For decision-makers, systematically defining the intended focus and impact of personalised learning efforts in a vision statement can help determine the scope of necessary implementation support.

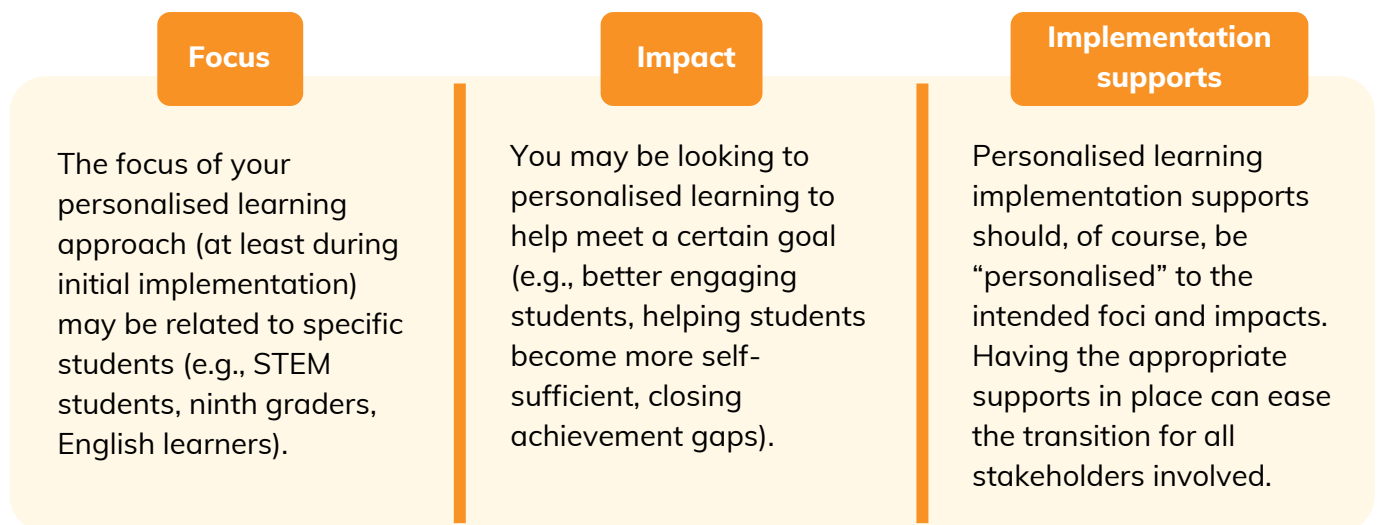


This tool can be used in a variety of ways by anyone interested in implementing personalised learning. For example:

Those with experience implementing personalised learning can use this tool to confirm their continued vision for their work, check assumptions, and create clear, relevant communications to share with the community.

Those new to personalised learning can use this tool to identify and refine the priorities and intended outcomes for their work. A team can use this tool collaboratively to drive decision making. Alternatively, individuals can complete the tool on their own and compare results. The draft vision statement generated by this tool can form the basis of initial personalised learning communications with the community.

This tool will help you and your team craft a personalised learning vision statement to guide your work. Three key components should be included in your vision statement: the focus, impact, and implementation supports for your personalised learning efforts (see Figure 1).



**Figure 1. Personalised Learning Vision Statement Components**



# COMPONENT ONE :

## PERSONALISED LEARNING - FOCUS -

The reasons for using a personalised learning approach can vary widely, but many of these reasons relate to issues of educational equity. Regardless of the intended focus or impact of personalised learning approaches, equity is often at the heart of these efforts. Making the shift to personalised learning is often an acknowledgment that current learning conditions do not serve all students equitably.

To begin crafting your vision for personalised learning, first consider who you want to influence. While you may hope to affect all students over time, there may be students on whom you plan to focus during initial implementation, such as those who need additional supports, those with achievement gaps, or those in specific grades or subjects. Likewise, you may wish to focus on training cohorts of teachers over time.

Identify who you want to influence through personalised learning by writing in any of the four boxes in the table below. If you wish to focus on all students, consider whether there are specific groups you plan to designate as “early implementers” of personalised learning. Your entries will help to build your draft vision statement at the end of this tool.

