

A group of people, including men and women of various ages, are standing in a line on a grassy field. They are all holding their hands out, palms down, in a gesture of unity or teamwork. The background features a dense forest of tall evergreen trees and a small wooden building with a gabled roof. The lighting suggests it's a sunny day, with shadows cast on the grass. The overall mood is positive and collaborative.

IM PROVE Handbook

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IMPACT

IM-PROVE

ABOUT US

ABOUT THE HANDBOOK

ABOUT THE HADBOOK

The IM-PROVE handbook is primarily focused to equip its users with simple theories and tools, how to:

Lead participants of their activities easily through learning reflection, so they will be able to express what they have learnt during this activity

Introduce and work with the IM-PROVE application quickly and easily (using it as a tool for self-reflection during the activity or after it)

SOME MORE INFORMATION

This website is full of simple explanations and easy activities you can use in your activities - voluntary projects (workcamps), youth exchanges, trainings, educational workshops.

WHAT IS THE PRIMARY TARGET GROUP?

Our primary target group are the workcamp leaders - leaders of short voluntary projects, who take care of a group of international volunteers from all over the world for 1-3 weeks. Their role is to connect the group with the local community, as well as organize activities during workcamp and reflect learning with volunteers.

WHAT IS THE USE OF HANDBOOK FOR WORKCAMP LEADERS?

As workcamp leaders are usually also volunteers and often, it's their first experience with leading such an activity, we would like to support them by this handbook, so they are able to easily understand the basics of learning in volunteering and have variety of methods to use with the participants. We believe this is the right way to strengthen the learning dimension in volunteering activities, which is becoming more and more important recently: Volunteering is for example an important added value in the CVs of young people entering the labour market.

WHO ELSE CAN USE THE HANDBOOK?

Of course, this handbook is also useful for leaders of other types of projects, working with groups of participants - facilitators, trainers or youth workers - who work with learning reflection in their activities.

HOW TO READ THIS HANDBOOK:

We propose you to start with **chapter 1**, which covers basic understanding of the competences. These are the basic elements we focus on in volunteering activities - you learn = you develop your competences. That's why it's first important to understand what is competence and which competences are there, before you jump into doing learning reflection with the participants.

Second chapter explains, how to use one simple and useful tool for self-reflection of learning in volunteering. This application is called IM-PROVE and the chapter will help you understand, how it works and how it can help you and other volunteers in learning reflection. Also, there is explained how knowing what you learnt by volunteering can help you during job hunt.

Third chapter then builds on these two and contains simple tips and tricks on how to reflect learning.

And finally, **chapter 4** summarizes activities you can do with participants on your activities and projects. They are mostly focused on how to reflect learning easily, how to explain relevant information to your participants, etc. You can download the whole chapter or each activity separately, if you need. Some of the activities are described in text, some in photos and some in videos.



ABOUT COMPETENCES

INTRO TO THE COMPETENCES

In the first chapter, we offer the introduction to the topic. This chapter will cover explanation of what exactly “competence” is together with simple exercises how you can explain it to your participants. Along with this, we will focus on the competences developed in volunteering activities and how they can be useful in our personal and professional lives.

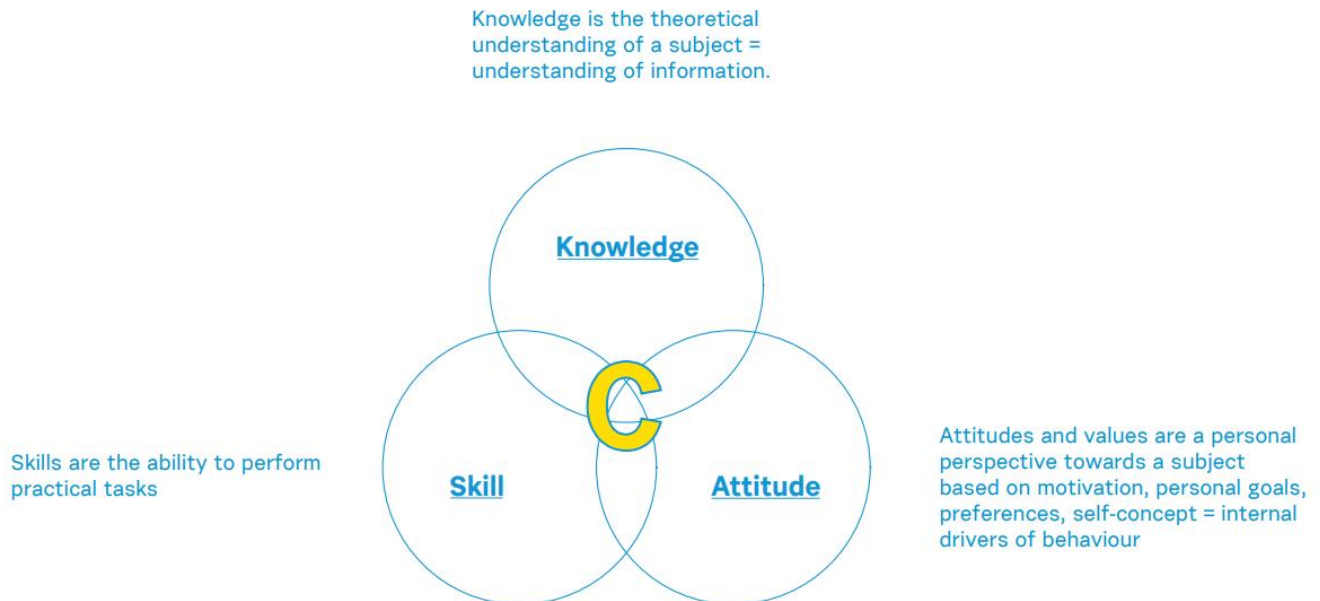
WHAT IS COMPETENCE?

DEFINITION OF COMPETENCE

The word competence can be defined as, for instance:

- ✓ *The ability to do something well.* (Cambridge Dictionary)
- ✓ *Competences are the result from the mobilisation of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values as well as their experiences that make an individual in a specific context to solve a problem or situation that presents itself in different arenas of their life.* (Desk/field research of education in youth voluntary projects, project “I’VE EXPERIENCE”)
- ✓ *The quality or state of being able or suitable for a particular task; the quality or state of being competent for a particular task.* (Wiktionary)
- ✓ *A cluster of related abilities, commitments, knowledge, and skills that enable a person (or an organization) to act effectively in a job or situation. Competence indicates sufficiency of knowledge and skills that enable someone to act in a wide variety of situations.* (Business Dictionary)

THREE COMPONENTS OF COMPETENCE



LET'S UNDERSTAND IT BETTER: EXERCISES

- ✓ Imagine you are going for a bike trip. Which knowledge, skills and attitudes you must have to do that? Make a list of at least 5 of each and write them somewhere.

Which knowledge, skills and attitudes did you come up with? Here are some:



Is it more clear now? If you still have doubts or don't understand properly what competence is, you can try next exercise. In case all is clear for you, go directly to next topic.

- ✓ Here is a Cartoon called 'Shaun the Sheep'.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WeQw6utcU_g&t=47s

Watch it now. When you're done, select one or more of these characters and write down, which knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to do what they do.

COMPETENCES IN CATEGORIES

We can divide the competences into two categories:

"HARD COMPETENCES"

(sometimes referred to as “hard skills”, but as the word “competence” covers skills, but also knowledge and attitudes, we prefer to use the word “competence” to “skill”) - something you can learn from books or by heart and practice by hands, such as math, accounting, programming or IT in general, graphic design, writing articles, statistics, etc.

