



Facilitator Handbook #1

STEPS TOWARD ACTION

**EMPOWERMENT FOR
SELF-RESPONSIBLE
INITIATIVE**

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STEPS TOWARD ACTION

**EMPOWERMENT FOR
SELF-RESPONSIBLE INITIATIVE**

**Help your learners to discover their
vision and to turn it into concrete
civic engagement**

The handbook is part of the series "Tools for facilitators", created as a part of an Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership Collaboration.



MitOst

SKORO

SÜDWIND
GLOBALISIERT
GERECHTIGKEIT



WORKING
BETWEEN
CULTURES

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A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

Why and for whom?

How can we best inspire for personal, professional and societal development? As editors from different organizations representing the fields of empowerment, community development, and education, this is our guiding question.

In an Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership collaboration we identify best practices from education and learning. Together we elaborate on how to strengthen the key competencies of individuals. A key issue in this process is empowering young people with different social background to act as responsible and active citizens. One of the outcomes of our collaboration is a series of handbooks created for anyone from the field of formal or non-formal education or active in local or global organizations.

Whether you work as a teacher, tutor, trainer, facilitator, group leader, educator, or a volunteer in civic initiatives with others – we hope our facilitator handbooks will be useful to you.

Facilitator handbooks

This handbook is the first part of four printed publications:

- Publication 1 deals with facilitating responsible initiatives
- Publication 2 deals with facilitating and planning experiential and holistic learning
- Publication 3 deals with stimulating creativity; using art, culture, and holistic expression as tools of empowerment
- Publication 4 deals with learning within European, global, and international contexts

Competendo.net - Tools for facilitators

In addition to the handbooks, our on-line toolbox offers information on a broad range of topics, from active citizenship education to the theoretical aspects of a broad range of educational approaches. Competendo is free of charge and is an open educational resource.

www.competendo.net

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GLOSSARY



OUTSET: THE FIRST STEPS TOWARD ACTION

All civic engagements begin with motivation and inspiration. The first chapters of this handbook discuss how to help people identify their inner motivations for initiating social change and self-development. The instructor, trainer, or teacher has a crucial role in this regard. In this light, we emphasize the idea of facilitation – a role that involves supporting, inspiring, and trusting in the capacities of learners.

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 stress the question of the "why" of civic engagement. This entails the needs of target groups, reflecting on personal motivations and what a democratic and cooperative attitude towards activism can look like.

Crucial for any successful engagement is the development of social competence. To this end, chapter 7 emphasizes team building, team culture and how teams can learn to shape their work in an open and accessible way.

Following the main title of this handbook "steps toward action", chapter 8 presents tools and ideas for facilitators to help people or teams transform their visions step-by-step into real, authentic and responsible civic initiatives.

Glossary

Writing a handbook by and for people from diverse backgrounds who work in a great range of educational contexts can be difficult. The glossary at the end of this publication will help to foster a common understanding of key words.

Copy, share, connect

We have published the content of our online toolbox COMPETENDO under a CC Creative Commons License. Please feel free to use, share, and develop these materials within your educational context. The Facilitator Handbooks are available for free download. We also encourage you to share your feedback, your approaches, and your visions of active citizenship education.

Contact info: editors@competendo.net



Competendo toolbox for facilitators

Want to know more? Our online toolbox gives you additional information, outlines additional potential methods, and discusses the theory behind planning, conducting, and evaluating empowering learning processes in greater detail.

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Legend:

Throughout the publication we use 3 types of labels:



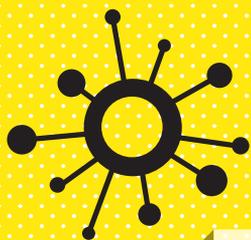
Under the label “Case Study” you will find concrete examples from real life that address a certain topic from the chapter.



Pay attention to the label “Task” if you are searching for tasks or methods for how to work with your group on a certain topic.



The label “Checklist” contains tools for individual reflection.



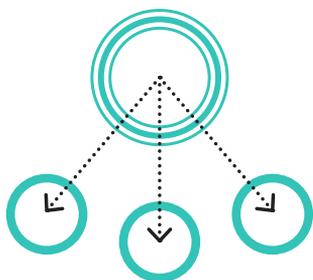
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

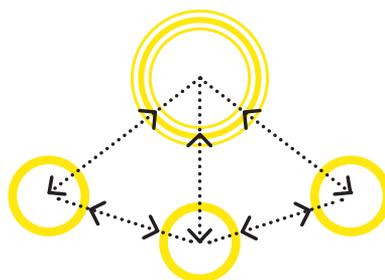
From teaching to facilitating

Facilitating a training in non-formal educational settings can be very different than the kind of teaching that takes place in schools. Traditionally, a teacher is a person who primarily disseminates knowledge. Facilitation, on the other hand, involves accompanying people during a learning process in which they develop competencies. Facilitators create the right conditions for individuals to form knowledge and skills in a self-directed way, according to their specific needs. This is one aspect of empowerment. Our profession is better understood with a new definition: a shift from *teaching* to *facilitating*, *moderating*, and *encouraging*.

Teaching vs. facilitating



One directional dissemination of knowledge through a teacher



Accompanying and shaping a learning process together

Focusing on existing knowledge

Facilitation seeks to focus on an individual's pre-existing knowledge, skills, and potential. In teacher-centered learning, the teacher is the cook and hopes that the group will enjoy the dish and its ingredients. In a facilitative approach, everyone cooks. In the best-case scenario, everybody is given the recipe, the ingredients and spices that help him or her best.

This example makes clear that facilitation is more than simply allowing each person to do whatever they want. Facilitators still use specific knowledge. Facilitation involves granting your participants' experience and knowledge more relevance than it has in traditional teaching. In this sense, facilitation is a step toward sharing expertise.

Situational and shared leadership

Knowledge and experience represent the two sides of a coin when it comes to the kinds of learning that take place in facilitation or in traditional teaching. The difference between empowerment and traditional education lies in the attitude toward the target group of people learning. A facilitative attitude seeks to connect experience in a seminar room with, life experiences, and knowledge in the most useful way.

Participants or learners usually know which approaches, topics, and learning styles work well for them. As a facilitator, your methodological skills help them bring their motivation and interests into play, and help foster a collaborative learning process.

Facilitators help learners to find motivation, identify goals, develop action strategies, reflect on their existing skills, and identify challenges.

This has consequences for your position within the group. In traditional educational settings, the role of a facilitator is clear – their place is standing in front of the group. According to our philosophy, this is somewhat different: As facilitators, sometimes we still stand in front of the group, but more often we're in the background, observing from the sidelines, acting as moderators or coaches. Sometimes participants even take the lead.¹

The challenge is to find the position that works best for the learning process as a whole. With regard to your role, you might face specific questions, such as: Do I need to explain something here or should I focus on active group work? What part of the explanation that I have prepared is really useful?

Several roles: stepping into different shoes



Relationships

When the boundaries between facilitator and participants become more fluid, challenges for facilitators can arise. Sharing the same values and vision of a participative and pluralistic civil society is a prerequisite for creating a trusting atmosphere where participants can open themselves to others.

On the other hand, situations continually crop up where facilitators have to give orientation, act as a role model, or inspire others through their own experience or expertise. In contrast to a participant, we must always be prepared to take on responsibility for the group process. Therefore, we should take care to balance personal feelings and affection for the group with the professional mission and concrete goals of the training. Critical self-awareness and a culture of constructive feedback in facilitator teams help to affirm ways of acting appropriately within dynamic group processes.

Increasing participation

Participation refers to the various mechanisms people use to express their opinions and exert influence on social decision-making – whether it's in politics, economics, social, or cultural life. To describe the various levels of citizens' involvement in planning processes, Sherry Arnstein created a “ladder of citizen participation,” which is one of the most recognized models of its kind.²

As shown below, *manipulation* and *therapy* are *non-participative* methods, because they aim to cure or educate participants. They both involve a plan created by an expert, which is considered to be the best.

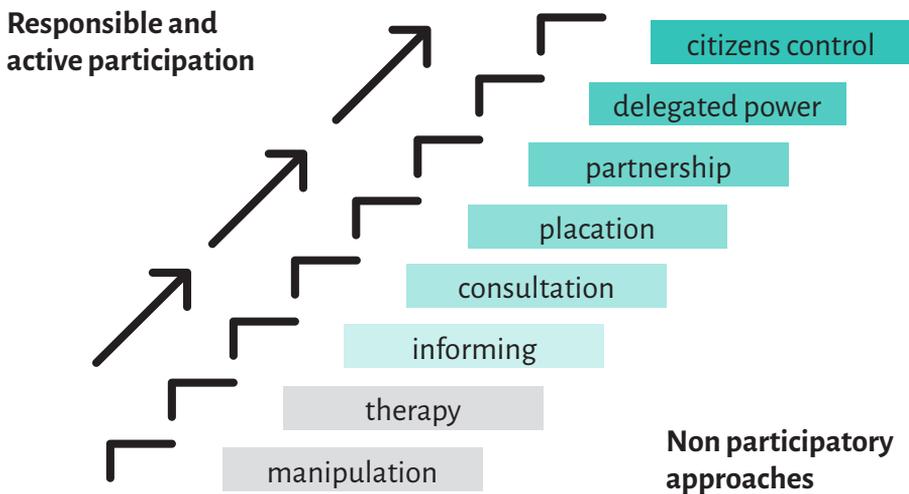
Informing is a good method of participation, but it usually takes the form of a one-way flow of information, with very limited space for feedback. *Consultations* such as asking your participants about two options for the next steps in their learning process (or within a civic initiative, an informational neighborhood meeting) are also good steps toward participation. However they often remain rituals, which do not encourage people to participate actively. *Allowing and accepting feedback* (placation) gives learners the opportunity to share their opinions on an issue, but still retains the right for you as the power-holder to judge the legitimacy or feasibility of participants' opinions.

Genuine participation takes place through *partnership*, in which a negotiation process is used to distribute power between facilitators and the people learning (in a civic engagement, this occurs between citizens and power holders). In this process, *decision-making* is shared. For example, you wouldn't just propose two alternatives, but would ask open-ended questions about

what participants want to learn. You would let them *co-decide* what content and methods they would like to use. Following this logic, the highest level of participation involves people taking action and making decisions about their situations independently. You might *delegate your power to participants* and let them act as experts in front of the group. Or you might have them conduct a training *among themselves*, independently from you. This serves as a peer learning initiative (*citizens control*).

The challenge is to find the position that works best for the learning process as a whole. With regard to your role, you might face specific questions such as: Do I need to explain something here or should I focus on active group work? What part of the explanation that I have prepared is really useful for active participation?

The way to participation



Empowerment

In this publication, we will discuss how facilitators and teachers can promote personal, professional, and social development in the groups with which they work. In light of the ideal form of participation, the crucial question is how to support people to reach the top rungs of the ladder of participation, becoming effective leaders and empowered individuals with their social groups, communities and societies as a whole.

Since the possibilities for participation are related to power, the fundamental didactical approach we promote is *empowerment*.

On an individual level, empowerment is feeling, accepting, and using one's individual power to take self-motivated independent action. In education and training, empowerment can be understood as a process of gaining competencies in public social activity, cooperative self-organization, and involvement in public decision-making. Empowerment for successful civil engagement addresses the dimension of power in social activities.

Empowerment

Empowerment is a process of promoting skills in public social activity, cooperative organization, and involvement in public decision-making. It deals with questions like:

- How do you gain power?
- How do you use power?
- How do you shape power relations?
- How can you influence socially relevant conversations and decisions?

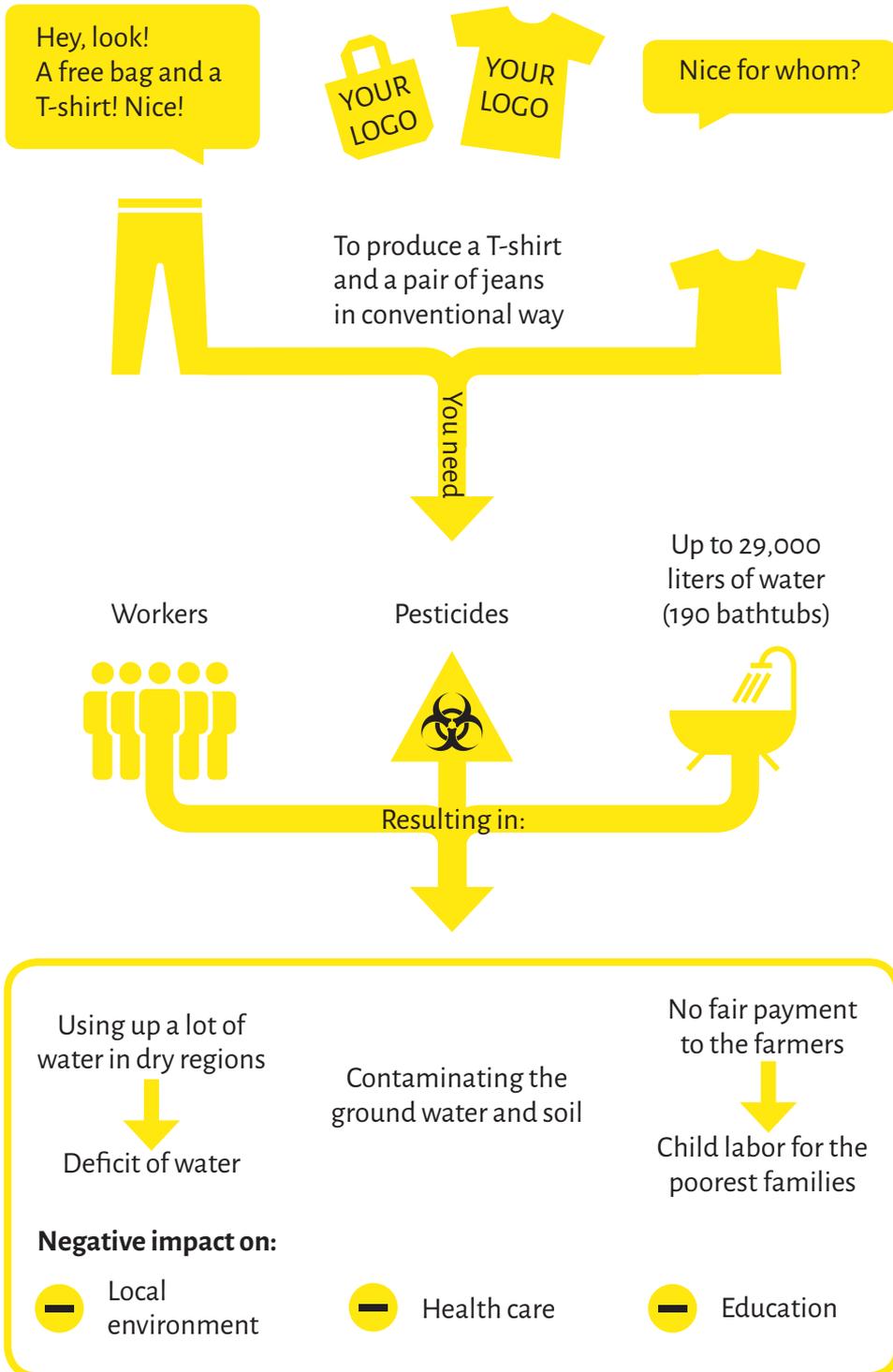
Act locally, think globally: The global dimensions of local learning

The concrete actions we take during a workshop, training, or conference have either a positive or negative *global impact*. While many actions aim to improve something, in our experience, the result is often the unwitting abuse of people in other regions.