### Personalised Learning Focus

Students needing additional instructional supports :	Students with achievement gaps :
Students in specific grades or subjects :	Other :

Table 1. Personalised Learning Focus



**Consider :**

- English learners
- Refugees or recent immigrants
- Students with special needs (including students with disabilities)
- Students in “transition” grades (e.g., first grade of secondary education)
- Low-performing students
- Gifted students
- Elementary, middle, or high school students
- Students in STEM courses
- Students in CTE pathways
- Students in humanities and arts courses
- Students with access to educational technology



## COMPONENT TWO :

# PERSONALISED LEARNING - IMPACT -

Depending on the focus areas that are a priority for your personalised learning efforts, you may have different types of outcomes you hope to see as a result of your work. Many leaders invest in implementing personalised learning with the hope of eventually impacting all students, but they often start by focusing on a specific subgroup with the most pressing needs. If there are specific students you plan to prioritize during personalised learning implementation (e.g., English learners, students in STEM pathways), consider what specific outcomes you hope to see for them in the next few years. You also may wish to consider what long-term effects you hope to see for some or all students.

Identify what short- and long-term impacts you wish to produce as a result of your personalised learning efforts by writing in Table 2. Consider first what effects you wish to see for the students you plan to prioritise or focus on during initial implementation (from your selections in Component 1). You may wish to see similar outcomes across different types of students (e.g., increased academic growth for both English learners and students with disabilities); alternatively, you may wish to see different types of impacts for different groups of students (e.g., increased engagement for gifted students, increased on-time graduation rates for recent immigrants).

In addition, while you may hope to see many kinds of positive impacts over time, consider which impacts you wish to prioritise and strategically address through personalised learning efforts. For example, you might focus on the “top three” most important short- and long-term impacts. Also, consider what metrics you have to measure impact and whether you may need to change the way you gather student or teacher data. Your entries will help to build your draft vision statement at the end of this tool.

### Personalised Learning Focus

Short-term impacts :

Long-term impacts :

Table 2. Personalised Learning Impacts



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**Consider :**

- Accelerated learning or credit accrual
- Increased academic growth in tested subjects (e.g., reading language arts, mathematics, science, and history)
- Narrow or closed achievement gaps
- Increased on-time graduation rates
- Increased completion rates for career pathways
- Increased independence in learning
- Reduced dropout and retention rates
- Increased enrollment in advanced coursework
- Improved social-emotional and deeper learning skills
- Reduced behavioural and disciplinary incidents
- Improved attendance
- Improved employability skills
- Increased postsecondary matriculation and completion



# COMPONENT THREE :

## PERSONALISED LEARNING - IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORTS -

Personalised learning implementation supports can lead to intended outcomes when they are purposefully selected and designed to match the focus of the work. Likewise, having the right kinds of supports in place can ease the transition for all stakeholders involved in the learning process. Identify how you plan to implement personalised learning by writing in any of the four boxes in Table 3 (based on where you are in implementation and planning). Your entries will help to build your draft vision statement at the end of this tool.

### Personalised Learning Implementation Supports

#### Phase I : Planning & Design

##### Consider :

- Establishing a personalised learning design committee
- Conducting a personalised learning needs assessment or readiness assessment
- Conducting an environmental scan of current personalised learning structures, practices, and opportunities
- Providing initial training and engagement opportunities around personalised learning
- Conducting a crosswalk of skills and competencies
- Creating a monitoring and implementation plan (including data)

#### Phase II : Early Implementation

##### Consider :

- Communicating about implementation, changes, successes, and lessons learned with invested stakeholder groups
- Providing professional learning and personalised learning implementation monitoring
- Providing access to coaching (on-site, virtual, or blended), demonstration classrooms, or other implementation supports
- Implementing the personalised learning pilot program with a group of students, teachers, schools, or districts (e.g., launching a “school within a school”)



### Phase III : Expanded Implementation

#### Consider :

- Providing professional learning, micro-credentials, or implementation monitoring around personalised learning
- Revising policies and protocols to reflect personalised learning practices
- Celebrating early adopters and champions by collecting and publishing stories from the field
- Conducting “reality checks” with key stakeholders to recommend midcourse adjustments

### Phase IV: Refining and Scaling

#### Consider :

- Conducting an evaluation of the impact of personalised learning instructional approaches on select student outcomes
- Compiling and curating strategies, tools, and materials from personalised learning pilot for future use
- Holding planning sessions to determine next-level decisions regarding personalised learning program implementation

**Table 3. Personalised Learning Implementation Supports**

## PERSONALISED LEARNING - VISION STATEMENT -

Using your selections for components 1, 2, and 3, you can now begin to craft a draft personalised learning vision statement. While you may want to revise your vision statement further to ensure it is ready for mass communication, this initial draft vision statement may be a good starting place for you and your team.