- ✓ For example when riding a bike, the process of how you ride a bike is a ‘hard competence’ - you must know how it works and how to balance, how to use the pedals and coordinate yourself.
- ✓

"SOFT COMPETENCES"

(sometimes referred to as “soft skills” or “people skills and self- management skills”) - are the activities that you do to manage yourself and manage or work with other people, such as communication, flexibility, independence, teamwork, or leadership.

- ✓ When going for a bike trip, soft competence you need is for instance to plan your trip (distance, time, having water with you...), communicate and plan with other people that go for a trip with you, etc.

COMPETENCES IN PRACTICE

To imagine what we practically mean with the competence, here are some examples how competences are linked with situations that happen to us in our real life or while volunteering. Those competences can emerge through various sub tasks and consideration in the build-up of the situation or the objective.

Situation 1: Organisation of a multi-day international meeting

Sub-tasks: communication with participants, considering the different expectations and experiences of the participants, be able to adapt spontaneously to satisfy the needs of the group, prioritising individual needs and keep track of the group objectives.

Competences: leadership (if you’re coordinating), communication, creativity and problem solving, flexibility, project management.

Situation 2: Planning a weekend trip with friends

Sub-tasks: communication with participants, considering the different expectations of the participants, covering back-up plan.

Competences: leadership, communication, creativity and problem solving.

Situation 3: Individual travel to a foreign country

Sub-tasks: effective communication in a foreign language, cultural consideration, advance preparation of the “field”, planning different options (accommodation, transportation, food, etc.).

Competences: foreign language, work with information, intercultural communication, independence, self-management, communication.

Situation 4: Planning a study session with a friend before an exam

Sub-tasks: consider different work styles and rhythms, planning a suitable and effective study schedule, effective and fair sharing of duties, consider other resources if an unsolved problem arises

Competences: leadership, communication, creativity and problem solving, teamwork, effectivity, work with information

Situation 5: Applying for a job and preparing for an interview

Sub-tasks: effective written and oral communication, analysis of the job description, ability to prove computer literacy skills, targeted selfpromotion, promote flexible attitude.

Competences: work with information, computer literacy, promotion, effectivity, communication, flexibility.

Situation 6: Coaching a sports team

Sub-tasks: sensitive and considerate dialogue with the players, promotion of the results, dynamic and inclusive training, management of player's schedules, effective and inclusive observation.

Competences: (intercultural) communication, promotion, leadership, teamwork, effectivity, creativity and problem solving.

Situation 7: Helping foreigners find their way

Sub-tasks: having an open-minded and resourceful communication, be flexible and aware of your own environment.

Competences: intercultural communication, foreign language, creativity and problem solving.

As you can see, each experience is connected to our learning and you bet the international experience (such as the ones from workcamps, youth exchanges or long-term volunteering) has enormous impact on our personal and professional development.

When talking about workcamp, it's usually:

- ✓ When going for a bike trip, soft competence you need is for instance to plan your trip (distance, time, having water with you...), communicate and plan with other people that go for a trip with you, etc. 6 Easy to name the **hard competences** people developed: such as agricultural work - how to work with different types of plant, how to grow plants in permacultural environment; construction work, restoration, renovation - basics of archaeology, how does renovation of old building or castle work from the beginning till the end, what is the best way to move big stones, how to work with old techniques of house building etc.
- ✓ Quite hard to name which **soft competences** developed: usually, communication in foreign language and perhaps independence pops up, but other soft competences are hard to reflect on and formulate which ones have developed during the project. The solution to this issue is offered in our next chapters. For example when riding a bike, the process of how you ride a bike is a **hard competence** - you must know how it works and how to balance, how to use the pedals and coordinate yourself.



SELF REFLECTION AND LEARNING

SELF-REFLECTION OF LEARNING AND WHY TO REFLECT IT ANYWAY?

In this chapter, we will focus on a concrete tool called IM-PROVE. It is a simple application accessible on-line (improve.inexsda.cz) or in app store for iOS and Android.

Basically, it's the on-line tool that help volunteers in different roles (participants, leaders, trainers...) reflect on what they learnt during their volunteering activities. You can have all the volunteering activities recorded here.

See the intro video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=02FBkCnFA04&feature=youtu.be>

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Easily - remember when we showed you in previous chapter the real-life examples and connected them with competences? This is the basic principle the IM-PROVE works on.

Step 1 - Sign up on [IM-PROVE App](#)

Step 2 - The application will lead you through filling in your profile

Step 3 - You can enter your first project. The app will lead you through it. You basically put some info about the type of project, your role in it, select few experiences you have already done in the project and put some details to these. After this process, the application will show you, which competences have you developed by these experiences.

Step 4 - Then, you can either add other experiences to the same project, add new projects or browse through other functionalities of the application.

OTHER THINGS IM-PROVE CAN HELP YOU WITH

To sum up, IM-PROVE will help you realize what you learnt and what you're able to do, plan your next steps in volunteering, and present your valuable experience on the outside (e.g. on the labour market). It helps you to show, that volunteering is, among other things, valuable tool how to learn important competences for personal and professional life.

Concrete examples, how to use IM-PROVE:

Your CV - Once you've used IM-PROVE to find out which competences you've developed by volunteering, you can easily fill them to your CV. It's beneficial to show you are aware of your competences and add information of where you developed them - it increases credibility and attractiveness of your CV for potential employers. More info about how to fill in your CV: europass.cedefop.europa.eu.

Your Youthpass - in case you have participated in a project granted by the Erasmus + Programme, you should fill in what you learnt at this project to Youthpass - IM-PROVE will advise you, how to do it. More info about Youthpass: www.youthpass.eu.

Presenting your profile on the outside - if you want, you can activate your IM-PROVE public profile and show the world (friends or potential employers), which competences you have developed by volunteering.

Recognition of the experience - for each project, you can ask for an eBadge, which will be confirmed by the organizer of your project. This eBadge will display on the public profile and will prove you really have the experience your public profile is showing. It raises credibility of this page, especially for example if you apply for a job.

Selecting your personal goal(s) and the competences you would like to focus on - better target your learning and choose the next volunteering activities based on what you actually need to work on. To sum up, IM-PROVE will help you realize what you learnt and what you're able to do, plan your next steps in volunteering, and present your valuable experience on the outside (e.g. on the labour market). It helps you to show, that volunteering is, among other things, - valuable tool how to learn important competences for personal and professional life.

DOES THE LABOR MARKET WANT TO KNOW?

It's a good question - the same one we have asked few years ago. INEX-SDA together with Zavod Volontariat has done a research on how does labour market perceive volunteering. Here are some results relevant for you:

- ✓ Volunteering is seen in both Czech Republic and Slovenia as beneficial to both the employees and the companies. To the employees, skills development, teambuilding and socializing effects are seen as the biggest assets; while to the companies, the resulting PR potential is seen as important.
- ✓ Volunteering experiences increase loyalty of the employees towards their employers, since they are provided with a meaningful activity above the framework of the working contract.
- ✓ Offering satisfactory volunteering experience can positively affect the work performance of the employees, combining all positive effects: skills gain (organizational and communication skills, creative thinking, etc.), socialization impacts, valuable personal development (self-confidence, determination, openness, etc.), and the overall boost in loyalty of the employee.

When it comes to job applicants, it is seen as important in both countries, that any experience, including the volunteering one, should be related to the working position the person is applying for; and in both countries, the volunteering experience is seen as rather valuable especially to the young people with no or little previous working experience (e.g. fresh graduates, etc.), who are therefore able to show favourable personal attributes, such as willingness to work, or a proactive attitude.