Imagine that you are organizing a training, meeting, or conference about your *local environment, health care situation, or educational system*. In the preparation phase, you ordered some nice t-shirts and tote bags with your logo on them as promotional items to give away. The global impact of this local event is connected to the production of the cotton used in the shirts and the bags.

Although you are organizing an event to support the environment, health care, or education, your event might have negative effects on a global level, which is the exact opposite of what you want to achieve. In this case, you could reduce the negative effects and even contribute to the global good by using fair-trade, organic cotton. Fair-trade items ensure that farmers receive a stable, usually higher salary than normal; organic cotton reduces the use of water and the amount of pesticides.³

When things work on a local level, but not on a global level.



Below you will find further ideas for planning your workshops in a globally responsible way:



Checklist for greater sustainability and fairness at your event:

- Under which social and environmental conditions is the *coffee* you provide produced?
- How do you serve *water*? In disposable plastic bottles? In reusable ones? Is it possible to serve tap water instead?
- Which *fruits* do you offer during breaks and where do they come from?
- Carefully plan the amount of meat to be served in your catering. *Meat consumption* is one of the most significant contributors to global warming. Why not go vegetarian for the meeting?
- What *materials* will you use during your training? What is their environmental impact? Are they reusable?
- If possible, *reuse* the back sides of flipchart paper or moderation cards. The paper is manufactured from wood, a process that consumes energy.
- The *transportation* industry is another major global contributor to global warming. How do your participants get to the training? Is public transport possible?

An important side effect of any training is the raised awareness that happens during the event. As a trainer and an organizer, you are seen as a role model. Why not make use of this to do something useful, such as promote a sustainable and globally aware approach to a broad range of concrete situations?⁴

Whatever we do in our trainings, programs, and events, and whatever we want to achieve, there is a good chance it might involve some degree of using and abusing the poverty of people in other parts of the world. If you want to change something for the better in your community, it shouldn't change something for the worse or perpetuate negative situations in other parts of the world.

1. Nils-Eyk Zimmermann: Learning Companion for Facilitators 2016; Theodor-Heuss-Kolleg; p. 3
 2. S. Arnstein: A ladder of citizen participation; Journal of the American Institute of Planners; 1969
 3. Making a simple pair of jeans takes around 8,000 liters of water.
www.pan-germany.org/download/br_konv.pdf, Feb. 4th, 2016
 4. You can find many other articles addressing this topic.
www.chathamhouse.org/publication/changing-climate-changing-diets, Feb 4th, 2016



Chapter 2

EQUIPPING INDIVIDUALS WITH SKILLS FOR ACTION

The general ideas behind this publication are based on shaping and strengthening individuals' *key competencies*. Thanks to *key competencies*, people can integrate what they've learned into their lives as active citizens and agents for social change. In this way, the result of a learning process is not only knowledge, but also practical skills and attitudes.

Competence-centered learning processes cover the broad set of skills, types of knowledge, and attitudes necessary for successful action in modern society. They help individuals develop *key competencies* and an open attitude to lifelong learning. Achievement of goals and the feeling that learning is relevant occur when learners activate and apply knowledge and skills in concrete situations. This might take place at work, during free time, as part of a public engagement, or in the private sphere. When competencies are universal, they are called "transversal" or "key competencies."

A key competency is more than just knowledge or a skill. It is an ability to meet complex demands, by drawing on and mobilizing psychosocial resources (including skills and attitudes) in a particular context.¹

Active learning

Within any learning process, there is a difference between the cognitive mobilization of knowledge and active learning. Facilitating the acquisition of competencies has been well described by the European Center for the Development of Vocational Training puts it: "The cognitive approach tends to emphasize the individual acquisition of certain kinds of learning, while approaches based on ideas of active learning tend to emphasize the dynamic role of social relationships and the situations in which learning takes place."²

Competence-centered learning is especially useful for trainings to promote *changes in attitudes* and the *active implementation of these changes* in participants' everyday lives and societies.

First of all, participants need opportunities to practice: They need to engage in trial and error learning in the form of project work, study visits, and simulations. A *spirit of cooperation* is especially important in making social change sustainable – participants in trainings can learn how to involve relevant stakeholders and the public, or apply more conscious communication strategies and styles. The success of a training begins with how your participants incorporate this spirit of cooperation already at the team level, where diverse opinions are moderated and transparent decisionmaking is applied.

Emphasizing applicability

If you are familiar with the current definition of Human Rights, you may also act as a Human Rights activist and advocate for this idea. A cognitive approach to Human Rights Education would focus on the content of the declaration of Human Rights and other key texts. However, there are many competencies beyond knowledge that you need to be a successful advocate. Many of them are relevant for *successful action*, such as presentation skills, strategic thinking, and involving supporters.

The example shows us that knowledge, personal attitudes, and skills all change together during the learning process. Therefore *we need a new definition for the result of learning*, one that includes the process of non-formal learning and understands knowledge as coming from different learning environments. Intellectually, this advocates for a broad competence-based understanding of learning: "*Learning outcomes are statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do after completion of learning.*"³ In terms of organizing learning, the interdependency of different learning opportunities needs to be reflected in our educational concepts.

Evaluative and reflective skills

Observation, analysis, and drawing conclusions based on observation (evaluation) are also important skills in the development of competencies. These capacities help people transform experience into changed behavior, which in turn provides the basis for new experience. If learning is a lifelong process, learners need the capacity to observe themselves and to draw conclusions in a conscious and targeted way. Personal motivation is a good starting point: What is my passion, what would I like to see changed? Other important starting points for action are the surrounding environment, a problem, a need, or a shared vision.

Fostering positive attitudes toward self-learning

Lifelong learning outside of schools and universities requires that *learners identify their challenges, needs, and motivations* for self-development, as well as for social development. It also requires a capacity for self-discipline to overcome challenges successfully in a constructive way. In this sense, becoming an active citizen is a process of self-development. Therefore, *empowerment strengthens a sense of personal responsibility* and the capacity for self-development.

The attitudes facilitators and teachers have toward their participants play a key role here. Should we strengthen participants' motivation or decide ourselves what appears best for our learners? Give inspiration as a stimulus for discovering new opportunities, or limit the space for opportunities by giving (too much) advice? Facilitation is about incorporating and showing an *optimistic, confident attitude* that our learners are then able to develop and implement themselves.

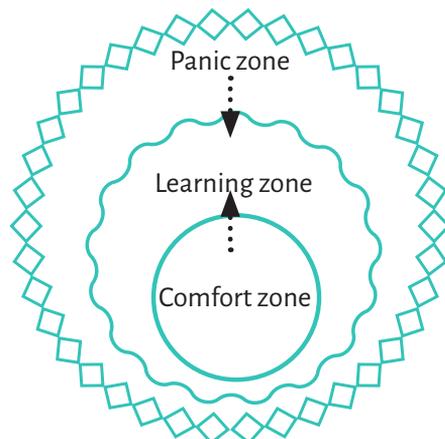
The learning zone in civic engagement

With regard to civic engagement, becoming an active individual is an intense emotional process. On the one hand, it's playful and inspiring; on the other it's connected to feelings such as uncertainty, anxiety, disappointment, and sometimes frustration. Empowerment prepares learners for facing the positive and negative aspects of civic engagement.

Lifelong learning is about a constantly narrowing your panic zone by widening your learning and comfort zones. One way of achieving this is to take part in various initiatives in your local community or support others in doing so.

When learners experience something for the first time, they often ask themselves questions such as: Can I do this? Do I know enough? What should I do? This uncertainty is an indication of the fact that they are *leaving their comfort zone and entering the learning zone*.⁴

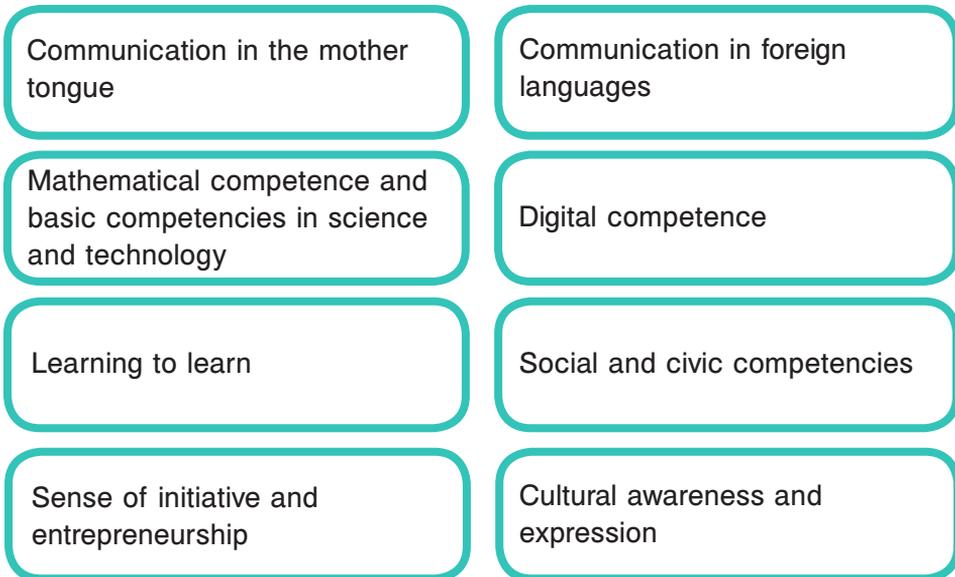
From some situations we learn that it can be good to be uncertain.



If you feel helpless and panicky however, it means that you're in the panic zone, and that the learning process isn't working anymore. Keeping people within their learning zones means maintaining a healthy balance of uncertainty and control. People who begin to panic need structure and simplicity to be able to return to their learning zone. Those that are less passionate or too relaxed need to be challenged.

Lifelong learning: Key competencies

The 2006 recommendations on “key competencies for lifelong learning” introduce (at the EU level) a reference framework for key competencies. This includes definitions of eight transversal competencies. Competencies are defined here as a “*combination of knowledge, skills, and attitudes appropriate to the context.*”⁵



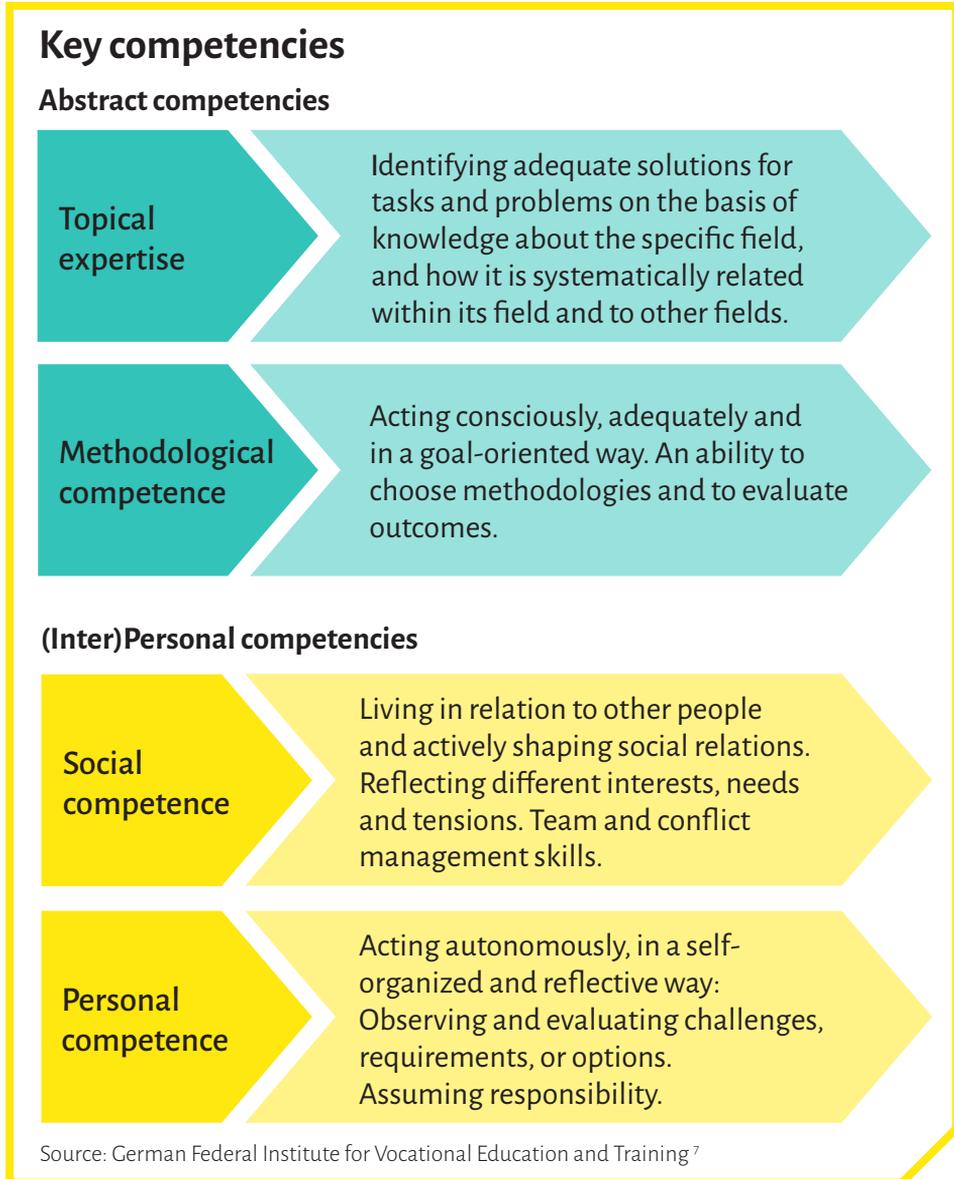
The European Key Competencies⁶ show how broadly competence-based learning contributes to personal and social development, within a given society.

