

- Visegrad Fund



PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCES

TRAINER MANUAL



STOWARZYSZENIE
ROZWOJU I INTEGRACJI
MŁODZIEŻY



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INTRODUCTION TO THE TOOLKIT

“This Trainer Manual on Professional Competences is developed in the frames of “ProDeCoR: Professional Development as a COVID-19 Response” project funded by International Visegrad Fund in 2020. The project is implemented by Armenian Regional Youth NGO in partnership with Youth Development and Integration Association STRIM (Poland), ReCreativity Social Enterprise (Hungary), and Vice Versa Association (Czech Republic). Toolkit is designed for trainers, youth workers, teachers, employment sector practitioners and other educators that work with young people. It provides objectives and detailed guidelines on how to work with young people in order to build their competences in the post-COVID 19 labour market. The manual covers 6-8 hours of learning activities and additional learning materials provided for follow up/self- learning.

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Session: Professionalism

	Themes	Ethics, Leadership, Critical Thinking, Conflict Resolution, Mentoring
	Goal	Introduction to key professional competencies, reaching common ground. Demonstrating how to become professional.
	Objectives	<p>After the session participants will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Integrate professional competences into their work ▶ Highlight the importance of professionalism and that of becoming a professional employee
	Group size	20-24
	Time required	90 min
	Overview / short description	Dedication, integrity, and responsibility are elements of professionalism that make a person successful in her/his field. By taking ownership of their roles and duties, professionals make names for themselves and usually find promotion and repeat business opportunities more easily. In this activity participants will discover how to stand up for professionalism and demonstrate each other the most critical competencies for being professional.
	Materials needed	Flip chart, markers, A4 papers, post-its, pen, pencils, projector, laptop For the video: questions are on flipchart
	Complexity	Intermediate
	References	Video Link

Introduction and implementation

Time	Steps
10 min	a. Explain that this activity is about professionalism. Ask participants to watch a video and reflect all the information provided in the debrief section on a flipchart. Discuss the answers. Video Link
30 min	b. Do a brainstorming in groups of 3-4 on professional competencies. Allocate 7 minutes to collecting as many competences about “professionalism” as possible, ask groups to come together for sharing the results. After the sharing phase, ask them to make 2 big groups, each of which should agree on 6 competencies found common within their group (based on their competence lists). They will have 15 minutes to finalize the capacities. Once the 6-6 competences are ready, the trainer puts all the 12 competencies on the flipchart and everybody votes (by taking a stick next to the 6 most important competencies) so in the end we all have 6 main competences.
45 min	c. Once the 6 main competencies are ready, divide them into 6 groups again. Make papers out of the six competences, and each group randomly picks one topic to work on. Each group has 20 minutes to prepare an interactive presentation, role play on how to demonstrate this competence in action. They can use any tool, video or music. Each member shall participate in the demonstration, which shall last max 3 minutes while others will be guessing which competence has just been shown. After all the role plays debrief the participants.
5 min	d. Evaluation

Debriefing and evaluation

	<p>a. Debriefing for the video: Participants provide answers for 3 questions: What was the message of the video? What did you like the most? How is it related to professionalism? Debriefing for the information shared: What was the catchiest fact for you? How do you feel about professionalism?</p> <p>b. Debriefing for the brainstorming: How did you agree on these 6 competencies? What worked and what didn't work in your small group? What worked in the bigger group and what would you do differently?</p> <p>c. Debriefing for the demonstration: How do you feel after the role play? What was the most difficult / easiest part for you? What was the most important message you wished you demonstrated regarding the competence? How will you use these competences in your life?</p>
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Tips for facilitator

	During the role play the trainer should encourage participants to use different tools.
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Additional materials for participants and trainers

	List of 62 competencies, competency overview with most common competencies - 123test Link
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Session: Communication and Team work

	Themes	Active Listening, Communication, Conflict Handling
	Goal	To enhance participants' communication skills and understand the 4 different styles. Explore how essential both individual and teamwork are as professional competencies
	Objectives	<p>After the session participants will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Identify their own strengths as individuals, and become better team players ▶ Develop better communication towards conflicts
	Group size	20-24
	Time required	90 min
	Overview / short description	The activity involves a group challenge in which participants need to communicate with eyes blindfolded while they try to create a perfectly shaped square by using a rope. The activity helps to discover how to cooperate among teams and handle any conflicts appeared.
	Materials needed	Flipchart, pen, at least a 5-meter rope / group with tight ends, blindfolds
	Complexity	Intermediate