On the other hand, while companies based in the Czech Republic usually do not enquire about the volunteering experience of their job applicants, in Slovenia-based companies, the volunteering is one of the topics often touched-upon during the job interview. Volunteering experience is in this context usually considered to be a positive factor and is taken as an advantage of the job applicant.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE VOLUNTEERS

✓ Engage in company volunteering.

Reports from both countries show, that company volunteering has a positive potential for personal and professional development of the employees. Like any volunteering, it cannot exist in absence of initiative. If your company already provides volunteering opportunities, use them. If not, ask for them and initiate them.

✓ Utilize the information to your advantage during job hunt.

In both countries, the findings suggest that simply stating all and any volunteering experience when applying for a job is not enough. Potential job applicants should pick particular volunteering experience to mention in their CVs and during the job interviews, in order to maximize the profits of such experience. This experience should always be linked to the position the applicant is running for.

✓ Stress the creative volunteering experiences.

Job applicants, especially in Slovenia, with long-term volunteering experience might put a special emphasis on their own initiatives within such experience, in order to avoid being perceived as less entrepreneurial than their peers. Examples of such initiatives within their volunteering experience might be included into their CVs (e.g. as a special achievement listed at the volunteering position) and should be presented during the job interview as well.

TIPS AND TRICS

HOW TO REFLECT LEARNING WITH YOUR PARTICIPANTS

Now, you should understand what competences are, you can link which competences are there and you know, how to use IM-PROVE and how are all these useful for you when applying for a job (but hopefully also for other situations that happen to everybody on a daily basis). At this chapter, we finally focus on how to prepare and realize reflection of learning for participants of your activities.

Always focus on your participants

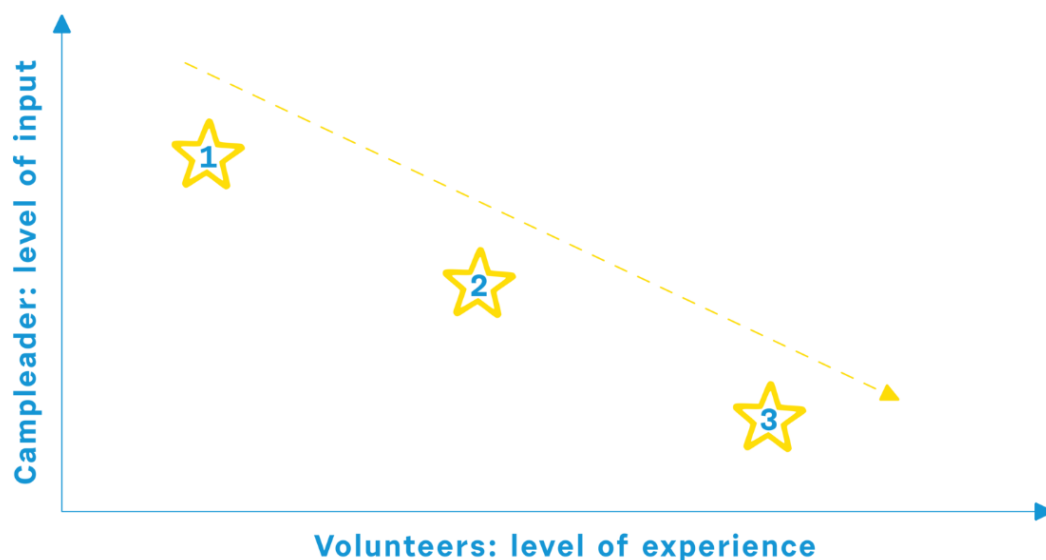
What is the most important when preparing learning reflection? Always think about your target group.

Usually, the target group is diverse and often, they start from the beginning. If you work with participants on workcamps or youth exchanges, it's very probable they have never heard anything about competences, therefore reflecting learning will be difficult for them - they won't know what to reflect on. As we mentioned, they will probably formulate the hard competences they learnt, the foreign language communication and perhaps independence, but most other competences will stay hidden. What can you do?

START FROM THE BEGINNING.

When you're thinking about what to do with the participants (at workcamps for example), be aware that they are not on the same levels in knowledge and skills in the topics as you do. They might understand what workcamp is and they might not, they might know what is competence and how to reflect learning and they might not... Always start from getting info from them - what do they actually know already and build on it. If you don't know their experience, or you think they are rather unexperienced, rather start from the very beginning than to skip the start and get half of the group lost. :)

This simple image shows, where we propose you to start with the input based on the level of experience of the participants with competences, learning reflection and volunteering as such.



1. HIGH LEVEL OF CAMPLEADER'S INPUT AND LOW LEVEL OF EXPERIENCE OF THE VOLUNTEERS

- a. Explain what a workcamp is
- b. Explain what are competences
- c. Ask them to name competences
- d. Ask participants if they already have experiences with reflection activities
- e. Explain the purpose of the reflection activities
- f. Introduce IM-PROVE more in details and give them time to explore

2. MEDIUM LEVEL OF CAMPLEADER'S INPUT AND MEDIUM LEVEL OF EXPERIENCE OF THE VOLUNTEERS

- a. Ask them to name competences
- b. Test their knowledge and comprehension of the word competence
- c. Explore their experience with reflection activities

3. LOW LEVEL OF INPUT AND HIGH LEVEL OF EXPERIENCE OF THE VOLUNTEERS

- a. Ask them what type of competences they have developed most through workcamps
- b. What type of competence was the most difficult to develop?
- c. What would you change in your next workcamp?
- d. Ask them which reflection activity they already know
- e. Ask them to plan their own learning objectives for this workcamp

Tip: A personal learning journal for short reflections could also be used for daily use in addition to other tools and methods. At the end of the day give volunteers/participants ten to fifteen minutes to reflect on what happened during the day. They can write the situations into the diaries and reflect on their learning from each of these situations. As it depends on their personal learning style it may happen some will never use it, but these can for instance take photos and at the end of the day, they can chose one that presents their learning moment of the day.

You can even include a short writing + meditation at the beginning of the day, where participants take time to look ahead and prepare for the day ahead. This and many more methods you can find in the next chapter Concrete Methods.

OTHER IMPORTANT THINGS TO MENTION (when preparing learning reflection)

Of course, there are many tips and tricks that will help you prepare the learning reflection in your activities. Here, we pointed out some that hopefully will be most useful for you.

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1. Don't mix the reflection and evaluation

There is a difference between these two and it is important to know precisely which one you want to focus on during the particular activity.

During the reflection, people connect lessons learned from the activities with their world, reflecting on how they can use the learning experience in their own personal and professional lives. The main purpose of this is to add value to the experience. Reflection enables us to name our knowledge, skills, attitudes -- competences, observe and become more aware on what and how we learn or behave in certain situations.

Evaluation is focused on something different - it helps us assess some features which are important. It contains questions as if you found the accommodation appropriate, how would you assess the campleaders or what did you learn and will use when you come home. Evaluation usually provides information to the organizers or the leaders, how the participants assess the project and what can be done differently next time.

2. Different learning styles - diverse methods

People learn in various ways. Somebody needs to hear things to realize and remember; others need to visualize it or talk to somebody to properly understand. Some people need books and resources to read about the thing and form their own opinion. Groups of participants on educational activities are always mixture of all these. It means that during activities and their reflection, it is advised to mix different methods to make sure most of the participants go through it and learn as much as they can. You can for example use sharing in pairs, metaphoric methods, individual reflection, learning diraries, artistic methods...