Personal competence

All change begins with an individual's *self-perception* as a potential change-maker and with an individual's ability to relate with other individuals or groups. Therefore, empowerment focuses primarily on the development of people's *personal competence* and *social competence*. For sustainable citizenship education, competence frameworks need to give these social and personal competences enough importance. In order to create a holistic learning experience, they need to balance the topical and methodological development

of competencies with a gain in social and individual competence.

The German Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training provides one example of how this may be described in concrete learning environments.



Theory, especially written by others, can sometimes be challenging to apply practically. In the following case study you will see how organizing a small local project can lead to the development of skills, competencies and knowledge in the organizers and the target group.



Case study: Applying key competencies

A team organized an environmental workshop for young people. The participants decided to organize a cleaning event in a nearby forest, where they and their neighbors collected garbage. Now the team examines the chart of the key competencies (page 19) and tries to describe the educational impact of this project.

For your organization, you could define such levels of competence development with the help of this model with greater precision. This will help you later on in describing and validating the development of competencies of your team and target group.

Competence fields		Thematic areas
	Example: Acting as an active citizen	Example: Planning skills
Topical expertise	Knowledge about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · concepts of civil society · the environment 	Knowledge about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · personal goal setting · the team · social impact · time management
Methodological competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Active experience with a small project · Experience in organizing a workshop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Applying goal setting models · Planning teamwork with task plans · Applying models of impact description to the project plan · Planning the project work by setting milestones, taking into consideration the scheduled appointments and with respect to personal life · Incorporating democratic decision-making mechanisms

Social competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Collaboration in a project team · Collaboration with youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · An exchanging on individual cooperation styles, discussing different needs · Applying the concept to these needs · Assigning tasks division based on the specific qualities and needs of team members
Personal competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Reflecting on one's own leadership style. · Reflecting on one's personal attitude to civic engagement. 	<p>...</p>



You can find more theory and methods for this topic online at **www.competendo.net**

Understanding → Competencies

Understanding → Experiential learning

Before → Planning

After → Validation and identification of learning outcomes

1. OECD The Definition and Selection of Key Competencies: www.oecd.org/pisa/35070367.pdf
2. European Center for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop): The shift to learning outcomes policies and practices in Europe; Cedefop Reference series; Thessaloniki 2009; p. 35
3. Ibid p.18
4. Heike Fahrur, Nils-Eyk Zimmermann, Eliza Skowron: Initiative Cookbook - Homemade Civic Engagement - An Introduction to Project Management; Berlin 2016; www.theodor-heuss-kolleg.de/service/materials/initiative-cookbook/; p. 33
5. European Commission/European Parliament 2006: Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competencies for lifelong learning; <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=O:L:2006:394:TOC>
6. Description of each of the eight Key Competences in: "The Youthpass Guide"; section A.4: www.youthpass.eu/en/youthpass/downloads/guide/
7. Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB): K. Hensge, B. Lorig, D. Schreiber: Kompetenzstandards in der Berufsausbildung; Abschlussbericht Forschungsprojekt 4.3.201 (JFP 2006)



Chapter 3

INSPIRING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT



More than by just talking or taking specific actions, we change the world by living out our ideas.

Marta Gawinek-Dagargulia, international trainer and facilitator.

No matter how many opportunities and capacities we may have already, each participant can take greater responsibility, initiate social change, and acquire skills. For facilitators, there is a range of different ways to motivate others to take an active role in their communities – whether it is encouraging people to take action, or simply promoting attitudes that don't require any additional action or effort. Teachers and facilitators already have the potential and capacity to inspire others without needing to make much additional effort or start new projects. Let's take a closer look at the various possibilities.

To be inspired means to be stimulated to take action. To get surprised. To discover opportunities, to combat challenges. To be encouraged to make an effort, to feel enthusiastic and self-confident. Inspiration comes from the inside and is a mirror of an individual's spiritual state, desires, and expectations.¹

What is not inspiring:

- When you *overwhelm* your learners with a lot of ideas or opportunities that they don't understand (yet).
- When you *direct cognitive process too forcefully* and participants don't discover the whole range of opportunities that might otherwise appear to them.
- When you *evaluate your learners' ideas* as adequate, reflective, or utopian. Evaluation at this point is limiting, whereas inspiration presents opportunity.

What is inspiring:



Beliefs and values:

- Trusting in participants' ideas and capacities to do things on their own
- Showing fairness and honesty: truthfulness, honoring arrangements, fulfillment of tasks on time, keeping promises you made to your participants, transparency as to how you want to achieve your goals
- Allowing space for experimentation and making mistakes
- Staying aligned with your own values and passions and showing it
- Building relationships based on empathy, transparency, and fairness



Teacher's/facilitator's attitude:

- Being aware of the power of words: motivating, building self-esteem, encouraging
- Critical thinking, accepting feedback about your own actions
- An orientation toward problem solving and showing creativity in the face of challenges
- Showing acceptance and understanding, focusing on lessons learned and emphasizing successes



Actions toward participants:

- Encouraging participants to make independent decisions
- Encouraging participants to face new challenges by getting out of their comfort zone and into their learning zone
- Leaving space for reflection and fostering conscious learning through action
- Encouraging participants to ask for help if needed

How far does inspiration go?

As a facilitator, you can inspire learners to assume active social positions in different ways—either smoothly, almost invisibly, or explicitly. What you choose depends on the learners' needs and on your personality.

The following collection of quotes about inspiration shows a wide range of approaches, from conscious restraint to direct invitation.

Let things be. Devote time, attention, and appreciation.

“My mom always made sure I held back from time to time (you don't have to do everything, make some space for others to be active!)”

Marta Kozłowska, academic and social activist

Ask questions, support people in taking new directions

“My trainer never just gave me the answer to something, but instead asked thought-provoking questions that made me re-examine my old patterns of behavior.”

Marta Gawinek - Dagargulia, international trainer and facilitator

Name strengths and potentials, help to uncover resources

“I refused to do a certain task, saying ‘No way, I can't do that, I am disabled. The final product won't be any good.’ My former boss said ‘You're great, you'll manage.’”

Barbara Lisowska, Association for the Fight against Lung Cancer , office manager

Address socially relevant issues openly, foster critical thinking

“Many participants (and colleagues) in various workshops and seminars have motivated me with their dedication, empathy, intelligent analysis, and clarity—even when dealing with very serious topics.”

Heike Fahrún, freelance trainer and editor

Make your values clear and follow them rigorously

“I knew a teacher at a primary school who was confident about his values. He spoke about them clearly, he was dedicated, demanding, took care to foster emotional connections (he would smile, give a pat on the shoulder, he saw each of us as an individual), and talked to us with respect.”

Joanna Dryk, educator Syntonia Association

Be a role model, share personal stories of engagement

“I watched a mentor and old co-worker of mine devote his life to building relationships with many different types of people. He was articulate and genuinely cared for the people he met and became really connected to them(...) I witnessed many young people learn to believe in themselves and respect themselves because he demonstrated this in the way he lived his life.”

Candace Hetchler , project manager

Invite others to engage with what you enjoy

“When I was at school, I was very inspired by a teacher who loved theater. She had a true passion for it and she exposed us to theater in many different ways: We went to nearby theaters, spent a whole week in Warsaw and Cracow and went to the theater every evening, wrote reviews, and acted in a school play. She was eager to share her passion and her feelings.”

Magda Lapshin, trainer and head of board, Genius Loci Association

Start with “Why”

The way that we talk about our initiatives or projects is another way to be inspirational and motivational without being explicit. When people talk about their work, they usually start by answering the question, “What do I do?” and “How am I different from others?” Not many people manage to get to the core question, “Why am I doing this?” Research shows that the most inspiring people and organizations, regardless of their activity field, stick to this narrative model, beginning with the impact of their work. ²



Task: Why + How + What

1. Start by answering the question *Why?* What's your purpose? What's your cause? What are your beliefs? Why does your organization exist? Why do you get out of bed in the morning? And why should others care? (“To make a profit” is not an answer here. Money is an outcome of something you stand behind.)
2. Answer the question *How?* How does your initiative/project correspond with your beliefs? How do your deeds mirror your values? How does your idea/ organization differ from others?
3. Finish by answering the question *What?* What is your concrete idea? What is your project/initiative? What is your “final product”?

WHY?

+

HOW?

+

WHAT?

Inspired by Simon Sinek: “How great leaders inspire action”:
www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action

This task has the advantage of reaching out to other people in a very understandable and efficient way. We start with our beliefs and feelings, which are strongly responsible for empathy and behavior. Then we allow people to rationalize it with the tangible things we say and do. What we do serves as the proof of what we believe.³ The goal is not just to find people who need something from us or from the initiative; it's to find people who share our beliefs. If your participants take people on board a project just because they can do a job, they'll work for monetary gratification. But if team members or supporters share beliefs, they'll work with passion and commitment.⁴

Balancing closeness and distance

“ ”

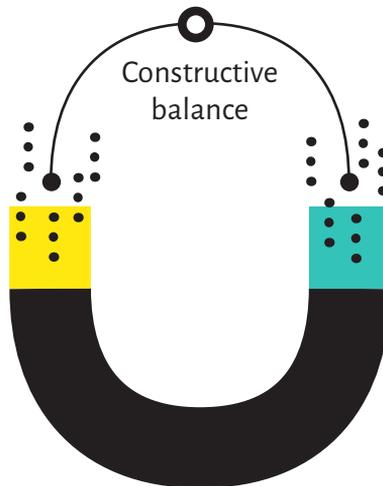
“A teacher I met at my orientation day told everyone she would have dinner with you if you had problems and no one to speak to. She never told other people what to do, she provided guidance and support, she fostered people's growth, she shared her resources and inspiration, she admitted her weaknesses and shared her battles.”

Diana Chobanyan, EcoLab, Armenia

Like Diana, many of us meet inspiring people over the course of our lives. They are our teachers, mothers, uncles, bosses, popular people from public life, personalities from history, and even fictional characters from books or films. They reach us through different channels, one of which is the advanced level of *personal relation*. But to claim that as teachers or facilitators we need to develop close relationships with our students or participants in order to be motivational is like taking a path without knowing where it will lead us. Yes, deep relationships can help people to find a common language, but inspiring and motivating others involves more than *addressing their hearts*. We have to *address their minds* as well. So before we form deep relationships with our students and participants, it is helpful to reflect on the situation. Being aware of the risks and potential positive outcomes helps us to control this process more effectively.

Deepening relations with participants and students

Focus on relation,
lack of interest in
learning outcome



Focus on outcome,
lack of interest
in personalities

Our actions depend on the needs and expectations of the people involved as well as the situation, which means that for every person, we have to find a different solution.

Potential risks

Putting greater effort into developing empathy costs us extra time and energy.

We are not objective and lose a necessary distance from certain people or situations.

People might lose themselves in just spending time together when relationships become the most important element.

Difficulties in the relationship might impair the project.

Having the same friends at work as you do socially might result in a lack of space from these relationships.

Potential positive outcomes

We gain a lot more informal information about people we work with, so we understand their needs better.

We can speak "their language" and address their interests in the best way.

We gain more informal information about the environments and conditions people live in.

Cooperation might be boosted tremendously by a strong relationship.

The same friends at work and in our free time – truly developing our passion and feeling fulfilled all the time.



You can find more theory and methods for this topic online at www.competendo.net

Understanding → Experiential learning
Before → My attitude as a facilitator

1. Słownik Języka Polskiego PWN: <http://sjp.pwn.pl/sjp/inspiracja;2466388.html> & Brogan, T.V.F. "Inspiration" in Alex Preminger and T.V.F. Brogan, *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, Princeton University Press, 1993
2. Simon Sinek "Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action", 2011
3. Ibid
4. Simon Sinek, leadership expert, author, TED-Talker: "How great leaders inspire action", TEDx: https://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action



Interview with Maja Stelmach: philosopher, teacher, scout

Maja Stelmach studied philosophy and pedagogy, and teaches ethics in two high schools. She is also writing her thesis on pedagogy at the University of Warsaw. In all her activities, she applies what she has learned in the Scout Movement, where for the past few years she has been responsible for training the future crew.

What kind of groups do you support in becoming socially active?

I work primarily with teenage Girl Scouts from 15 to 19 years old. Under my supervision, some of them are preparing to become tutors. I also work with youth of the same age in high schools, where I teach ethics.

What does it mean to be active?

Being active involves any action a person takes that is driven by their freedom of choice. This relates to all the conscious activities an individual agrees to.

Why are you active?

It's natural for people to be active, but the activities we choose consciously are what makes us happy. Happiness is what we strive for in life, by making a path to reach it. Being active is striving for happiness.

What kinds of conditions help you take action?

I assume people do things they want to, so it follows that there is no unselfish action. People always see some purpose in their action. One of my reasons for taking action is the feeling and recognition that the activity develops in me, and the fact that I gain something from it, something that helps me personally.