Introduction and implementation

Time	Steps
10 min	a. Explain that this activity is about communication styles and team work as a part of professional competencies, as well as about how you can solve a challenging situation together. Start with an energizer - the human knot. Ask everyone to stand next to each other in a line: shoulder to shoulder, to form a circle. Each person must reach across the circle and take the hands of two other participants. People may not take the hands of the individuals standing directly next to them. When each participant is holding the hands of two other participants, a large, human knot is created. Next, each team must determine how to untangle their arms without letting go of each other's hands. Team members will need to communicate with each other to become untangled. By bending and twisting as needed, the first unit to become untangled wins.
20 min	b. For the second exercise, create new groups of 4. Teamwork as a social intelligence competency is the ability to work with others toward a shared goal, participating actively, sharing responsibility and rewards, and contributing to the capability of the team – these all will be experienced by the participants. Explain the activity: team members have to form a perfect square while being blindfolded. Get everyone to stand in a circle while holding the rope. Once the circle is formed, they can lay the rope on the floor. Each participant then puts on their blindfold, and takes 5 steps backwards. They can begin the activity - to form a square all together while being blindfolded. The activity ends when the team thinks they have formed a square. Participants then take off their blindfolds and see the result. If there is enough time, you can run the activity for the second time giving the team a chance to have a better performance. Debrief.
30 min	c. Theory: With the use of a flipchart explain the 4 communication styles: assertive, passive, aggressive, passive-aggressive. Example for: Passive: difficult to express himself/herself, inability to say no, go-with-the-flow type: "it doesn't matter". Aggressive: Talks too much poor listening, interrupts frequently, points fingers, controlling, criticizes: "because I said so", "I am right". Passive-aggressive: frequent sarcasm, words won't align with action, difficulties with acknowledging emotions: "Fine, whatever". Assertive: expressing desires and needs with confidence: "I statements", the ability to say no "I respect the needs and opinions of others". "We all have the right to express ourselves respectfully and honestly." Debrief and Q&A
10 min	d. Final evaluation

Debriefing and evaluation

	<p>a. Debriefing for the energizer: What are the similarities between communication, teamwork and this exercise? What was your role in this game? What did you do well and what would you do differently? How is it related to professional competencies?</p> <p>b. Debriefing for the challenge of the rope: What problems did you encounter during this challenge? Did you identify a leader? How was leadership demonstrated during the challenge? How did it influence the teamwork? How well did you communicate during the challenge? What conflicts occurred? (In case the activity was done in two rounds) Was there any improvement in the second round? What did you learn from the challenge?</p> <p>c. Debriefing for the theory: Which communication style did you recognize within the team? Which type is yours? How did it influence the teamwork? How does it relate to professional communication and teamwork?</p> <p>d. Final evaluation of the workshop: What did you learn? How is it relevant to your professional life and to this group? How do you feel?</p>
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Additional materials for participants and trainers

Ideally facilitate outside with larger space [Link](#)

Inspiration from this [Link](#)

Session: Creativity and Innovation

	Themes	Mindset, Creative Methods, Innovative Solutions, Cooperation
	Goal	To raise awareness on the importance of creativity and innovation in terms of professional competencies among participants.
	Objectives	<p>After the session participants will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Identify how creativity influences their professional life ▶ Learn how performance and innovation are based on mindset
	Group size	20-24
	Time required	90 min
	Overview / short description	<p>A playful attitude helps people adapt to rapidly changing circumstances by finding creative solutions to problems that arise. Playful behaviour can generate radically new ideas, and those new ideas can lead to new forms of behaviour by which we approach the world. Creativity is about developing ideas and creating new views and behaviours that can be applied in new situations. Creative people are original thinkers. They have many ideas, can quickly change mindsets and come up with new combinations. It is interesting that great thinkers, scientists, designers and artists often regard their work as a play and take a curious and playful attitude in everything they do. Additionally, It is in connection with Carol Dweck's book on growth mindset which is also the topic of this workshop. After studying the behaviour of thousands of children, Dr. Dweck coined the terms “fixed mindset” and “growth mindset” to describe the underlying beliefs people have about learning and intelligence that work also with the attitude towards work.</p>
	Materials needed	flipchart, paper, pen, projector; 1 marshmallow, 1 meter rope, 1 meter tape, 20 spaghetti stick – per group, envelope, measuring tape
	Complexity	Intermediate
	References	Link 1 Link 2 Link 3