3. Ask good questions

Base of reflective activities is to ask the right questions, that will help the participant with reflecting their own experience. Questions open the door to dialogue and discovery. They are an invitation to creativity and breakthrough thinking. Questions can lead to movement and action on key issues; by generating creative insights, they can ignite change.

What makes a question powerful? It generates curiosity in the listener, stimulates reflective conversation, is thought-provoking, surfaces underlying assumptions, invites creativity and new possibilities, generates energy and forward movement, channels attention and focus inquiry, stays with participants, touches a deep meaning, evokes more questions. A powerful question also has the capacity to "travel well" - to spread beyond the place where it began into larger networks of conversations throughout an organisation or a community.

The advantage of questions before answer is, that questions lead to exploring and answers lead to closing. Close questions also close communication. These are yes/no questions. We try to avoid them. Sometimes they are appropriate but with more open questions we stimulate more reflective thinking in a deeper level of conversation.

Questions as Why?, How?, What? Are the ones that help a volunteer/participant to move forward, that provokes thoughtful exploration and evokes creative thinking.

When you ask a powerful question, it may happen that the questioned person will be quiet. A question can cause many things in a person, it can open a new door to which they don't have an answer. Silence is a good sign, that the question started a process in a person, it means that a person is thinking about something. Try to be friends with the silence, don't be afraid, this is also a part of a personal support.

It is also very possible that there is more than one answer to the question or that there is no real answer. That's why a person starts to explore. It does not need to find a solution or an action right away, and it is not necessary to offer an answer or solution to the person.

Source: Vogt, E., Brown, J., and Issacs, D. (2003). The Art of powerful questions: Catalyzing insight, innovation, and action. Whole Systems Associates: Mill Valley, CA.

4. Take the group into account

When considering the reflection tool, it is also important to take the size of your group into account. Some methods might work easily with 5 but worse with 15 participants. Also, if you have people in the group, who have rather lower communication level in English or any other language you use, select more simple methods with less speaking to reflect the learning. In this way, they will be more involved and will express more freely. Another option is that they work in groups in their own language, in order to have a deeper discussion.

5. Timing is important

It is also important to think about timing when you're doing the activity. We suggest diversifying and changing the way you work throughout the process. At the start of the activity, it is good to do more work in a large group since the group building process is still very important in this stage; people are getting to know each other and finding their place in the group. On the other hand, working in small groups can create a greater feeling of security. Alternatively, you could combine the two. Towards the end of the activity it can be good to work more with individual reflection (for instance using the IM-PROVE app) since the participants are the ones who will have to transfer the lessons learned into their own context.

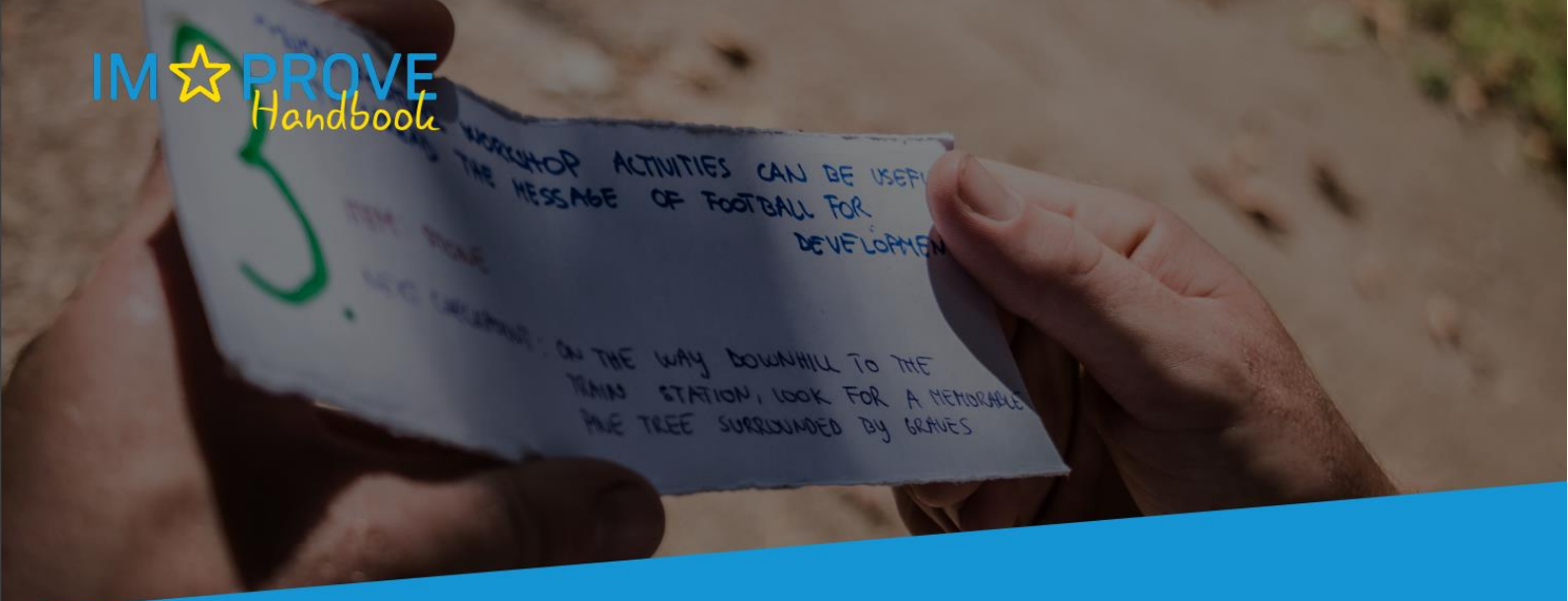
The timing of the learning reflections are the best at the end of each day, or at the start of each day. It can also be less frequent, as every second day or just twice/three times during the project - depending on your group, priorities, possibilities, energy in the group...

6. Be careful of personal boundaries

Some issues can have a negative effect on the reflection and learning process, such as cultural sensitivity and personal boundaries. If you cross someone's personal boundaries they might close themselves or get into a panic zone. Also, games where people drop out one after the other stop their active participation in the reflection process. To avoid these situations, we prepared list of activities for you to use with your volunteers/participants in the next chapter. :-)

Tip: A personal learning journal for short reflections could also be used for daily use in addition to other tools and methods. At the end of the day give volunteers/participants ten to fifteen minutes to reflect on what happened during the day. They can write the situations into the diaries and reflect on their learning from each of these situations. As it depends on their personal learning style it may happen some will never use it, but these can for instance take photos and at the end of the day, they can choose one that presents their learning moment of the day.

You can even include a short writing + meditation at the beginning of the day, where participants take time to look ahead and prepare for the day ahead. This and many more methods you can find in the next chapter.