So how has your initiative changed you specifically?

I'm always joking that when I'm on a trip with my students or Girl Scouts, automatically switch into a "super-hero" mode. It's not an artificial or forced attitude, I'm not pretending to be someone else. It's just that taking responsibility for others and for the success of an operation automatically makes me more resourceful, more rational, less shy, more articulate, etc. When I'm back in my everyday life, most of those characteristics disappear, but I am richer with the knowledge of what I'm capable of, or who I really am.

Thanks to my work with Girl Scouts, I am seriously pursuing what I like, which is visiting new and interesting places. Working with my scout team, my “Wędrowniczki” team, means organizing trips together, which is the main way of reaching the group's common goals. It is also thanks to this experience that I decided to start teaching in high school.

How can you tell if being active will be beneficial for your students' development?

Happiness is the development of human nature and the potential inside of each person. Developing my students means developing who they are. They need to reflect on themselves and their genuine interests and needs. They are the only ones who can take responsibility for themselves and decide in which direction they want to develop.

What steps should a student take before starting this activity?

After answering the question: “Who am I?” which is the basis of self-development, the next question is “What do I want to achieve?” which is the same as “What do I need to be happier?” It's the students themselves who set the goals and who know their own needs best. Only then can the teacher help in planning how to achieve these goals step by step.



Task: Crucial questions

Ask participants to fill out two checklists, one after another.

1. Who am I?

Your role in society; Skills and characteristics; Topical interest;

2. What do I need to be happier?

Tasks in a team and your team role; Learning goals; Challenges;

You find a detailed checklist on Competendo under: Crucial questions

3. How?

Building on your answers, a next step might be to start to work on ideas for projects or initiatives, i. e Associations (p. 44) or Envelopes (p.64)

What is the teacher's role at the beginning of this process?

A teacher can raise doubts, ask questions, and encourage students to reflect on the learning process. The most important role of the teacher, however, is to trust that their students know themselves well enough to know what is best. A teacher's trust fosters student responsibility. If a teacher wants a

student to assume responsibility, he/she should delegate this responsibility fully, and totally trust that the student can do it.

Another point is to create a friendly environment that fosters growth among students and helps them to discover and stay in their learning zones. Teachers can create such learning environments and encourage and support their students in not slipping into the comfort or panic zone.

As an instructor, have you ever been in a situation where you trusted a student fully and got disappointed?

I haven't had a situation like this yet, but maybe this is a mistake in my educational work. A disappointment like this reveals certain boundaries to our possibilities (at least temporary boundaries). It's difficult to truly grow without being aware of where our borders are and how can we overcome them. It's important for the students to know what they can cope with, what they can't cope with yet, and what is beyond their ability.

What sorts of things should a teacher always be aware of in this process?

If a teacher encourages a student to take action in the right way, all the results of the work are elaborated on by the student as they fully assume responsibility. This means the student will probably underestimate the role the teacher played in this process and not fully appreciate it. This might be difficult for the teacher from a psychological point of view, but if so, it reveals a lot about their expectations toward their students.

Can you think of a situation where no action is better than taking action?

Yes. For example, when my action doesn't derive from who I am and what my real needs are, but is based on some contrived "me," who isn't real. I also think that being active for the sake of being active is harmful, if it is not related to personal development. Activity is not a value in and of itself unless it leads to somebody's development. If by developing myself I inspire others to do the same, I have probably chosen the right profession. And if I don't develop myself, I should stop helping others in being more active and first help myself.

Thank you very much!



Chapter 4

WHY DO PEOPLE GET INVOLVED?

Let's face it: inspiring teachers, facilitators, and other people are not the only reason why students and participants get socially involved. People have many different reasons for working for the social good – psychological advantages, internalized values, social norms, or (in)direct profit. Take a moment to consider your own motivations.



Checklist: Examine your reasons for getting socially involved

Please mark the most suitable answers for you personally. Choose a maximum of 3 answers.¹

- I want to feel needed and helpful
- In my opinion working with others is a worthwhile endeavor
- I receive sympathy and respect from people
- It gives me the possibility to be in a group and make new contacts
- I cannot remain indifferent towards social issues and problems
- I do not agree with social inequality and people's suffering
- I enjoy social engagement
- I think everybody needs to be useful in life
- I think we ought to help others
- I want to contribute to changing the world for the better
- I can gain new competencies and experience in my profession and personal life
- It lets me spend my free time in an interesting way
- It allows me to do what I am passionate about or interested in
- My voluntary service will be useful to myself and to my family
- It helps me to solve my own problems
- If I help others now, later on others will help me
- I cannot say "no"
- My friends and family are doing it
- Other:



Task: Reasons for getting involved

Have team members fill out the checklist on the preceding page. Encourage them to compare their answers:

- Where did it take longer to decide?
- What was easy to identify?
- Where do you see similarities?
- Where are there different motivations?

Diverse motivations

When motivating others to take action, we tend to concentrate on the reasons we find the most appealing for ourselves. In doing so, we narrow the range of possible supporters, collaborative partners, and team members. Not only do we reduce our chances of motivating others, but the people who are motivated by our reasons generally resemble us. The less diverse the people involved, the less diverse their ideas, the smaller the representation of social groups, and the narrower the range of people that the ideas will reach. ²

A survey on voluntary work for social good in Polish society ³ shows that there are three main sources of motivation:

- Egocentric (receiving long-term profits from social engagement)
- Empathetic (reducing others' suffering)
- Normative (adapting to social rules)

What will motivate people for future engagement:

The survey is also aimed at people who are not yet involved in volunteer services. When asked, "Which argument sounds like a convincing reason for taking civic action?" people answered as follows:

Moral values:

Possibility of living one's own values	78%
Enjoyment, satisfaction, a feeling of fulfillment	77%
Possibility of changing the world for the better	73%

Investment in the future:

It could be useful to me and to my family	67%
Possibility of solving one's own problems	62%

Direct profit:

Possibility of gaining new competencies and experience in professional and private life 72%

Possibility of spending free time in an interesting way 65%

Possibility of developing interests and passions 64%

Social motivation:

Feeling needed and helpful 83%

Possibility of cooperation with others 76%

Getting sympathy and respect from people 77%

Possibility of being in a group and making new contacts 77%

Moral values and empathy are not the main motivators for people getting involved in activities for social good. To create a realistic picture of activism, it's definitely necessary to present the variety of beneficial results, both for the beneficiaries of social engagement and for the activists themselves.

Expected mutuality:

If I help others now, later on others will help me 76%

Depicting activism realistically

People who aren't involved in social engagement share an idealistic picture of a person who is socially engaged. According to the survey, this is another intrinsic reason why people who consider themselves "normal" cannot imagine themselves in the role of a "super-person." In order to bring this role into the scope of reality, we need to take volunteers down from their imagined pedestal by creating a realistic image of them. We need to show them with all their doubts and points to improve upon, as well as their strengths, ideals, and learning goals.

- Usefulness and profit are seen as important motivations for engagement. Ask how your participants might gain from volunteerism personally.
- Reflect on the characteristics of your participants' role models for activism. Discuss their altruistic and their egoistic aspects, as well as the pros and cons of their activities.
- Encourage participants to think about which expectations regarding the ethical characteristics of an activist they might fulfill, partly fulfill or not fulfill.

Trust helps people get involved

In our experience and those of the people mentioned in the survey, there are three main characteristics that socially engaged people share. All three of them rely on trusting other people in society. Working with groups, we can foster common values or beliefs such as trust and transparency. What can you do to support participants in mobilizing trust and a willingness to cooperate?

Needs and expectations	Ask participants about their needs and expectations concerning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → other group members, → topic, → facilitator Make the <i>diversity</i> and the <i>differences</i> public.
Discussion	Let the group experience that a discussion does not have to end with one “winning” or “loosing” side but is rather there to widen horizons and get to know other perspectives better. Let the group discuss the seminar rules and add their own, reflecting on their personal needs and goals.
Interactive group activities	These ease the atmosphere and support the group feeling and capacity for empathy. By activating one's own sensory perception, one's sensitivity to other participants is increased.

People who are socially engaged share:

Common values: a high level of trust toward others and a belief that the majority of people are trustworthy

Common beliefs: cooperation with others makes sense. Ordinary citizens acting with others can help those in need and solve local problems

Common behaviors: reliance on others (including those outside of family) when they are in need





Task: Basic rules

Participants and facilitators need rules to rely on in the group, as a sort of internal constitution for the training. It's your task to introduce some of them and to abide by them.

Introduction: On an individual level, trust is the certainty that things will happen according to my expectations and wishes. On a group level, it is a generally supportive, well-intentioned attitude toward each other. Rules help to facilitate a trusting working culture.

Discretion rule:

"What we say here stays in the seminar room."

This also includes pictures, stories, or videos, which are not allowed to be shared in social networks without explicit permission.

Stopping rule:

"Whenever a participant feels uncomfortable with something that happened or is about to happen, they are allowed to say: STOP."

In this event, they do not have to participate and do not need to explain why.

Disagreement rule:

"Everybody has the right to agree and to disagree."

Minority perspectives must be heard and respected, which also means that no one's experience is marginalized or put in relative terms by the majority. The group does not have to agree – but everyone should at least try to increase empathy.

Cooperative learning

Another way of increasing trust is letting participants learn through group interaction – cooperative learning. This is also a great tool for empowerment. However, *"cooperative learning does not simply mean that learners work in pairs or groups in the classroom with little regard to the actual interactions that take place within these groups."*¹ As facilitators and teachers, we are also part of the game, and our interactions with the participants need to be cooperative. Our role changes as a participatory learning culture develops. Cooperative learning is influenced by two factors: *the role of the facilitator* and *the formality of the learning environment*, with its specific rules, assessment criteria, and determination of content and goals. In any setting, the same five basic elements of cooperation are relevant and need to be facilitated in a way that suits the specific context:

Basic elements of cooperative learning ⁴

Positive interdependence	This happens when group members realize that one participant cannot succeed unless everybody succeeds. Success and involvement are interconnected in the group activity.
Individual and group accountability	When empowerment means <i>giving power</i> , it increases accountability. This entails accountability toward the other group members as well as the group's accountability to collaborative goals.
Encouraging interaction	Members <i>share</i> resources, and help and <i>support one another</i> . This includes using skills to show trust, increase empathy, and mobilize solidarity.
Interpersonal and group skills	<i>Effective</i> and <i>participatory</i> leadership, trust-building, appreciative communication, and conflict management are applied.
Group processing	A group <i>reflects</i> on their successes and <i>evaluates</i> how well they are achieving their goals and maintaining effective working relationships.



Case study: Focusing on the needs and interests of the target group

The motivation for taking action can also derive from values like empathy toward others. We can feel motivated when we disagree with social inequality and others' suffering, when we believe that helping other people is the right thing to do and that our contribution can help change the world for the better.

Often participants quickly come up with an idea for a specific project. Recently one of our participants mentioned that the children in her neighborhood needed a playground. In this case the problem was the cost of the playground, which could be a few thousand Euros and is actually the responsibility of the city. The realization of this idea was unrealistic.

We took a step back and asked what the needs of the children actually were. It turned out it wasn't just a playground that they needed, but rather a safe place to express their creativity, use their energy, and have fun with friends. We identified various, already existing places that fulfilled this criteria.

As you can imagine, with a bit of organization this need could be addressed rather easily with another project idea, using already existing infrastructure in the neighborhood.

Examine the needs first

In this case, a playground was not the children's actual need. It was the concrete idea of a civically engaged person. Remaining stuck on this idea is the same as blocking other possible solutions from being taken into consideration. In doing so, we lose the focus on the children's actual needs, which is a safe space for kids to be kids.

That is why we suggest taking a step back and examining the actual needs at hand. You might ask the question, "Why do you want a playground?" When we concentrate instead on needs, we can find many realistic, simple, and diverse options that will allow us to design a proper project.⁵



You can find more theory and methods for this topic online at www.competendo.net

Understanding → Empowerment
Methods for trustbuilding
Constructive feedback

-
1. Questions about research on voluntary service in Polish society from NGO's portal ngo.pl, <http://fakty.ngo.pl/wiadomosc/978536.html>
 2. More on potentials and risks of working with diverse groups: Diversity Dynamics: Activating the Potential of Diversity in Trainings ISBN 978-3-944012-02-5, p. 6 ff
 3. "Zaangażowanie społeczne Polek i Polaków; Wolontariat, filantropia, 1% I wizerunek organizacji pozarządowych" 2013, by the Klon/Jawor Association: http://fakty.ngo.pl/files/wiadomosci.ngo.pl/public/civicpedia/publikacje_okladki_LAST/20140407_RAPORT_final.pdf (in Polish)
 4. After: D. W. Johnson, R. T. Johnson: An Overview Of Cooperative Learning <http://www.co-operation.org/what-is-cooperative-learning/>
 5. Some theorists refer to "needs," while others refer to "interests." These phrases basically refer to the same thing, and for our purpose here we do not have to differentiate further. This shift from a specific position to considering needs is a part of the Harvard Model, which is used in negotiations. For more information, please see: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Getting_to_Yes



Task: Map your Neighborhood

Let your participants take a look at their neighborhood. They may draw, sketch, or paint a map and put in all relevant information.

- Where can you meet the target group of your planned activities? (in the example on the preceding page it was children)
- Which public places are there in general?
- Which places does the target group visit and use?
- What are the needs of the target group?
(In the example before it was expressing creativity, and having fun together).

Let your participants place their ideas on the map.

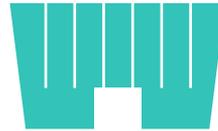
If you want to go further – on page 66 and you will find ideas for, how to concretize the need assessment in greater detail.