Introduction and implementation

Time	Steps
5 min	a. Explain that this activity is about creativity and innovation. Start with a simple energizer (assign a participant to come up with one or prepare something fun and easy yourself)
25 min	b. Detail that the warm up exercise is to boost creativity and innovative thinking. Create groups of 4 and give each group 3 different photos of useless objects. Ask them to come up with as many solutions as they can. The winner team collects the most. Give them 7 minutes for this task. Ask the winner team to present their solutions and invite others to share some results as well.
30 min	c. After the warm up exercise, divide the participants into 3 groups of 7-8 people. Let them know that they are going to overcome another challenge for which they need to think outside of the box. Tell them that this exercise is solved by thousands of people - from kindergarten students to top managers from world-leading companies; this might lead them to taking it more seriously. Make sure you're very clear about the goal of the exercise, as well as you are clearly communicating the rules. Give out the tools for the challenge for each group, do not let them start before you grant permission. You can keep the tools in a closed envelope. Explain the rules: "You have 18 minutes to build a tower as tall as possible, a tower that stands alone on top with a marshmallow. Thus, the team that builds the tallest free-standing structure measured from the table's surface to the top of the marshmallow, wins the challenge. Your prize is going to be..." Rules: the structure must be standing independently and you cannot hold it. The whole marshmallow must be on top. If any team tries to intentionally destroy, hide or eat its marshmallow, is disqualified. There's no restriction on how much materials the teams use. Find more info Link Additionally, you can put some background music and start the countdown. Observe the teams, pay attention to the time. Emphasize the rules, comment on the progress and encourage competition. Once ready, ask participants to let the structure stand at its own, then measure each structure and announce the winner. Explain the theory: Kids excel at this challenge much better than business students: For almost every form of innovation children have always found a way to create taller and more intriguing structures. Prototyping is crucial: Kids and kindergarten tend to outsmart business school students because they spend more time prototyping and playing. Kids will often start by sticking the marshmallows in the sticks and build up from there. On the contrary, business school students spend most of the time coming up with a plan. Eventually, they realize that they don't have enough time to fine-tune the design when the marshmallows go on top. The Marshmallow challenge exposes the hidden assumptions of a project: The common thought at the beginning of the challenge is that marshmallows are light enough to be supported by spaghetti sticks. However, once you start building the structure, you notice that marshmallows aren't as light as you initially thought. The marshmallow challenge highlights the need to be aware of the assumptions in our projects – the cost of the product, customer preferences, duration of the project – and test them out as soon and as frequently as possible. This is the mechanism that drives innovation. Debrief.
20 min	d. Invite participants to sit back in a circle and present Carol Dweck's theory on growth and fixed mindset. Take the given test and debrief on their performance. Find the quiz Link A "fixed mindset" assumes that our character, intelligence, and creative ability are static givens which we can't change in any meaningful way, and success is the affirmation of that inherent intelligence, an assessment of how those givens measure up against an equally fixed standard; striving for success and avoiding failure at all costs become a way of maintaining the sense of being smart or skilled. A "growth mindset," on the other hand, thrives on challenge and sees failure not as evidence of unintelligence but as a heartening springboard for growth and for stretching our existing abilities. Out of these two mindsets, which we manifest from a very early age, springs a great deal of our behaviour, our relationship with success and failure in both professional and personal contexts.
10 min	e. Final evaluation

Debriefing and evaluation

a. Debriefing for useless objects:

What has happened? How would you assess the innovation process?

What encouraged you to be creative?

How is it connected to professional life?

b. Debriefing for marshmallow:

What worked among the team and what could be improved?

Were you creative or innovative? How?

How would you evaluate the communication?

Who was the leader and why?

c. Debriefing for the quiz:

What result did you get? Do you agree?

Why is it important to understand your mindset?

How can this information be useful for you?

d. Evaluation of the workshop

What takeaways do I have?