CONCRETE METHODS

Activities for workcamp participants

Competence reflection orientation game

Length: 1hr preparation - 1-3hrs activity time (depending on the extent)

Main objective(s): Reflecting in groups and in the field about the competence development

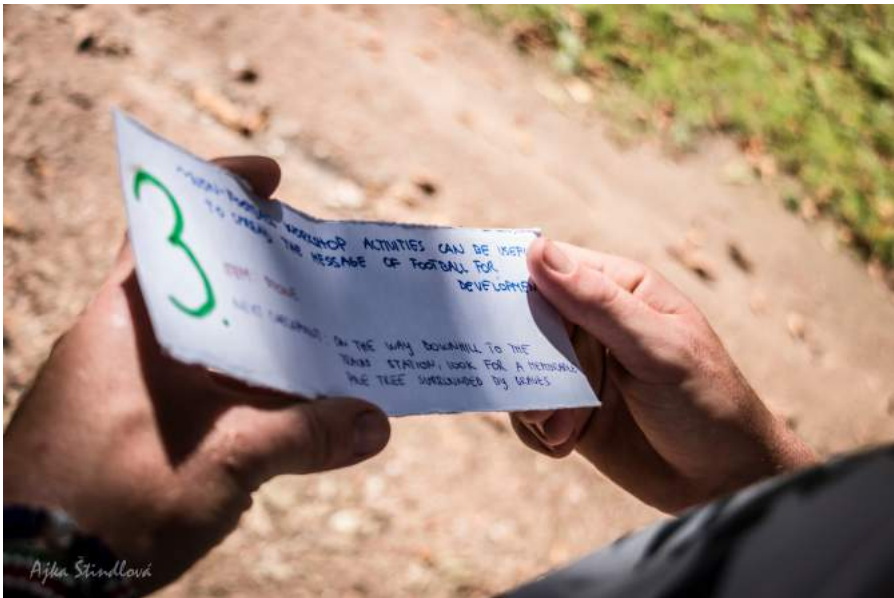
Materials needed: Station cards, direction signals, markers, tape, cones or visible objects, pens

Outline (step by step methodology):

1. Prepare station cards, participant reflection forms and the initial orientation cards. The station cards contains the number of the station, the name of a competence, the reflection activity and the instructions how to get to the next station (ex. "2. Station - Communication - How much did this workcamp help youdevelop your communication skills? Rate from 1 to 5 - 1 not at all/5 a lot - The next station is on your way to the castle under the small bridge"). The reflection forms are blank and only have the number of the stations on them. The orientation card contains the indication where each group should start from (ex. "You start from station 8. You will find this station by the entrance of the castle next to the small well").
2. Set up the orientation path in the surrounding area (forets, park, garden, etc). The path's length depends on the length of the activity you want to have. Make sure the path is well marked so the participants cannot get lost easilly.
3. On the path mark 5 to 10 station with a cone or a visible object and leave the corresponding station card there'.
4. Divide the group in groups of 2-3 and give each participant a pen and a relfection form. Each group also recives the first orientation card, which instructs them to which station they should start from.
5. Give the instruction to the participants (ex. You will play an orientation game. Each group will need to pass through 9 stations. Each station represents a competence and is marked by a cone and has a station card with instructions. At each of the station you need to reflect on the competence and follow the given instructions using your form. On each station it will be indicated how to find the next station. Once you have checked all the stations, come back to the camp).
6. At the end debrief the activity with all the group.

Notes: During the activity it is good to be on the path and guide the participants who might have problems finding the path. Otherwise positive experience from Football for Development campaign evaluation 2017 and 2018.

Method was used in project Football for Development: www.fotbalprorozvoj.org



Activities for workcamp participants

Creative competence reflection performance

Length: 2hrs preparation - 15-30min presentation

Main objective(s): Reflect in a creative and entertaining way the competence development

Materials needed: Paper, pens, scissors, bowl (or bucket or hat)

Outline (step by step methodology):

1. Write down the competences on small paper/cards (you can use those that are listed in IM-PROVE app)
2. Mix them in 1 bowl
3. Divide the group in 2-3 groups
4. Ask each group to pick 3 to 5 cards (depending on the size of each groups and nr. of cards)
5. Then ask each group to create a performance out of the set of cards (the type of performance: song, theatre, foto shooting, dance,... is left free to the creative appreciation of each group - it can even be something as you can see on the picture), which reflects their competence development. The guidelines should remain basic, as the task should encourage the free and creative minds of the participants.
6. Give them 2hrs to create their performance
7. Finally give each group 15-30min to present their outcome
8. Run a small debriefing with all the participants about the activity - how did it go, what did they struggle with, answering their questions etc.

Notes: Method was used in project Football for Development: www.fotbalprorozvoj.org



Activities for workcamp participants

Reflection ball

Length: Depends on the size of the group and their participation - from 5-15 minutes

Main objective(s): Reflection in groups

Materials needed: Soft ball

Outline (step by step methodology):

1. Put participants in the circle
2. Ask them to think about the most important lesson learned from the same day or the day before. (You can use the questions we prepared. We would recomend you to choose only 2-3 each time.)
3. Throw the ball to the first participant, after answering this question, the participant throws the ball to another person etc.

Guiding questions

1. Now that it's over, what are my first thoughts about this overall workcamp?
2. What were some of the most interesting discoveries I made while working on this workcamp? About myself? About others?
3. What were some of my most challenging moments and what made them so?
4. What were some of my most powerful learning moments and what made them so?
5. What is the most important thing I learned personally?
6. What got in the way of my progress, if anything?
7. How well did I and my team communicate overall?
8. What were some things my teammates did that helped me to learn or overcome obstacles?
9. How did I help others during this process?
10. Were my goals/expectations mostly met, and how much did I deviate from them if any?
11. What did I learn were my greatest strengths? My biggest areas for improvement?
12. What would I do differently if I were to approach the same problem again?
13. What moments was I most proud of?
14. What could I do differently from a personal standpoint the next time I work with the same group or a different one?
15. What's the one thing about myself above all others I would like to work to improve?
16. How can I better support and encourage my teammates on future projects?
17. How will I use what I've learned in the future?
18. What did I see that was different or unfamiliar?
19. What do I feel about what I saw or experienced?
20. What made me uncomfortable? Why was I uncomfortable?
21. Was there anything really difficult that happened at the workcamp? If so, why?
22. Was there anything that really disturbed you? Why?
23. What questions did this experience bring up for me?
24. What did the people I encountered teach me about myself, about the world?
25. Why did you decide to do this?
26. What have I learned about myself through this experience?
27. How have you challenged yourself, your ideals, your philosophies, your concept of life or the way you live?

Activities for workcamp participants

Reflection triads

Length: 45min

Main objective(s): Practice active listening and reflection

Materials needed: papers, pens

Outline (step by step methodology):

The participants are going to work in groups of three, where each participant gets to try three certain roles; speaker, listener and recorder.

Share the question(s) they are going to reflect upon, for example, at which moment in my life did I learn the most valuable lesson? What was present then? Tell them that they have 10 minutes in each role and that you are going to tell them when half of the time is left, as well as when to switch roles.

Give all instructions before you divide them up into groups of three (preferably group participants that do not know each other very well) and ask them to decide who is going to start in which role.