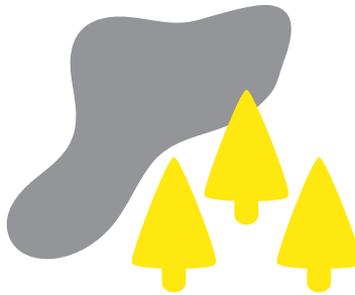
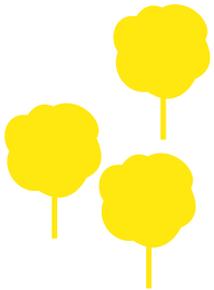
Religious building



Municipality



Shopping center



Park & pond



Houses



Houses



Kindergarten



School



Shop



Chapter 5

MOTIVATION

Motivation is vital to self-directed learning. It springs from the inner joy of doing something well - our desire to achieve something just for the resulting personal satisfaction. Our motivation has to be aligned with our actions and their impact on society. We can feel and experience its power. Our motivation corresponds to the resources we have at hand and to our own personal needs: The key to genuine motivation is the achievement of self-actualization. Our motivation depends on our personalities, the other people involved, and the context.

Sometimes when people leave their comfort zones and face new challenges, they feel exhilarated. Psychologist Mihály Csíkszentmihályi describes this self-actualization as a deep experience, which makes people feel “*totally taken up in an activity.*”¹ In this kind of situation, one moment flows into another. One action leads seamlessly to the next. The person does not feel separate from their environment, and is able to meet challenges in a meaningful way.

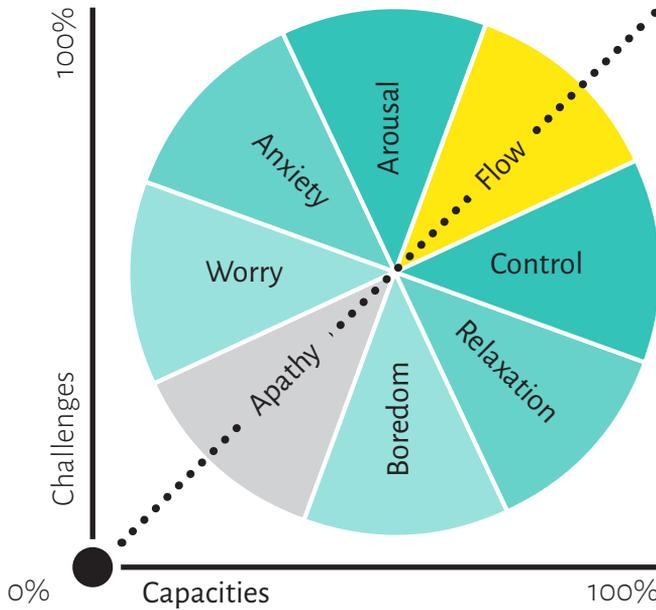
FLOW is a subjective state that can be reached when one leaves comfort zone, faces new challenges, and overcomes them through his or her abilities. The ratio of challenges and capacities are well balanced when people feel positively occupied by an activity.

Range of FLOW

Csíkszentmihályi examines the conditions of this “flow” experience. He identifies the optimal relationship between the challenges a person faces and his or her own abilities. If the two are well balanced, a person acts with passion and without feeling like he or she is exerting tremendous effort. Creative activity, play, and elaborate rituals seem to stimulate and foster intrinsic motivation more than competitive ones.

Balance of capacities and challenges

The spectre of FLOW is open to a person when the challenges and capacities of an activity are balanced.



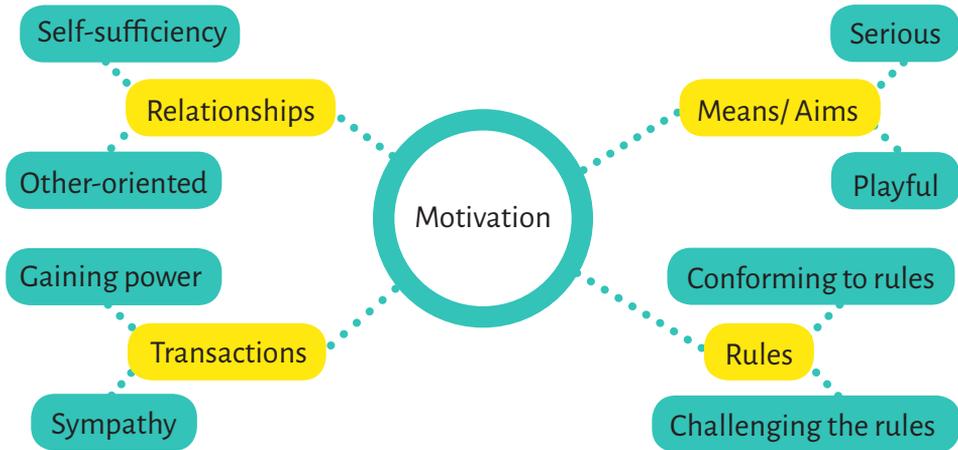
FLOW is produced by a host of changing variables. When we do something for the first time, we feel excited. If we do it repeatedly, we feel secure. If we do it often enough, there is a danger we might start to feel bored. Therefore, we have to be aware that activities that produce flow once may not always have the same result later. Sports coaches are familiar with this fact: they work hard to make sure every practice provides a new balance of challenges and opportunities, which leads to increased performance. ²

Supporting intrinsic motivation

Supporting people in exploring their passions and interests helps stimulate action. One example of this is schools or universities, where students are provided with structure and schedule. Another example is working in non-formal education, where motivation and self-organization are mainly decided by the participants themselves.

As shown earlier, motivations for actions are varied. Some motivations involve a feeling of responsibility, some a material gain, still others a gain in power. Yet another motivation is an attraction to the idea of *vita active* - a purposeful active life. ³

Variety of motivations



After: Michael J. Apter



Case study: Personalities, attitudes, polarities³

A team established a cross-generational club in their community. Two team members talk about their intrinsic motivations - why they are active in this project:

Team member 1:

I want
 ... to discuss things.
 ... to overcome my shyness about speaking publicly.
 ... harmony in the team.

Team member 2:

I want
 ... a functioning meeting group.
 ... to try out leadership abilities.
 ... to work productively and effectively.

The motivation profiles for both team members are quite different:

Team member 1:

Feeling self-sufficiency	← → x	Supporting others
Playfulness	x →	Envisoning results
Gaining influence	x →	Deepening personal relations
Following the plan	← → x	Shaping something new

Team member 2:

Feeling self-sufficiency	x →	Supporting others
Playfulness	← → x	Envisoning results
Gaining influence	x →	Deepening personal relations
Following the plan	← x →	Shaping something new



Task: Scales of motivation

Ask your participants to think about the last project, task, or exercise they did with other people. Which position on the scale describes their motivation?

Feeling self-sufficiency	←———— ————→	Supporting others
Playfulness	←———— ————→	Envisioning results
Gaining influence	←———— ————→	Deepening personal relations
Following the plan	←———— ————→	Shaping something new

Step 1: Let your participants examine all five motivational aspects and mark their position on these scales. For example, was their goal more result-oriented or playful? Were they more interested in the team process or in their own achievements?

At the end, each participant will have a personal profile, possibly with some general motivational preferences. In their teams, participants may reflect on the diversity of their motivations by explaining their styles and patterns to each other.

Question for individual reflection

- What motivates you in general?
- Are there situations or people that impair your style of motivation?

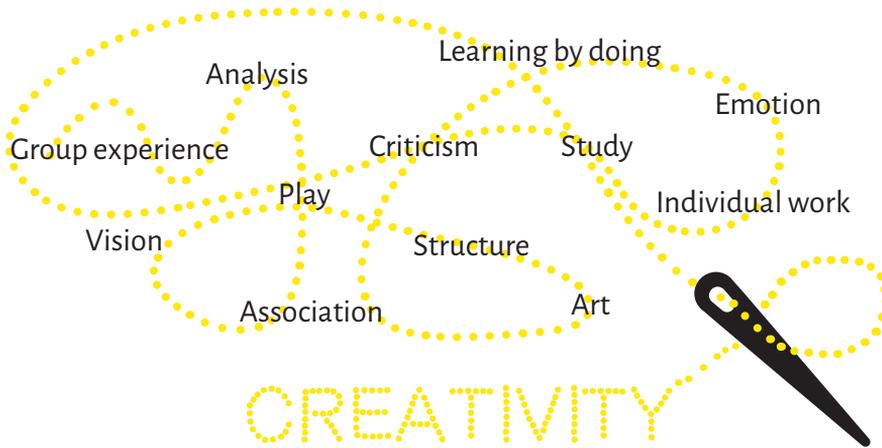
Step 2: In a second step, ask participants to think about how their initiative could be shaped to fit all team members' motivational preferences.

Regardless of the different sources of motivation, all participants share the fire of motivation, a special glow inside of them. Often people do things because they need to do. Exploring their passions or entering FLOW. That flame supports us in exploring our passions or entering a flow, and provides us with a compass for the things or topics in life we would like to work on.

Play and exploration

Playful and creative work helps people to explore the entire range of their competencies and skills. A seminar that is outside one's everyday environment might be a good space for this. Methods that involve all our senses and a broad range of possibilities for expression support this exploration: "Cognition isn't what creates something new, but rather the

instinct for enjoyment that stems from an inner need. A creative mind plays with things it loves (...)”⁴



How to support creativity?

Supporting creativity means giving participants opportunities to combine two things. First, a diversity of thinking styles: cognitive and associative methods, structural work and critical thinking can stimulate our brains. Second, facilitators may include and incorporate the diversity of experience that participants bring to the table: Having people use their hands and their heads, encouraging group collaboration and individual work, as well as playful and serious activities.

When participants are thinking creatively, they are able to activate these thinking styles and experiences to come up with new or unusual solutions.



You can find more theory and methods for this topic online at www.competendo.net

Understanding → Experiential learning
Motivational style

During → Topics → Project development

During → Techniques → Unleashing creativity



Task: Associations

When participants are familiar their own intrinsic motivations, it can bring them a step closer to generating a great idea for social engagement. In the following task associations people have with specific terms are collected, analyzed, and classified. They form the basis for an activity's initial idea.

Environment

My neighborhood

Team

Getting to know one's own intrinsic motivations can be difficult - it is not always easy to be conscious about. This method can help us to become aware of them.

This method is suitable for small teams. Two or three people sit down, back to back. A facilitator holds five to seven A4 sheets of paper, each with a word or phrase written on it.

The following terms are then written on the sheets: my neighborhood, challenges, problems, initiatives, project, team, surroundings, environment, sustainability, politics, people, injustice. Participants choose five to seven notions from this list.

The facilitator reads out the first idea and writes down the others' free associations. After a minute, the next one is read aloud.

Reflection

- What are the most interesting ideas?
- Which (different) associations did you have with them?
- What wasn't mentioned?⁵

1. M. Csíkszentmihályi: Beyond Boredom and Anxiety: Experiencing Flow in Work and Play; 1975 San Francisco; p. 59
 2. N. Zimmermann: Mentoring Handbook - Providing Systemic Support for Mentees and Their Projects; Berlin 2012; MitOst; ISBN 978-3-944012-00-1; p.30
 3. M. J. Apter, S. Carter: Mentoring and motivational versatility: an exploration of reversal theory in Career Development International 7/5 [2002]; p. 293
 4. Julia Cameron, The Artist's Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity, 2002
 5. Heike Fahrún, Nils-Eyk Zimmermann, Eliza Skowron: Initiative Cookbook - Homemade Civic Engagement - An Introduction to Project Management; Berlin 2016;
<http://www.theodor-heuss-kolleg.de/service/materials/initiative-cookbook/>; p. 12



Chapter 6

REALISM AND LASTING MOTIVATION

Sometimes we know what we want to do... but we're not brave enough or we think we're not "ready" yet. This is the anxiety that comes from your idea confronting reality. When peoples dreams and plans are ready and they are waiting for the right moment, the facilitator may support them by encouraging them to enter their learning zone and identify the next constructive. This involves striking a balance between vision and a sense of realism. When criticism, challenges, and a lack of resources aren't balanced by a positive vision of social impact, personal development, and working processes in the initiative, a facilitator may help to make adjustments. The first step is to respect both sides of the issue and to make them systematically visible. When all the issues are out in the open, it is easier to reflect and find solutions.



Task: The positive in the negative: Balancing development

The idea behind this method is that people have good reasons for remaining passive, just as much as they have good reasons for wanting change and development.

In the first step, you balance your vision for change with the good reasons for making no change.

1. Development: The Vision

Begin by sketching the vision:
Describe the positive outcome or impact of the project.

2. Positive Aspects of Reality

In the next column, mobilize your conservatism: collect aspects of the situation that show why it is more or less OK not to initiate change.

Let your participants take their time, making sure that both columns are equally elaborated upon and show the most relevant issues in both. There are always good reasons for change as well as for stability.

3. Balance

Now you step into the mix. Identify *high priority aspects*, i.e. which developments should take place quickly (A priority). Add what would be good to change (B and C priority).

4. Limitation

Hedge the development goal. Describe the line that should not be crossed. Where should development stop? Where do the goals of the initiative exceed your resources, personal motivation, or possibilities?

Check

At the end you might evaluate if 1. vision and 4. limitation are well balanced. Furthermore, check if in 3. balance all relevant goals are mentioned, and if their hierarchy is acceptable for the person.¹

Balancing internal and external criticism

Experience is built step by step. It includes positive feelings of FLOW as well as anxiety. When we create good conditions for FLOW in our trainings, we should also create spaces for dealing with ambiguity, anxiety, and skepticism. In this sense, empowerment encourages people not to “*be afraid and do things.*”²

We face not only internal criticism, but external criticism as well. This often happens too soon – it is like destroying a young sprout. Facilitators help participants to deal with criticism when they begin by listening actively. It is important to identify what dulls motivation and reflect on what participants do, and how they work. In a second step, reframing may be necessary - transforming demotivation into something constructive.

The method from the Forum Theatre approach offers sensible approach to unleashing the constructive positive thinking that can be masked by too much skepticism.



Task: Voices

Participants in a performative group often hear, feel and work with negative and positive motivators. They learn to reformulate negative aspects and turn them into positive ones.