To create your draft vision statement, populate the following template (Table 4) with the focus areas, impacts, and implementation supports you noted for components 1, 2, and 3.



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# PERSONALISED LEARNING - VISION STATEMENT TEMPLATE -

We are committed to ensuring that all students have the learning supports they need to succeed.

To this end, we plan to focus our personalised efforts on :	Write selected focus areas below.
Leading to:	Write selected impacts below.
We plan to support these shifts to personalised learning through :	Write selected implementation supports below.

Table 4. Personalised Learning Vision Statement Template

Here is an example of a draft vision statement generated through this tool:

To this end, we plan to focus our personalised efforts on :	Write selected focus areas below. Students in our lowest-performing schools
Leading to:	Write selected impacts below. Increased student engagement and increased academic growth.
We plan to support these shifts to personalised learning through :	Write selected implementation supports below. Conducting a needs assessment (including a deep dive into student data), offering professional development to teachers on student choice and differentiation, and supporting peer learning networks to help make personalised learning a grassroots effort.



You may find after developing your draft vision statement that you need to revise the language, add more details, or even revisit the previous decisions you made when completing components 1, 2, and 3 of this tool.

Once you have crafted and refined your vision statement for personalised learning, consider how to expand strategic communication messages for key stakeholders.

**For parents,**

consider communicating not only what the positive outcomes are for students, but also what will stay the same. For example, “What students learn will stay the same, but how they learn will be more tailored to their individual needs and interests.”

**For parents and community partners,**

consider communicating the specific knowledge and skills personalised learning will support. For example, “Students will have more opportunities to practice and develop self-regulation, communication, and reflection skills.”








**For teachers,**


consider communicating what the specific changes are to their primary responsibilities as instructors. For example, “The learning standards, scope, and sequence of instruction will stay the same; however, you can expect much more individualized and independent learning activities as well as much more flexibility in pacing.”





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SESSION

LEARNING OUTCOME 	LEARNING OBJECTIVES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ENVIRONMENT 	LOCATION 
	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <span>Behavior</span> <span>Insight</span> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <span>Skill</span> <span>Knowledge</span> </div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <span>Physical</span> <span>Virtual</span> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <span>Social</span> <span>Cultural</span> </div>	
PEOPLE 	CHARACTERISTICS 	CONSTRAINTS 	RESOURCES 

STRATEGY  


PROCESS  


ACTIVITIES  


CREATED BY NIELS FLOOR  


## TEMPLATES - COACHING TECHNIQUES

The clusters' coding is as follows :

■ Connecting with emotions - red

■ Finding direction - blue

■ Mapping strengths - yellow

■ Thinking in systems - green

■ Completing the picture – white



Career Bingo Cards – FOR PRINTING AND CUTTING

A career that requires ongoing training	A job that requires you to be “on call”	A job that requires a computer	Someone who needs specific tools to do their job	A job that does not require a degree
A job that is mostly physical	A career that helps people	A job that requires compassion	A job that has changing hours	A job that can be done anywhere
Someone who works with food	A job that works with animals	FREE!!	A job that mostly uses your brain	A career that excites you
A career that travels for their job	A job that requires physical contact	A Job that requires a uniform	A job that works with public	A job that works with children
A job that requires a degree	A job that deals with money	A job that requires driving	A job that involves working outside	A job that deals with customers face to face