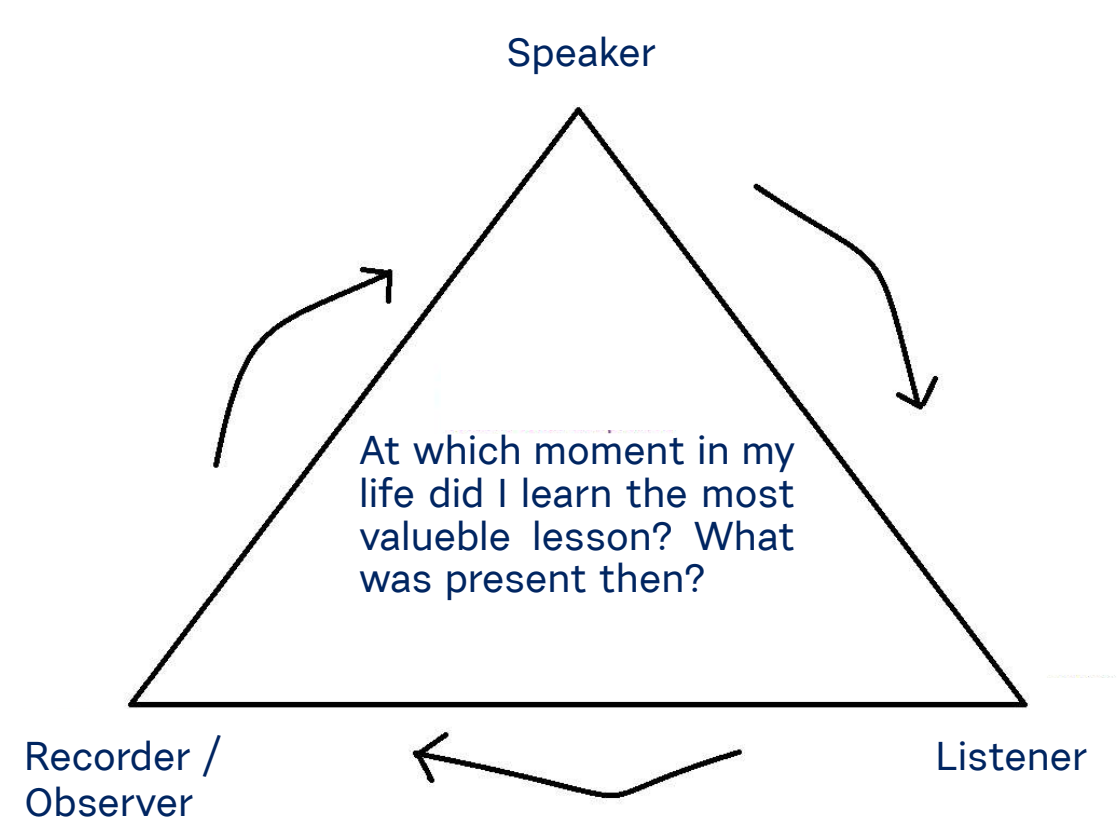
Distribute three papers and some pencils to each group and let them spread out and start.

After 10 minutes, let the participants know it's time to switch roles (make a sound, ring a bell, put on some music so they know they should finish and start over with different roles).

Repeat the process, until all participants are in all roles.

After sharing is complete, invite all the participants in the plenary and debrief with the following questions: What happened? How was this for you? How did you feel when you had to share? How did you feel being in different roles? Which one was the most comfortable for you? What was the most important thing you learnt or realized?

You can also see how the method works in practice: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zUvCCsKaUFc&feature=youtu.be>



Activities for workcamp participants

Blob tree

Length: 15-30minutes

Main objective(s): reflection

Materials needed: Blob tree copies (no. = no. of volunteers), colors/markers

Outline (step by step methodology):

Blob Tree was created by behavioural psychologist Pip Wilson, who is a psycho-educational gamester and EQ developer. This test helps us to recognize and strengthen emotions.

The Blobs are simple. They deal with deep issues using the primary languages we learn from infancy – feelings and body language. The Blobs are neither male nor female, young nor old, European nor African, ancient nor modern. They are outside of culture. Blobs are the best of us and the worst of us. They don't tell us what we ought to do, or what we mustn't do...they merely show us how a variety of people feel. Without words, the Blobs can be interpreted in a hundred different ways. There is no right and wrong about the Blobs, which is very important. A leader who uses them in a 'one way of reading them only way' will find that the rest of their group become very frustrated in discussions.

Each picture is a means to a conversation, rather than a problem to be solved or a message to be agreed upon. If the people you are working with read the characters in totally opposing ways, that's fine. We each see the world through our own eyes. Allowing others to share their feelings enables group members to understand and appreciate one another. For each of us, emotional literacy is a journey of self understanding.

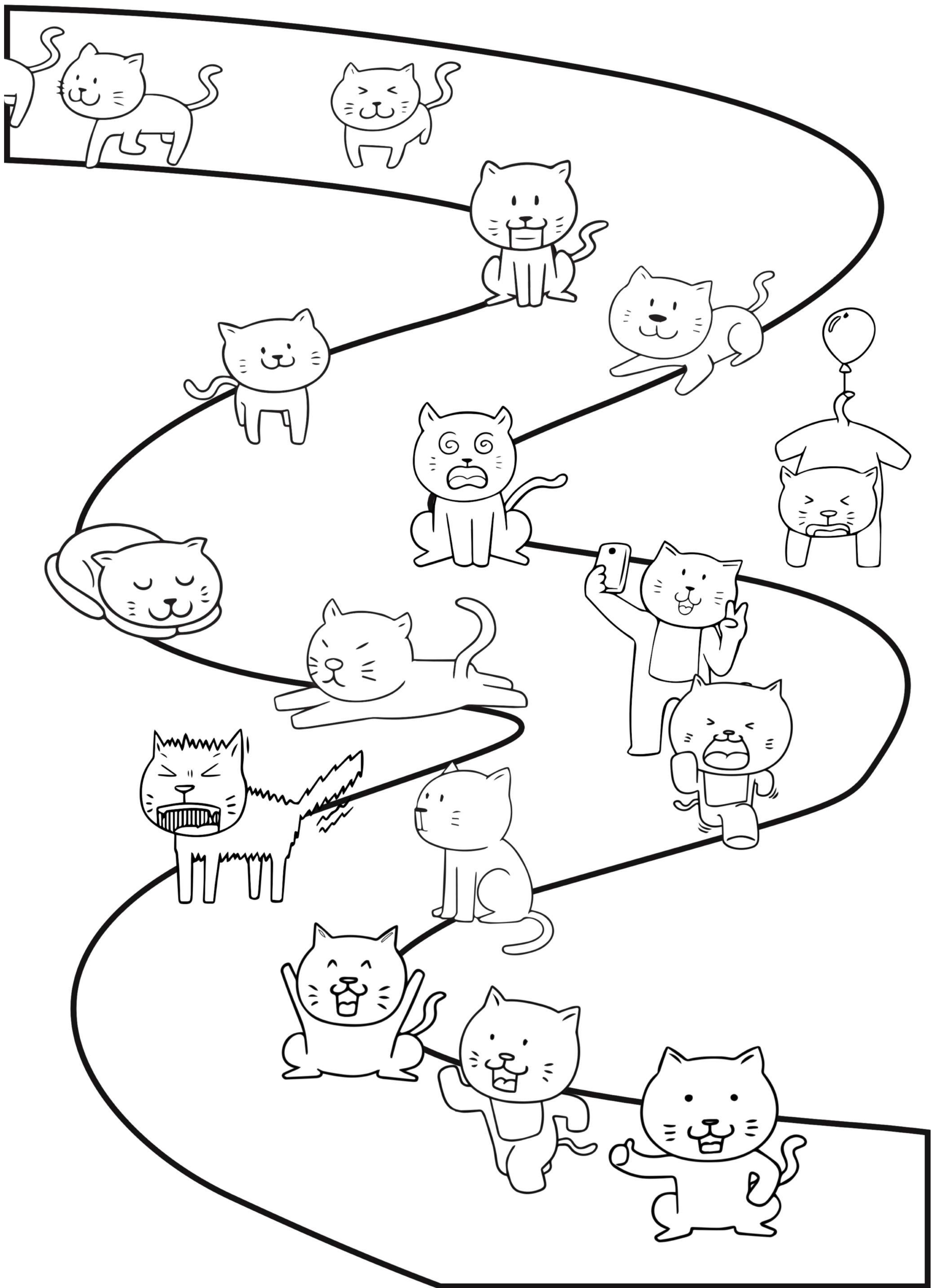
1. Hand out a photocopy of the Blob tree to each volunteer. Give them few moments to look at the image and let them think about their own interpretation about each blob character's feelings.