Steps:

1. Begin by brainstorming demotivating and destructive statements from participants, negative thoughts that extinguish passion. Choose three or four that are universal and relevant for all group members.
2. Have one volunteer sit on a chair in an empty room. Three other volunteers stand behind the volunteer's chair and repeat the chosen "passion extinguishers". Other participants may also turn their backs to the voices and listen for a while to the choir of negativity. The person in the chair may decide how long they want to stay seated (it is usually not for very long).

You will never find financial supporters!

Let it go, study or go to work instead!

My idea is not good enough

I will not manage

Nothing will change

And you really think people will like it?

What you're saying doesn't make any sense!



3. Change all those negative "extinguishers" into positive ideas. E.g.: "What you did does not make sense" into "What you did makes sense"
4. Have three more volunteers join the choir. The three "old" choir members repeat their negative sentences, while three new repeat the positive. The voices overlap and the choir creates a meaningless ruckus. The volunteer listens to the voices for as long as they want.
5. In the last phase, all six choir members repeat only the positive sentences while the volunteer listens to them.

Reflection:

- How was it for you to hear all those negative voices?
- Did you rebel against them inside or did you feel sympathetic to them?
- How was it for you to hear positive and negative voices?
- Did you have the feeling that some of them were stronger? If so, why?
- How do you feel now? What is your inner voice is telling you now?

**Case study: Controlling internal criticism**

In our work on voluntary project management with youngsters and young adults across Europe, we are often confronted with strong negative opinions and reactions among learners. As these negative thoughts often come from within, participants often need support in dealing with them.

Doubts	Reactions
This is a bad idea	Constructive criticism in the form of a <i>proposal</i> : "And what would your alternative to that be?"
People will not like it	Combating generalizations and making them <i>more concrete</i> : "Whom exactly do you mean?" Showing <i>different perspectives</i> : "Do you know people who will like it?"
Others did it already	<i>Relevance</i> is more important than innovation: "Change isn't always about bright new ideas; an idea must be relevant for people."
Others will do it better	Use <i>good experience</i> : "Learn from others." <i>Feed forward</i> : "Imagine a situation in which you already did something similar in a successful way - how did you deal with it then?"
I am not the manager type	Bring it on the level of small steps: "What <i>realistic first steps</i> could you take with your competencies and capacities?"

A hard nut to crack: I have nothing to offer!

Sometimes a participant may refuse to look for team members simply because they think that they have nothing to offer. He or she is reluctant to approach potential team members, assuming that they would not agree to work without money. In such case, it might be useful to remind the participant about the diverse sources of motivation that we listed in chapter 4.

You never know what people really think before you ask them! A facilitator can help the participant to prepare a presentation of the idea to potential team members. You may also rehearse an interview with a prospective team member. Below you will find a couple of tips:

- show your own passion for the idea,
- stay optimistic about the result of the meeting,
- present the idea in a clear and simple way,
- explain why you are inviting this particular person to join the project, highlight their qualities and skills,
- don't talk all the time, listen to the questions and concerns of the listener,
- allow enough time for the person to think about the offer,
- stay flexible about the role and amount of time the person will devote to the project, try to find a solution that everyone will be happy with.

Focusing on solutions

One common approach in coaching people is to concentrate on helping them to find solutions not based on their problems but rather on their abilities, to find “solutions to problematic patterns in thought and behavior and to do it dialogically.”³

Our participants are often able to find solutions within their problems. Their solutions come from *realistically describing their abilities*. Facilitators can support this constructive attitude by showing their own personal optimism attitudes and by appreciating participants' *existing* abilities.

One tool for shifting the focus away from problems is to focus on asking questions aimed at solutions.⁴

Questions aimed at solutions

“Tell me in which situations ‘the problem’ is a bit smaller!”

“Tell me about the last time this (positive event) happened. How did you respond?”

“What will you need to do differently when the situation changes?”

“What would your best friend say if I asked her what you usually do when a situation changes?”

That being said, we don't want to overlook the productivity of critical observation. We also want to point out that being oriented toward solutions helps people concentrate on their strengths and adjust their goals more easily.⁵

The influence of past experience

How we see ourselves and others and what our internal critics are whispering into our ears depends on different aspects. Maybe it is a bias coming from our own experience or from the cultural surroundings or a label: “gifted but lazy”, “you have a humanistic mind”. These internalized biases and labels rob us of the right to change.

A very successful method for dealing with such labels is to change them into positive affirmation, a motto, which then motivates us and pushes us toward action.

Out of the frying pan and into the fire?

All of these methods and tasks help to prevent us from being manipulated by our minds. Knowing that many of our participants are in the early phases of searching for their passion, – a phase that is very sensitive to criticism – they should learn to protect themselves from it. As facilitators, we have a huge influence on our participants and an equally great responsibility for their process of searching for their passion. Giving them our support, motivation, talks, inspiration, and sharing observations and joy are the best things we can do.



Task: Creating your own motivational motto

A very successful method for dealing with such labels is to change them into positive affirmation, a motto, which then motivates us and pushes us toward action.

This activity should be done in pairs or small groups. Let your participants choose a disturbing label. Then make them break the statement into “simple pieces” by trying to find logical foundations for it.

Very often participants conclude that the statement simply isn't rooted in reality. If so, they can create a new sentence, statement, or a rule that constructively motivates them. This is very helpful in the process of tracking down what they really want, and what fuels their “inner fire.”

The list can be long and filled with any kind of potential doubt. Writing these doubts down and giving them names brings relief in and of itself.



You can find more theory and methods for this topic online at **www.competendo.net**

Constructive questions
Facilitating motivation

-
1. Inspired by Maren Fischer-Epe: Coaching: Miteinander Ziele erreichen; Reinbek 2002/2011
 2. Susan Jeffers
 3. Maren Fischer-Epe, Coaching: Miteinander Ziele erreichen; Reinbek 2002/2011 p.59.
 4. This solution-focused approach is strongly influenced by Steve de Shazer and Solution-Focused Brief Therapy Association <http://sfbta.org>
 5. N. Zimmermann: Mentoring Handbook - Providing Systemic Support for Mentees and Their Projects; Berlin 2012; MitOst; p. 28



Chapter 7

TEAMS AND SUPPORT

When people initiate social change, sooner or later they will come across to people join them and work with. A talent for teamwork is one of the top qualities sought by employers and organizations these days. In many countries, teamwork is the buzzword in educational reform. In many different contexts, we hear that cooperation is important and essential for any project's success. However, things are also complex – it would be an exaggeration to say that everyone values collaborative work. Many people prefer to tackle tasks alone, since it involves less stress and time. And maybe those people aren't completely wrong...

Pros and cons: Why work in a team?

Teamwork is a straightforward opportunity to acquire competencies. The ability to shape interpersonal relationships applies to the work place as well as to private life. This relates directly to the key social competencies described in chapter 2. A team is a space for experimenting! Before making any decisions, it's good for participants to gain a realistic picture of their options.

Advantages and disadvantages of teamwork

More people bring more ideas	>	Discussions require a lot of time
Tasks are divided = ideas can be implemented more easily	<	It takes longer to make decisions
More people identify with the mission and tell other people about it...	>	It is difficult to schedule times for meetings
A team provides a sense of security	<	People feel less responsible
A team offers a chance to form new relationships	>	Personality conflicts are magnified

Such a list can be created in a discussion with participants, who will certainly come up with more suggestions.

What exactly is a team?

Not every group of people working together deserves to be called a team. The “teamometer” is a model that shows the spectrum of teamwork.¹

Teamometer

+4

High performance team: Communication on the meta-level

All team members understand the various individual and group goals at play. They make use of their abilities and resources in an optimal way so that individual and shared goals can be reached. There is trustworthy and respectful relationships based on communication at the meta-level.

+3

Team: Self-reflective team members

The team's tasks are distributed in such a way that suits each person's personality and abilities best. Collegial leadership: decisions are made together. Team members think reflectively.

Community: First 'we' feeling

+2

Goals and values are developed and implemented together. Each person is taken seriously, the team addresses individual needs and goals together. The team also discusses when the goals are to be met, and in which way. Establishing the first 'we' feeling.

+1

Group: First signs of the group as one unit

A superior gives instructions about the group's goals. Each member has their own individual goals, which may still be more important. Lack of empathy for each other.

0

Gathering: Lack of empathy, emphasis on personal goals

People are not synchronized. Team members have different ideas. Goals, group goals, and agreements are unclear. One's own goals are more important than shared goals.

-1

Wild mob: Competition among team members

The group consists of solitary players. Agreements are not made or are not kept. Each person's own goals are fulfilled at the expense of others. Competition between people.

The teamometer reflects the dynamic nature of a team. Taking it to the highest stage involves a lot of patience and work, and might not be possible to achieve for every group. It might prove easier for people who have a lot of experience working in teams.



Task: Team temperature

Ask participants to recall some of the teams that they were a part of in the past. It might have been a sports team, a choir, a fishing club, or a project group at work.

- What “temperature” did those teams have?
- How did you gauge the temperature? What were the signs?
- Discuss what is needed to achieve the highest stage of team development: clear goals, open communication, respect, well defined roles, a positive atmosphere, a cooperative spirit, trust...
- Which kind of “team temperature” would be appropriate for the current context in the sense that it would help to fulfill the goal?
- What energy is necessary and what has to be done in order to come to an acceptable state of teamwork?²

While putting a team together, people can concentrate on relations or on competencies. The focus on close relations helps to build safe spaces for exchange with like-minded people. They form bonds. On the other hand, a complex society requires interaction between different interests and diverse groups. Therefore initiatives and organizations should be encouraged to build such bridges. In this sense, a facilitator should encourage participants to think in both directions.



Case study: Finding new team members

A group of active young entrepreneurs is going to organize a cross-generational club in their town. They will have to prepare advertisements and information posters about the meeting, and they need someone with graphic design skills.

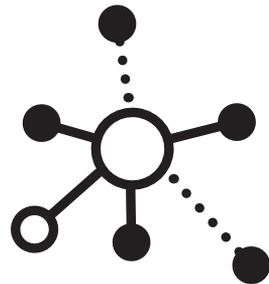
Strategy 1	Strategy 2
A poster needs to be made, so a friend learns graphic design.	A poster needs to be made, so the team searches for a graphic designer.
Looking for friends, neighbors, relatives, and acquaintances.	Search for people who already have certain skills.
Advantages: One can easily approach these people and it's fun to work with people you're already friends with! Such teams will probably learn many new things from scratch.	Advantages: Mostly professional work it might prove a more comfortable strategy if one wants to separate the initiative from one's personal life.
Risks: Working with friends also means putting your relations at risk: If something goes wrong, the friend may resent you.	Risks: It takes a lot of time and effort for people to get to know each other and integrate.



Task: Network

Individually or in small teams, ask participants to draw a network of their personal and professional relationships. Participants should try to think of as many people as possible who might help them in implementing their initiative. This method also works well for identifying potential team members.

1. Introduce the task, provide paper and pens of different colors. Participants can use various distances, lines, and colors to mark different types of connections.
2. In the second step, ask which people, groups, or organizations that have not yet been mentioned might also be interested in the initiative.³





Checklist: Where to search for supporters or team members



- **In the family.** Relatives – whether it's a grandfather, a mom or a younger cousin – can make great team members. They often show patience and understanding where others might not.
- **Among friends and colleagues and their friends and colleagues.** It is reasonable to explore your closest networks first – there might be a lot to discover. And it's like making waves: people one knows personally can help spread the word about the initiative's idea. Also, the facilitator's network may prove very useful!
- **The target group of the initiative.** If the initiative is directed at a specific group of people, it is good to have an “insider” on the team.
- **An announcement or poster in a place** one visits regularly and where one has acquaintances: the workplace, a sports center, a library, a game club..
- **Local volunteer centers** help match people with projects and may give valuable advice.
- **E-volunteers** are people who offer their knowledge and time with the help of a computer and an Internet connection. Check for e-volunteering platforms in your country or globally: www.onlinevolunteering.org/
<http://discoverevolunteering.eu/>

Tasks such as research, IT development, translation, or design can be also done virtually, and the team can gain a valuable member from another part of the globe!

A project for, with, or by people?

A facilitator has the right to propose that the team design its initiative in a participatory way. Participation means that all stakeholders (people or groups interested in or affected by the project) express their opinions and exert influence on decision-making. There are different levels of participation in the implementation of any initiative.

A charity project focuses mainly on doing good for people. The plan that has already been proposed is considered to be best. In this case, informing is considered to be a good method of participation, but it usually takes the form of a one-way flow of information with no space for feedback. Consulting is more connected to empowerment. It integrates people in the decision-making processes. At a higher stage of empowerment, people become capable of self-mobilization and the directive role of a project leader dissolves.

An effective way of actively involving the target group in all stages of the project is to *invite the target group's representatives to join* the initiative's core team. For example, if an action for the disabled is planned, it is good to have a person on the team who will share valuable insights and evaluate possible solutions from an insider's point of view.

Encouraging diversity in a project team

Team members are frequently very similar people who come from similar backgrounds and have similar opinions. This is natural and happens because it is easier to start a collaboration with someone with whom you have something in common. However, good teamwork does not mean that everybody thinks and acts the same.

Diversity research shows that diversity within a team (not only in gender or ethnicity, but also in background, experience, lifestyle, values, and even language) contributes to higher quality work results. Diverse teams can be more innovative and creative than homogeneous ones, and are able to provide non-standard solutions to well-known problems. However, they are also more difficult to manage.

A facilitator can encourage the team to invite people that they would probably not consider in the first place. Team members might also recognize on their own that they are not diverse enough. In such a situation, the facilitator may support them in preparing a profile of a person / persons they need, and a strategy for finding them.



Task: Discussing diversity through film

“Remember the Titans” (2000) is an American drama that tells the story of a football coach who uses sports to help his players work through racial conflicts. A movie screening followed by a discussion is an entertaining and effective way of sharing some strategies and values about teamwork with participants. Other movies dealing with various aspects of teamwork are:



- “Ocean’s Eleven” (importance of planning)
- “Shackleton” (leadership)
- “A Bug’s Life” (conflict management)
- “Apollo 13” (decision making, crisis management)
- “Miracle” (team development)
- “Kelly’s Heroes” (division of roles, diversity)



Checklist: Building trust

Facilitators can create an atmosphere of trust in order to encourage learners to propose ideas and take action. They can also support the new project team by making it aware of some qualities of trusting teamwork.