Tips for facilitator

At marshmallow you probably want to repeat the rules for a few times; people might be playing with the ingredients without paying enough attention; and offer a HUGE prize for the winner (as it can destroy the team performance). Also there will always be a few teams who will try to bend the rules or even cheat. Make sure they're not getting any unfair advantage. Be encouraging about creative ideas, even if they're slightly bending the rules; announce these attempts out loud. It might help other teams to think outside the box.

Additional materials for participants and trainers

Read the book "Growth Mindset" by Carol Dweck

Handouts

You can access the quiz on the fixed and growth mindsets (or you can use the projector) [Link](#)

Useless objects [Link](#)

Session: Emotional Intelligence

	Themes	Team work, cooperation, leadership, communication, EI, career management
	Goal	Participants will explore emotional intelligence, as well as the impact of their own and other's behavior at workplace
	Objectives	After the session participants will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Understand the importance of EI and be able to change their own mindset▶ Define the importance of EI and realize how behavior influences teamwork
	Group size	20-24
	Time required	90 min
	Overview / short description	EQ is our ability to manage our emotions and get along with others. Since getting along in the workplace has a direct impact on our livelihood, it's highly beneficial to understand our EQ strengths and weaknesses.
	Materials needed	Flip chart, markers, A4 papers, pen, pencils
	Complexity	Intermediate
	References	Adele B. Lynn & Janele R. Lynn: Emotional Intelligence

Introduction and implementation

Time	Steps
10 min	<p>a. Explain that this activity is about emotional intelligence in career management, as well as about how it influences your own self or your team. Plan a short energizer.</p>
30 min	<p>b. Ask participants about the importance of EI. Tell them, that this exercise is going to help them better understand how people think about certain things, and how they can transform their negative mindset into positive. This exercise contributes to managing one's emotions and helps to avoid self-destroying situations (for instance when you are afraid of your boss, each time you go to work you search for your own mistakes since you are worried that your boss can discover them on his/her own). Ask your participants to think of a current and/or real-life example of them being in a negative situation (there is no need to disclose it while group sharing). Ask the participants to have some thoughts about the situation paying attention to especially the negative points. Provide each of them with a piece of paper so they can divide the page into 2 columns. They should write down all the negative statements in column 1. Then ask them to “switch their mindset” and write all the positive or useful patterns in column 2. Debrief.</p>
45 min	<p>c. Explain the goal of the next exercise: to demonstrate how we influence a group's mindset by our behaviour. Companies need people who are able to understand consciously how their behaviour impacts others. Create groups of 8 people (each participant says a number in a row - 1,2,3,4...). Tell each group that the task is to create a list of the closest restaurants and rank them according to their quality. Highlight that this is a task about teamwork and later they will share the list with the rest. As a second step, each group is given a bunch of cards (handouts) and each group member gets a role/behaviour pattern to follow. The information on the card is confidential. Each team must complete the task within 8 minutes (to create a list of restaurants and decide where to have dinner). Debrief in 8 minutes.</p>
5 min	<p>d. Final evaluation</p>

Debriefing and evaluation

<p>a. Debrief the mindset switch: Once the columns are ready, ask participants: What will happen if you focus on column 1 and what will happen if you focus on column 2? What is the difference? How do you make a decide on approaching a situation/person? Is it possible to change one's mindset? What can the advantages of changing one's viewpoint be ? What impact would it have?</p> <p>b. Debrief the restaurant task: Could you finish the list? What worked? What did not work? How did you react to other's behaviour? How did you feel about the team and the results? What emotions did you have during the exercise?</p> <p>c. Final evaluation questions: How would you assess this exercise? What is your takeaway?</p>

Tips for facilitator

<p>During the role play the trainer should encourage participants to use different tools.</p>

Additional materials for participants and trainers

<p>Daniel Goleman: Emotional intelligence Dr Bradley Nelson: Emotion code</p>

Handouts

Cards for each team (restaurant)

Put your leg on the table,
look at your phone screen
and try to look bored.

Stand up and leave
the room for 30 seconds
without telling
the team why you left.

Every 2nd minute tell
the whole group that
you are not interested in
this task trying to make
the whole team stop it.

Tell every 3rd talker
that whatever he/she says
it is rubbish and useless.

If somebody talks,
interrupt them.

Tell every participant
that you like his/her
recommendation.

Offer the group to be the
one who will do the list
and complete it at all costs.

Give positive feedback to
each team member and
embrace the list as if
“the list is great”.