2. Explain that you want to give them a chance to record how they are feeling about what ever you want to reflect on - it can be the whole day, or something more specific. Volunteers think about which blob character they most identify with and colour it.

3. Ask volunteers to share their blob tree eather with those near them (2 or 3) or with the whole group, and discuss their reasons for chosing their blob.

You can do Blob tree activity each day, with the same questions, and volunteers can see on daily baiss how their feelings are changing. On the next page, there's a picture you can use for this activity and print out for each volunteer. As the Blob tree method has copyright, we cannot provide you the original image with the tree, but we prepared a Cats Path which can be used in exactly the same way.

Notes: source <https://www.blobtree.com/>



Activities for workcamp participants

3x what

Length: 15min

Main objective(s): final evaluation

Materials needed: handout with questions

Outline (step by step methodology):

This activity is best performed after an activity where you are defining learning outcomes.

Tell the participants they will be thinking about next steps on their learning journey as a follow up to this workcamp.

Divide handouts (see the next page) to participants with the following questions: What.... did you get out of the workamp/workshop? So what.... what value does this has, what questions were raised? Now what?.... What can you do with this new competence?

You can ask participatns to share responsed in pairs and define 3 next steps together. Steps should be concrete and practical. What will you do as a result of this workcamp? How will you spread / develop the competences?



3 x WHAT

<p>What.... did you get out of the workcamp/workshop?</p>
<p>So what.... What value does this have, what questions were raised?</p>
<p>Now what?.... What can you do with this new knowledge?</p>

Activities for workcamp participants

The food review

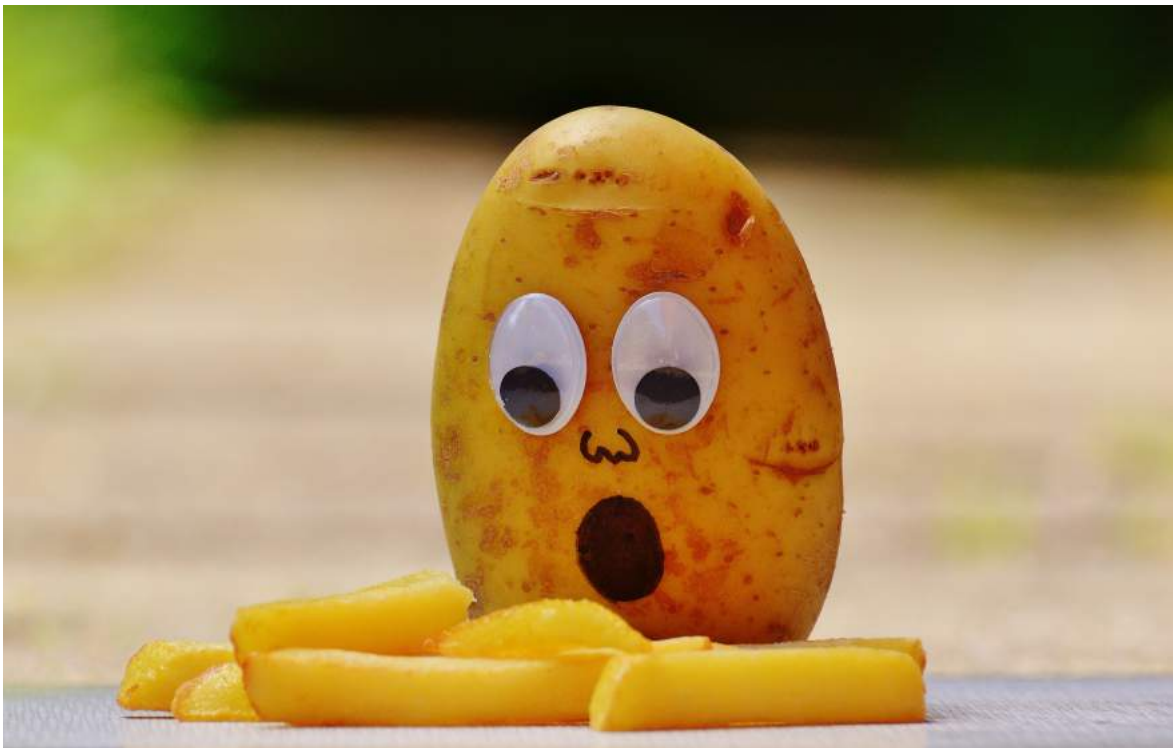
Length: 10min

Main objective(s): reflection

Materials needed: papers, crayons

Outline (step by step methodology):

Divide papers to participants and invite them to draw a dish which represents their learning and feeling throughout the day. Invite them to share in a circle their association of the day with different dishes they draw.



Mirror reflection

Length: around 60 min., apr. 5 minutes for each volunteer

Main objective(s):

- * to encourage volunteers to reflect on their own learning
- * to support volunteers into looking at themselves and their learning from another point of view
- * to highlight the important elements of one's learning

Materials needed: a box, a small mirror fitting in the box, a cover (sheet, blanket etc.) that cover the whole box and can even flow over, a few sheets of paper

Outline (step by step methodology):

IMPORTANT NOTE: This activity should be used by an experienced trainer or facilitator. If you don't feel like having too many experiences yet, we suggest to select other activities now and when you gain experience, get back to this one.

At the end of the workcamp, in the middle of the volunteers' circle, there will be a box with a cover on top. Volunteers will be told that in the box there is the photo portrait of each person. In turns, volunteers will peek in the box, see the face of a volunteer and talk about that person, without giving any type of hint on who the respective person is. (Campleaders will have to change the "photo" afterwards).

Key questions:

- * What do you think about that person we all met?
- * What changes have you seen in this person during the time here? What competences has s/he learnt during the workcamp?
- * What advice would you give to the person?

Campleaders can add some funny questions or other relevant ones.

THE METHOD is that in the box (besides a few pages that make the simulation of changing photos) volunteers will see a mirror. Surprising the volunteer, he/she will speak about themselves without having prepared answers beforehand, here more sincerity.

Another part of reflection, is that participants will listen to the comments of each one and see themselves through the eyes of others, wondering if it's about them talking. On the other hand, participants who have been in front of the mirror, will be able to further reflect on their learning hearing other points of view.

You can also see how the method works in practice: <https://youtu.be/swxnvk7ioe8>

Source: According to Cosmin Saic, <https://www.saltoyouth.net/tools/toolbox/tool/reflective-reflection.2074/>

Horoscope forecast

Length: 10 minutes

Main objective(s): to prepare for the day

Materials needed: A4 papers, pens

Outline (step by step methodology):

Ask participants: Did you ever read a horoscope in a newspaper? You are invited to prepare (write) a horoscope forecast for your sun sign, for today. Think about what you would like to learn and achieve, how you would you like to feel and contribute.

Use your creativity and tell us what the horoscope says. Give 10 minutes to participants to prepare their horoscopes on a paper. Ideally, you can give an example for yourself, so they get the point. After, invite them to share. You can ask a volunteer and then go from that sign onwards :-)

*Activity can be also used for setting expectations or for looking back- in this case, ask: if you would look back at the day, what would your horoscope say?