Group members...

- ...are competent and will not let me down
- ...share important information proactively and clearly
- ...maintain promotions and are team-oriented
- ...trust me and want to cooperate with me



Rapid trust can be achieved more readily and is necessary for the early stages of teamwork. It is based on observation.

Team members...

- ...have common backgrounds, values, interests
- ...are concerned about my overall well-being
- ...behave consistently over time and in different contexts
- ...actively include me in their activities
- ...share their true feelings and thoughts



Deeper trust takes more time to establish and requires efforts on an ongoing basis over a longer period of time. It is based on feeling.

The above are some crucial criteria for trust building. *Rapid trust* is necessary for any kind of teamwork. *Deeper trust* plays a bigger role in the case of the long-term team cooperation. ⁴

Let team members to fill the check list individually and honestly by themselves.

Challenge: The first team meeting

The first team meeting is an occasion for participants to fill the facilitator's shoes. This is also a moment for the facilitator to share some of his or her professional knowledge. Depending on the group's wishes, a facilitator may be present during the first meeting, or just help the team to prepare in advance. Nevertheless, it is important to leave enough space for getting to know one another and express expectations before going into project details.

In the first meeting, it is essential that every team member has a chance to form their expectations, not only toward the initiative, but also toward the teamwork. This is the first step toward fostering better understanding within the team and evaluating participants' understanding of the project.



Task: Proof of concept

Have participants answer the following questions about the initiative's concept honestly and, at first, individually.

Afterward, participants come together in small groups to exchange thoughts. The goal of this task is to balance two main aspects of common social activity. On the one hand is the factual dimension – what will be done. On the other hand is the personal dimension – the visions and passions of the people involved and their social expectations toward each other. It is very helpful for visually – oriented people to cluster similar answers together and keep different answers separate.

Motivation and personal expectations

Why am I interested in this initiative on a social and personal level?

Values

What values do I associate with the initiative? Which values should the team represent?

Project goals & educational goals

What is the most important change that I want to make through this initiative? What do I want to learn?

Expectations for the team

How do I imagine work in the team? How can I support my team and how can my team support me? How should we communicate with each other?

Follow up

Further work on a project description can be found on page 70.⁵

Creating a new working culture in the team

We tend to assume that our team members share our working culture and that there are no differences in the individual perceptions of time, money, communication, etc. Passing over such issues in silence could provide fertile ground for misunderstandings and conflicts.

Some team members are used to planning every single step of the initiative meticulously, others would rather trust their intuition and dive in spontaneously. It is reasonable to agree on some basic rules for teamwork (e.g. "Always inform others in advance when you are not able to come to a meeting").



Task: The team machine

Ask participants to visualize their expectations for teamwork in the form of a machine. Participants should act it out with their bodies, where everybody has the opportunity to define his or her place and role in the project.

Reflection:

- What is your place and why is it there?
- How will the overall image change as you perform your role?
- What will you do when it changes?



You can find more theory and methods for this topic online at www.competendo.net

During → Facilitating teamwork and group dynamics

1. Jörg Friebe: Reflexion im Training, Bonn 2012, p. 90
2. Heike Fahrún, Nils-Eyk Zimmermann, Eliza Skowron: Initiative Cookbook - Homemade Civic Engagement - An Introduction to Project Management; Berlin 2016; <http://www.theodor-heuss-kolleg.de/service/materials/initiative-cookbook/>; p. 42
3. Ibid. p. 90
4. Building Trust in Diverse Teams: the Toolkit for Emergency Response. Oxfam GB, 2007.
5. Initiative-Cookbook; p. 43



Case Study: The team that never intended to be a TEAM: A story from the Black Sea



If you want to build a ship, don't drum up people to collect wood and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea. Antoine de Saint-Exupery

Some teams are not made intentionally but are self-created thanks to the power of a strong shared vision and shared values. Such teams rarely discuss in detail how to create a team, since there is a strong passion that bonds the people together on a deep level of understanding.

In Bulgaria in 2007, during a real estate boom, a wild beach on the Black Sea coast named "Irakli" was threatened with being developed into a resort owned by an offshore company. The coast was home to a rich world of biodiversity, but was not yet under full state protection.

Deeply affected by the possible consequences, a young lady sent an emotional letter sharing her personal thoughts on the matter to all of her networks. She thought that what was about to happen was outrageous, and that she would do anything to stop it. Her passion and certainty were so strong that people started contacting her, saying that they shared her values but had never been so daring or open about it. The group soon got its name: "Let us save Irakli", and proved to be the first of its kind in Bulgaria: www.daspasimirakli.org

Without any plan but with a strong sense of urgency, diverse specialists and personalities started collaborating on what soon became the "voice of the young Bulgarians against oligarchy." A young PR manager, a lawyer, a biologist, a DJ, an archeologist, a designer, and a web developer, amongst others, formed a core team that remained active for almost 10 years. They became a non-hierarchical leadership rocket, an inspiring example of a bottom-up process. They put the Black Sea coast development on the public agenda through dozens of advocacy successes on a legislative front, 15 beach-cleaning weekends, more than 30 protests at four different government organizations, and collaborations with citizens' coalitions, artists, and festivals. They established a clear link between the problem of non-transparent decision-making and wildlife protection.

This example shows how we can stretch our own understanding of whether to focus on the process or the goal. Neither makes much sense without the

other. Having quality time with your teammates is extremely important, just as it's important to stay passionate about the larger goal. Maintaining this balance reveals true mastery.

Main lessons:

- set clear goal
- set clear roles
- build a shared vision and passion
- stay open to opportunities and collaborations
- communicate clearly with the outside world about your values and your vision – not just specific objectives.



Chapter 8

OUTLOOK: FROM INSPIRATION TO ACTION

Inspiration, motivation, and social change were the main topics in the previous chapters. Let's take that a step further. Facilitation can also support participants to engage in a mission driven by volunteer project management. In the following publication you will find methods for engaging volunteers.

Project inspiration

Projects can provide a good framework for gaining experience, making a social impact, building networks, and putting democratic principles into practice. Therefore, it's a good idea to encourage participants to seek out volunteer projects.

The basic criteria for such projects are that they

- are non-profit
- have clear goals and impacts
- have a defined time frame
- relate to a program's thematic issue (if there is one)

The projects should be *implementable* within a certain period. There are additional criteria that influence the success and sustainability of a project, like the motivation of the people involved and the approach. Projects that focus on civil society are relevant in this context. Since civil society involves inter-group communication and interaction among individuals, projects should *involve the community* as well. Concretely, this means doing something with other people – not just doing something for them. When one treats other people as clients and the project as a service, then the impact decreases once the project is finished.

These criteria make it clear that even small changes are beautiful – and that even big projects can fail if they do not reflect these criteria. For this reason, we place emphasis on how much funding a project has.

How to develop an idea?

In previous chapters, you read a lot about internal and external motivation and inspiration, and also how to find the right people for the right “job.” Tasks like “Envelopes” show, how you might support people in their creative efforts to develop an initial idea for an initiative or a project for the social good.



Task: Envelopes

This activity helps participants discern what social issue they care about. It can be used in a training session during an ideation phase.

Put four envelopes in the room, numbered 1 to 4. Put one sheet of paper with a task on it in each envelope. Each envelope represents one station participants will visit during the activity. These help participants to take a first step in the idea-finding phase. The outcome of this session is not shared with all participants.

These tasks should be done in silence.

1. Social issues

In the first envelope participants will be asked to think about what social issue matters to them. They should write down their thoughts (time: 15 minutes).

2. Mind map

In the next envelope, participants are asked to make a mind map on the previous topic (time: 15 minutes).

3. The ideal

At the third station, participants visualize their thoughts regarding the issues they have selected, or depict how they see an ideal community visually (time: 15 minutes).

4. Concrete steps

At the last station, participants write down the steps they would take to realize their vision (time: 20 minutes).

Defining goals

One approaches a vision step by step. In order to find the right path, it is important to formulate clear and concrete goals. At the same time, it is worth checking in to make sure you are still on the right path.

Clear and positive formulations: A well defined goal describes exactly what effect the initiative should have: the people involved are informed and motivated. There should be a clear result that can be examined and will show whether or not the initiative was successful. For example "Thanks to the work of those involved in the garbage clean-up action described below, the forest is now clean." The goals are represented positively – people are motivated and not passive.

Create boundaries for deadlines and content: Many problems are deeply embedded in society or are the result of a systematic lack of opportunities. The action of the garbage clean-up cannot solve the problem of a lack of garbage removal. However, the people involved still understand how important their own behavior is, and that it can bring about change. There will be specific improvements in the future.



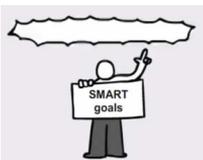
Task: SMART goals

In this activity, the five letters SMART stand for the five characteristics of well formulated goals.

Try to build sentences including goals that reflect all of these characteristics.

As a team, check to make sure all aspects are included. Concretize the sentence by adding or deleting information.

S – specific	What exactly do I want to achieve?
M – measurable	How can I measure whether I have reached my goal?
A – accepted	Do all the people involved agree with the goal?
R – realistic	Is the goal achievable under the given conditions?
T – time-related	When should the goal be reached?



One way of describing your own goals with the help of these five aspects is illustrated in the film "How to Write a Smart Goal."

Project Smart: https://youtu.be/4_ccSw5vLek

The first idea might be not the best idea

Field research consists of practical activities that are done in the natural habitat of the species that the researcher is interested in. In our case, that species is humans. Learning their habits, interests, and wishes allows us to become more aware of the context of our work and adjust our project idea to this context.

Primary field research provides initial information about the target group. Once you have developed your project idea, you have an option to conduct secondary research, which will allow you to verify initial findings and collect feedback on the project plan from its prospective beneficiaries.



Case study: Local activity center for elderly people: How association ProEthica learned about the needs of their target group

The case study of Association ProEthica demonstrates the positive effect that research and consultation with the target groups can have on the project concept and planned activities.

“We wanted to create a local activity center for elderly people from our district. Everybody knows that Polish society is getting older – this was also happening in our neighborhood. Demographic facts never provide us with concrete solutions to solve social problems, however.

We needed insight into the everyday world of our beneficiaries and we decided to turn to experts – the elderly themselves. We completed more than a hundred questionnaires and conducted in-depth interviews: we asked them about how much free time they have, how they spend it now, and how they would like to spend it.

We applied the results of the research to our project concept. For instance, we created more opportunities for the elderly people to volunteer. In the beginning, we could hardly gather 15 people to join the activities we offered; now more than 250 people regularly take part in our workshops and meetings.”

Anna Nawrot and Ireneusz Tomczek, Association ProEthica

How to correctly identify the needs of the target group

When field research is done at the right moment of project development, it can help to determine whether the project has a chance for a sustainable future. In the following pages, a small catalogue of methods is presented.

A facilitator can help the participants choose the right method and adapt it to the specific context. All these methods require patience and sensitivity.

Reading



Local newspapers, books, and Internet articles can be a great source of information, by providing statistical data and information about the history of the group targeted by the initiative. During research, you can also check whether a similar initiative has already been implemented somewhere else – there's no need to reinvent the wheel.

- A facilitator can help the participants to gather a list of literature, begin library research, and share smart Internet links.

Participant observation



Participating in the target group's daily life, visiting places and events, giving informal talks, and documenting it all with notes, photographs, drawings. Participant observation can be a lot of fun, but requires an ability to maintain a balance between “insider” and “outsider” roles.

- A facilitator can introduce exercises that develop visual and auditory attention. For example, ask participants to describe their morning the way they hear it: write down and describe the sounds they hear, even before breakfast. Another exercise is to have participants prepare a visual essay (a video, a slide show, a collage etc.) about their nearest neighborhood by paying specific attention to nature, public transport, or people. Exercises of this kind improve a perception of details that at first sight may have seemed trivial or insignificant.

Expert interviews



This is an interview with a person who has specialized knowledge about the target group / area / topic of the initiative, and can therefore share information quickly and in an organized way. For example: If an initiative is intended for visually impaired people, one might visit a local NGO that works with people with disabilities. If the initiative seek to popularize regional history among young people, it might be useful to approach a history teacher at a nearby school.

Interview with a member of the target group



An *interview* allows for insights into a particular person's world of thought. A list of questions prepared in advance will prove helpful here, as well as paper for taking notes or an audio recorder, which can often be found as an application on your mobile phone. The strategy: open-ended questions, general questions come first, followed by specific ones related to the initiative. Conducted in the interviewee's neighborhood—where they live or work—an interview is an occasion for additional observation of the person's habits and conduct.

- A facilitator can train participants in the art of asking open-ended questions – the interviewer should try to avoid imposing their opinions on the interviewee.

Group discussion with several representatives from the target group



Gathering *multiple people in one place* will most probably result in lots of diverse ideas and opinions. Interviewees will inspire each other and create associations that would not appear in a standard interview. Photos, pictures, quotes, statements (even provocative and absurd ones) can be used to ignite discussion.

- A facilitator can support the participant by helping to moderate group discussions, and providing participants with methods that will foster creative thinking in the group.

Surveys



With the help of *questionnaires*, lots of data can be collected in a relatively short period of time. However, most questionnaires typically consist of questions that aren't open-ended, and therefore limit the amount of information that is collected. A small-scale trial run is a necessary step to make sure the questionnaire will not confuse respondents or give them a bias.

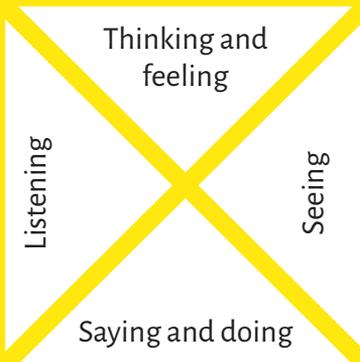
- A facilitator can work with participants to collect tips for making a good survey, taking into account different types of questions and carefully prepared order.