Career Bingo - Sheet 1

A career that requires ongoing training	A job that requires you to be "on call"	A job that requires a computer	Someone who needs specific tools to do their job	A job that does not require a degree
A job that is mostly physical	A career that helps people	A job that requires compassion	A job that has changing hours	A job that can be done anywhere
Someone who works with food	A job that works with animals	FREE!!	A job that mostly uses your brain	A career that excites you
A career that travels for their job	A job that requires physical contact	A Job that requires a uniform	A job that works with public	A job that works with children
A job that requires a degree	A job that deals with money	A job that requires driving	A job that involves working outside	A job that deals with customers face to face





Career Bingo - Sheet 2

A career that helps people	A job that requires you to be "on call"	A job that deals with customers face to face	Someone who needs specific tools to do their job	A job that does not require a degree
A job that is mostly physical	A Job that requires a uniform	A job that requires compassion	A job that requires a computer	Someone who works with food
A job that can be done anywhere	A job that requires a degree	FREE!!	A job that mostly uses your brain	A career that excites you
A career that travels for their job	A job that requires physical contact	A career that requires ongoing training	A job that works with public	A job that works with children
A job that works with animals	A job that deals with money	A job that requires driving	A job that involves working outside	A job that has changing hours



Career Bingo - Sheet 3

A Job that requires a uniform	A job that does not require a degree	A job that requires a computer	A job that works with animals	A job that requires you to be "on call"
A job that is mostly physical	A career that helps people	A job that deals with money	A job that has changing hours	A job that can be done anywhere
A job that deals with customers face to face	Someone who needs specific tools to do their job	FREE!!	A job that mostly uses your brain	A job that requires a degree
A career that travels for their job	A job that requires physical contact	A career that requires ongoing training	A job that works with public	A job that works with children
A career that excites you	A job that requires compassion	A job that requires driving	A job that involves working outside	Someone who works with food





Career Bingo - Sheet 4

A job that works with public	A job that requires you to be "on call"	A job that requires a computer	Someone who needs specific tools to do their job	A job that requires physical contact
A job that can be done anywhere	A career that helps people	A job that requires compassion	A job that works with animals	A job that is mostly physical
Someone who works with food	A job that has changing hours	FREE!!	A job that mostly uses your brain	A career that excites you
A career that travels for their job	A job that does not require a degree	A Job that requires a uniform	A career that requires ongoing training	A job that works with children
A job that requires a degree	A job that deals with money	A job that requires driving	A job that involves working outside	A job that deals with customers face to face