A great source for your methodological inspiration is IDEO.org's Design Kit: www.designkit.org/



Task: Empathy map

Have your participants create an “empathy map” for their initiative, in order to find out more about their target group. Ask them to fill out a poster with the structure shown below. These questions will help them listen, empathize, and make careful observations. On the one hand, the Empathy Map can be helpful in defining topics and questions for a target group; on the other hand once we have answers, it is a good visual way to get the big picture of the social situation related to the project.



Frustrations

Hopes

Listening

Influences/Media

1. What influence does the environment exert?
2. Who are people influenced by?
3. Which media are relevant?

Seeing

Environment/Family

1. What does the environment look like?
2. Who are allies of the group?
3. What opportunities do they have?

Saying and doing

External World/Social Interaction

1. What do other people say about them?
2. How do they behave?
3. What are their hobbies?

Hopes

Desires/Goals

1. What do people want to achieve?
2. How do they measure success?
3. How can they reach their goals?
4. What do they need in order to participate?

Thinking and feeling

Hopes/Concerns

1. What is important to the people, to whom am I addressing my initiative?
2. What are their hopes and dreams?
3. What moves them?

After: Dave Gray/XPLANE

Frustration

Fears/Obstacles

1. What frustrates people in the target group?
2. What hurdles do they have to overcome?
3. What risks are they taking?
4. What prevents them from participating?

Project concept

Simulations, creative expression, and interactive discussions can help participants to identify new opportunities. For the following step – creating a more concrete project concept – it is good to use a basic template. In this way, participants learn to work like professionals who apply for grants from donor organizations. The challenge is to transform a broad and often not yet very detailed idea into a text with a clear logic and structure.

**Task: The long path to a project description**

Many people have the deceptive thought that short texts should take a short amount of time to write. It is certainly not the case with project descriptions. It is difficult to include all the necessary information and complexity without getting too wordy or unclear. The more time you allow your participants to invest in the pre-stage of their project description, the deeper their thoughts will appear and the better their understanding of the project itself will be. It is crucial to manage this time wisely.

1. First sketch:

Ask your participants to create the first draft of their project description.

Helpful tasks:

- “Start with ‘Why’” (page 25) is a good starting point. For more inspiration you can also show your participants the TED talk.



2. Problems & requirements and Goals & impact:

Let your participants work on the related questions mentioned on page 73.

Helpful tasks:

- “Empathy map” – for finding answers (page 69)
- “Map your neighborhood” (page 38)
- “SMART-Goals” – for defining the right goals (page 65)



3. Process & implementation and Type of initiative:

Let your participants tackle the questions related to those two aspects. (page 73)

Helpful tasks:

- Inspiration: the attitudes described in the chapter 3 are crucial.
- Collect the project types and approaches your participants are already familiar with. Make them aware of the diversity of possible solutions.



4. Presentation

Ask participants to write down their answers, observations, and reflections in the form of a short text. When working with larger groups, you might use collective knowledge and experience. Create a space for a deep constructive exchange.

Helpful tasks:

- Presentation of ideas in free form, in front of the whole group.
- Constructive peer-feedback: encourage groups to give and receive feedback amongst themselves.



5. Appeals and other missing information

During participant's presentations, you might find some ideas convincing, and have already framed their concept in the form of an appeal addressed to their audience. The next step might be to discuss any aspects that remain unclear, the appeal & requests (page 73), and a discussion of aspects that might be needed for a detailed version of the project description.

Helpful tasks:

- “Elevator pitch” – for discovering the most appealing and important part of a concept.
- Give the participants roles to play: a member of the public youth administration, a teacher, an activist in a social NGO, a grandmother or grandfather, etc. Let them explain what they understood from the presentation of the idea.



6. Resources and risks

After the vivid, intense, and FLOW experience of the first steps, emphasize the need for a reality check. Ask participants about their resources – especially their time, energy and what might prevent the project from being implemented.

Helpful tasks:

- “Teamometer” – A manual for checking the condition of the team (page 53)
- “Personal time budget” – for a realistic view on time management

Source: MitOst/Theodor-Heuss-Kolleg



You can find more theory and methods for this topic online at www.competendo.net



Checklist: Shortlist for a project description

Problems & requirements

Especially at the beginning, speak to readers or listeners as directly as possible, with concrete examples or good descriptions.

- What is the problem, what does it require?
- What impact is the initiative trying to make?

Goals & impact

Describe your goals and how the initiative will reach them.

- What solutions does your initiative offer for the problem at hand?
- How exactly will your initiative improve the situation?
- In which way is your initiative special or innovative?

Process & implementation

Describe the most important steps in planning and the intended results or outcomes.

- What will you do when, where, with whom, and for whom?
- What specific steps will you take?
- What result will you see at the end?

Type of Initiative

Describe the type of initiative you are organizing and your planned actions.

- What form will your initiative take?
- Why is this the best form for your goals and interests?

Appeal & requests

At the end of a text, make a connection to the beginning and summarize the most important goals in one sentence.

- What value does the initiative have for a certain target group or region?
- What specific social development does the initiative support?

Contact

Offer at least one way to make contact and deepen the relationship.

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone number | <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook page | <input type="checkbox"/> Postal address |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Email address | <input type="checkbox"/> Messenger account | <input type="checkbox"/> Website |

What should the detailed version entail?

- Specifics about target groups/people
- Team, partners
- Supporters, promoters, and the type of support
- State of planning
- Form of public relations work
- Budget
- Sustainability of the project: potential follow-up activities

The finishing touches

Working on projects often entails striking a balance between the personal and the public spheres, between risks and opportunities, failures and successes, even right moments and bad choices. In this constantly unfolding process, our participants need to be mentally prepared for the fact that it is almost impossible that their project or initiative will turn out exactly the way they planned it. Most people adjust to surprises and changes quickly and without any difficulty, but they should ask themselves – did they overlook something in their planning? Could they have avoided or foreseen the problem? Here is a method for how to catch blind spots in an otherwise great idea.



Task: Six thinking hats¹

Generally we all like our own reasoning – our own thoughts seem to be logical and plausible. It's as if each of us were wearing a “thinking hat” that fit perfectly on our heads.

But when it comes to developing an idea or thinking creatively, we begin to feel our “thinking hat” get tighter and tighter, more like a helmet that prevents our thoughts from getting outside the box.

Everyone knows this feeling, right?

Well what if you had six different thinking hats?

You have an idea and need to improve it or further develop it. Each team member takes one of the six thinking hats, then perceives and discusses

the idea only through the one perspective represented by the hat they wear. The hats come in six different colors:



White hat: analysis based on facts, objective thinking



Red hat: emotional thinking, subjective opinions and feelings



Black hat: critical thinking, risk assessment, skepticism, problem-oriented thinking



Yellow hat: positive and optimistic thinking, best-case scenario



Green hat: creative, associative thinking, constructive and productive thinking



Blue hat: structured thinking, putting everything in order, keeping the “big picture”

Each of us could probably say which hat(s) fit us best. You can use this existing potential in your team when your goal is to push the idea forward. You could also try to look at the idea from a different perspective by choosing a hat that you think would fit the least.

Please note: Meetings like this need to be strongly moderated – we often tend to forget at some point what color we're wearing. De Bono's six thinking hats method can also be both a method for developing to elaborate the very first idea for a social or civic initiative by looking at it from six different perspectives. It can also be a tool for reviewing and fine-tuning an idea that is almost ready to implement, and checking it in a diverse way.



EPILOGUE

The authors of this publication have tried to empower its readers with knowledge, sharing experience and practices with those who share a belief in democratic participation based on the freedom of active individuals and communities who shape their societies and involve others in the process. Education, both formal and non-formal, serves to empower such individuals and communities with basic competencies, which in turn makes it possible to fully participate in social and civic life. Actors in the field of education, i.e. teachers, trainers, community workers, facilitators, play an important role in empowering and equipping learners with the necessary skills and space for gaining experience.

Self-initiated action is one of the many possible expressions of such participation. This publication helps to promote such action in a meaningful way, such that it genuinely stimulates social change and a type of active citizenship which is conscious and based on critical thinking.

We hope our work serves genuine empowerment, and will contribute to more resilient individuals and communities. We invite you to share the publication in your networks and welcome your feedback.

Contact: books@competendo.net



GLOSSARY

The aim of the glossary is not to provide a universal definition for the key word, but to clarify their meaning in this book for better comprehension.

(Community) Animation – encouraging people and communities to initiate social change on their own, working with (not for) individuals and groups to encourage them to become more active citizens and resilient communities; bringing out the best through motivation and inspiration. Not suggestive of any hierarchical relationship between the worker and the community.

(Systemic) Coaching – individual support based on autonomy and personal responsibility. Coaches pose challenging questions (without giving advice!) to help their clients (“coachees”), identify possible solutions, and think about them independently. Systemic coaching is all about solving problems independently and responsibly.

Community development work – see *community animation*.

Competence – skills, knowledge, and attitudes, that one needs for effective action in a modern society.

Key competence – universal skills, knowledge and attitudes that one needs in work, free time, civic, social and private life. Also called transversal competence.

Transversal competence – see *key competence*.

Formal education – learning in an organized and structured environment, such as a school or an institution of higher education. Formal learning is intentional and leads to recognition and accreditation.

Informal education – a non-institutionalized, unstructured form of learning. May occur in the family, in the workplace, in the local community, or in daily life, on a self-directed, family-directed or socially-directed basis.

Non-formal education – all learning environments other than formal education activities that assist people in developing their skills and knowledge as citizens, consumers, or parents. Intentional from the learner’s point of view, voluntary and organized.

Empowerment – a process of developing in public social activity, cooperative self-organization enabling involvement in public decision-making. As a didactical approach, empowerment means supporting each individual to act in a self-responsible, purposeful and effective manner.

Facilitation – a helpful, empathetic approach which brings out and makes maximal the use of people's skills and talents. It suggests 'helping along', 'bringing together', 'building on' the existing skills and talents of people.

Constructive feedback – enhances the quality of interpersonal cooperation by improving communication, relevance (helps to improve individual and team actions by sharing specific observations) and moral quality (showing interpersonal respect).

Fieldwork – practical work with direct beneficiaries, grass roots, 'bottom-up approach' – the worker is not afraid to get involved – a 'hands on' approach.

Flow – subjective state where self-actualization coincides directly with learning. It occurs when one leaves his or her comfort zone, faces new challenges, and overcomes them through one's own capacities. The ratio of challenges and capacities needs to be well balanced.

Forum theater – a method of the "theatre of the oppressed", developed by Augusto de Boal. Forum theater reflects social reality and motivates active participation. It uses everyday experience with violence or discrimination, develops small scenes, and finally seeks behavioural alternatives. This happens collaboratively between actors and audience. Everybody is allowed to take part in the play.

Initiative – an action for change driven by a desire to develop one's potential or fill a lack in society or one's community. It has clearly defined goals and impacts, and has a defined time frame. Less complex and smaller than a project.

Inspiration – stimulation to do something, to be surprised, to be willing to take action. The discovery of opportunities or combat with challenges. Receiving enthusiastic encouragement for making an effort with self-confidence.

Learner – any person learning something in a formal, non-formal or informal educational setting.

Learning outcome – knowledge, practical skills, or attitudes achieved in any learning process.

Mentoring – supporting (usually) less experienced people in self-development through a more experienced mentor. Mentoring helps them to overcome their challenges and reflect on learning goals. Oriented toward the personal needs of the client ("mentee"). Involves elements of advising, coaching, accompaniment, motivation and training.

Meta-level – a theoretical consideration of something's properties, such as its foundations, regularities, styles, or form. Good for reflection on a higher level of abstraction, such as a group conversation about group dynamics.

Mini-project – an action for change driven by a desire to make use of a community's potential or fill a lack. It is focused on a clear, small goal and has a small impact; it has a defined time frame and is done with small effort and almost no resources.

Moderation – shaping a common learning or discussion process. A moderator offers methods and guides the process without voicing his or her own opinion, passing judgement, or taking sides.

Intrinsic motivation – vital to self-directed learning, the intrinsic joy in doing well for the resulting personal satisfaction. The key to intrinsic motivation is the fulfillment of one's talents and potentialities. What motivates a person depends on their personality, the other people involved, and the context.

Participant – any person taking part in non-formal and/or informal education.

Participation – different mechanisms people use to express their opinions and to exert influence on decision-making processes that take place in the society - in politics, economics, social and cultural life.

(Social) project – an action for change driven by a desire to make use of the existing potential and chance to fill a lack in society or the community. It has clear goals and impacts and a defined time frame.

Sustainable project – a project which aims at long-term social change in its social, economic and ecological dimension. A sustainable project does not have to last forever, but the change needs to be long-lasting.

Seminar – a planned and facilitated learning event in non-formal education.

Student – a learner engaged in formal education.

Target group – main or direct beneficiaries of a social project.

Teaching – one directional transferral of knowledge from a teacher to a learner in any kind of setting.

Volunteer work – any kind of work for the social good without financial benefit

Comfort zone – the range in which a person is confident of their personal skills, knowledge and attitudes. This relates to a relaxed consciousness about oneself.

Learning zone – the range in which skills, knowledge, and attitudes are partially mastered, and partially need to be acquired. This is related to a partial consciousness of one's personal competencies.

Panic zone – skills, knowledge and attitudes which we are not (yet) able to master and will not be achieved in the near future. A confrontation with situations where people feel that their competencies are not helpful relate to panic or fear.

The Handbooks for Facilitators series seeks to assist teachers and facilitators in strengthening individuals' key competencies by highlighting best practices from education and learning. A key issue in this process is empowering people with different social background to act as responsible and active citizens.

Since all civic engagement begins with motivation and inspiration this publication starts with the idea, how “facilitation” can support learners to envision their ideas for an authentic volunteer initiative. Therefore it strives the question of the “why” of civic engagement, the needs in the community and the development of the relevant social and personal competencies.

Above all stands the idea of helping facilitators to shape a step-by-step learning process with authentic and concrete initiative concepts at the end.