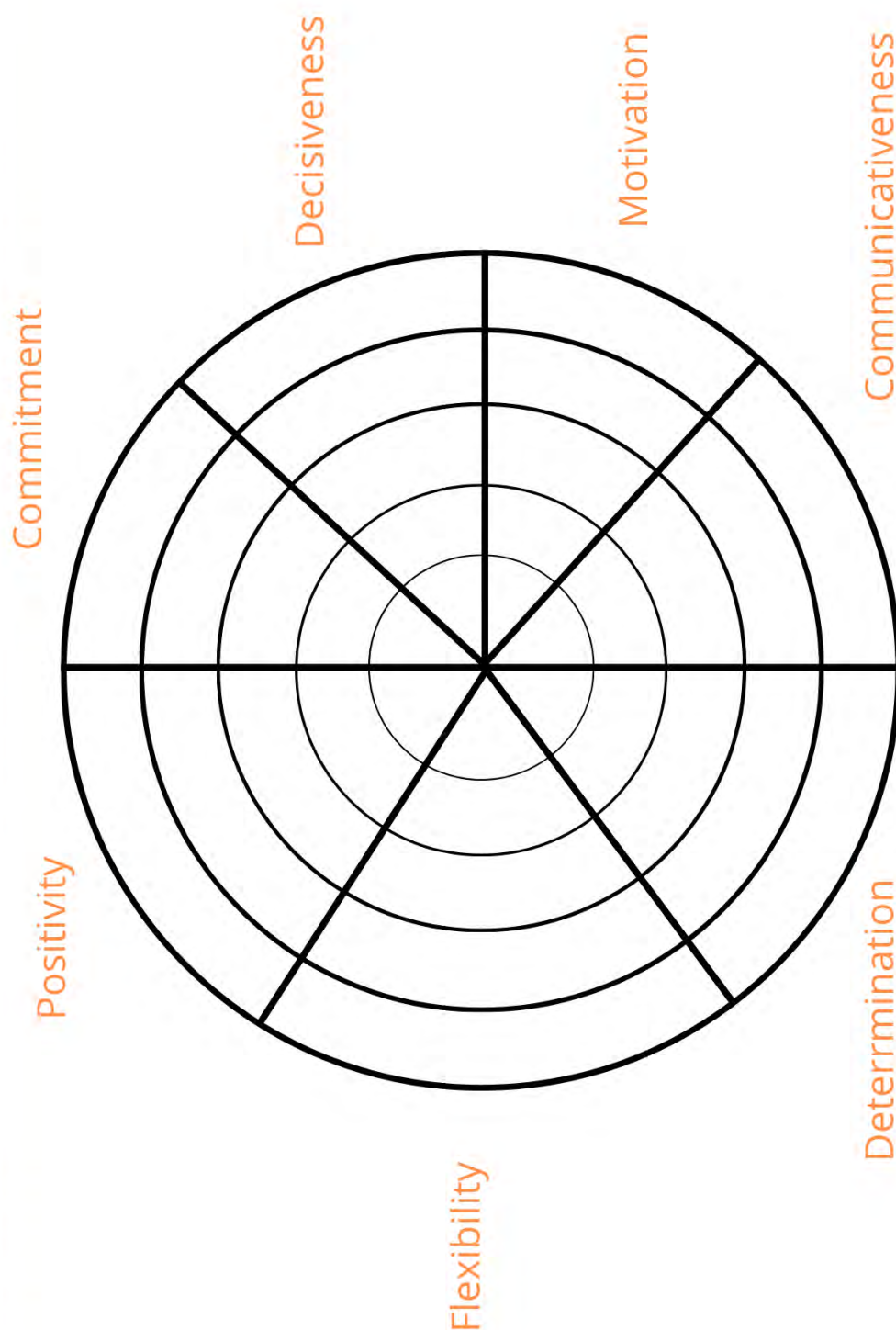
Career Bingo - Sheet 5

A job that works with public	A job that requires you to be "on call"	A career that excites you	Someone who needs specific tools to do their job	A job that does not require a degree
A job that can be done anywhere	A career that helps people	A job that requires compassion	A job that requires driving	A job that is mostly physical
Someone who works with food	A job that mostly uses your brain	FREE!!	A job that works with animals	A job that requires a computer
A career that travels for their job	A job that requires physical contact	A Job that requires a uniform	A career that requires ongoing training	A job that works with children
A job that requires a degree	A job that deals with money	A job that has changing hours	A job that involves working outside	A job that deals with customers face to face



## SELF REFLECTION CIRCLE

Starting from the center of the circle, color in sections 1-5 based on how fulfilled you feel (1= unfulfilled 5= extremely fulfilled).  
Write notes about each topic on the accompanying lines.



# PERSONAL SWOT ANALYSIS

**SWOT Stands for:**

**Skills**

**Weaknesses**

**Opportunities**

**Threats**

**We all have personal strengths and areas to improve on. We all have opportunities to try and challenges to overcome!!!**

**Understanding your personal SWOT makes all the difference**



## On completing this booklet you should be able to.....

- **Know what you are good at**
- **Understand what resources and advantages you have**
- **Recognise areas where you can improve**
- **look at the obstacles that are preventing you from moving forward.**
- **Keep a note of things you have to deal with right now**
- **Note opportunities you can try**



# SWOT ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

## STRENGTHS

What do you do well?

How are you unique?

What strengths do others see in you?

abilities / traits / behaviours



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# SWOT ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

## WEAKNESSES

What could you improve?

What resources do you have?

What weaknesses might others see in you?

abilities / traits / behaviours



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# SWOT ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

## OPPORTUNITIES

What opportunities are open to you?

What trends could you act on?

How can you turn your strengths into action?

your situation and you



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# SWOT ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

What risks/challenges do you face?

What competition do you face?

How do your weaknesses leave you open to threat?

your situation and you



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The <b>GOAL</b> My goal is....	The <b>WHY</b> I want to accomplish this goal because....	The <b>HOW</b> I know I can do it because.....	The <b>WHEN</b> I will know I have met this goal when.....	The <b>PLAN</b> These are the steps I will take to make it happen.....





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