Activities for workcamp participants

Frankenstein

Length: 30 minutes, 5x during the whole workcamp on a regular basis

Main objective(s): To let the volunteers analyse their learning path on a regular basis of the workcamp

Materials needed: Flipchart papers or sheets of papers, coloured markers, colours.

Outline (step by step methodology):

1. Volunteers will be divided into pairs, in order to regularly analyse their learning process, focusing on :
 - a) new skills
 - b) new attitudes
 - c) new knowledge they have gained during the previous day(s).
2. The pairs shall receive two (flipcharts) sheets of paper, one each.
3. Volunteers have to draw a body part on the papers:
Day 1 – Arms
Day 2 - Legs
Day 3 – Chest
Day 4 – Head
4. Volunteers write and draw on this body parts the learning outcomes.
5. Campleaders shall keep these flipcharts/ sheets of paper until the final day.
6. Volunteers will be given an extra flipchart/ a sheet of paper which they have to shape as a heart, where they have to write the learning outcomes of this workcamp, and put together the person they have drawn in the previous day.

Source: According to Lorenzo Nava, <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toolbox/tool/frankenstein-reflection-on-learning.965/>

Activities for workcamp participants

LOVE reflection

Length: 10 minutes

Main objective(s): To track our learning, dream, relax and embrace with meditation

Materials needed: poster with LOVE letters and words, preferably with illustrations. Diaries, for participants to answer questions, pencils

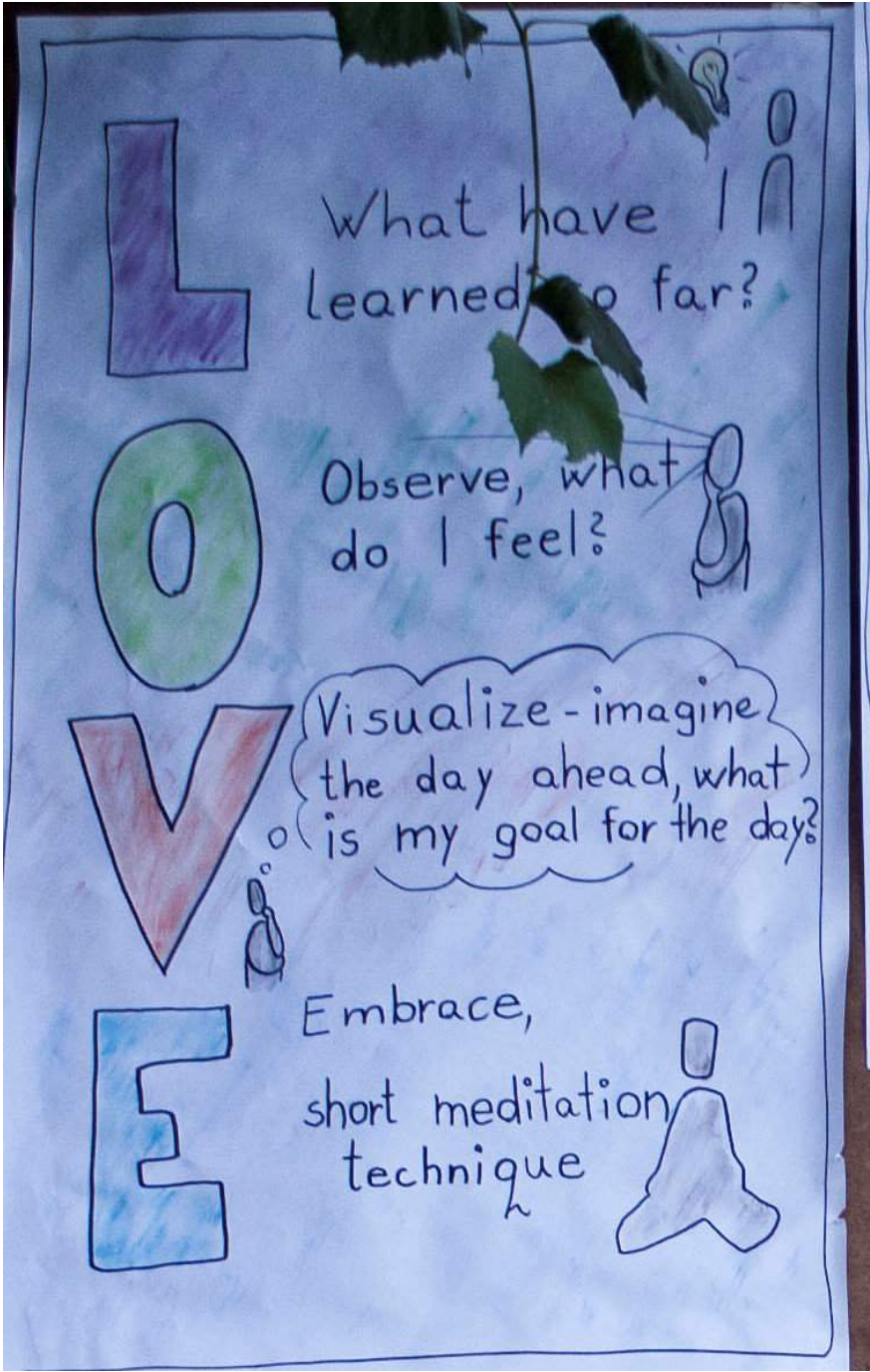
Outline (step by step methodology):

This method can be used every day in the morning, to start with reflecting on our learning, anticipating the day, observing our moods and surroundings and meditating. Each letter of the acronym LOVE, represents one activity. Participants should open their diaries.

We start with L - What have I learned so far? Continue with O - Observe, what do I feel?, then V - Visualize - Imagine the day ahead, what is my goal for the day? and finally E - embrace; short meditation technique is practiced.

For each "letter", give participants about 1-2 minutes to write down anything that comes to their minds regarding the questions. It might be just a flow of thoughts they write down for themselves - whatever is most useful for them.

Notes: Example meditation technique (page 9 and 10):
http://www.dragondreaming.org/wpcontent/uploads/DragonDreaming_eBook_english_V02.09.pdf



Activities for workcamp participants

Blog writing

Length: 25min

Main objective(s):

To stimulate participants' to prepare written reflection

To ensure objective reporting about the project

To raise awareness of what is going on

Materials needed: papers or pens and laptops

Outline (step by step methodology):

Ask participants to individually write a blog daily. We can also divide them in groups, and each group writes a daily blog post. The participants write whatever they want about this particular day, when they need to write a blog. It is also important to provide some time after the dinner where one group will be able to work and others will probably be free. Tell the participants that you will publish the blog on the Facebook or webpage and ask if they are OK with it.

Questions they might answer with their blogposts:

What did you enjoy doing today?

What would you like to change about today?

Did you get to know anything new today?

What was the most important learning of today?



Activities for workcamp participants

Walk & Talk

Length: 30+

Main objective(s): To reflect on the experience or evaluate any aspects of a project

Materials needed: Flipchart, markers, questions written on small pieces of paper, hat

Outline (step by step methodology):

1. Write questions on paper and put them in the hat. -Each pair takes out 1 or 2 questions, walks in the nature and discusses it. Questions such as: How did I feel today? How have the activities influence my behaviour/perspective on my work/ life? What was I thinking during the activities? Were there any AHA moments coming up today, which ones? What else could I do today to be more engaged? What was the most important thing for me today? Where could I use this again?

2. The participants in pairs go for a walk and discuss these questions, agree on a conclusions.

3. After the walk, the participants sit in a circle and each pair presents their question and main conclusions.

Also, it is possible to give each pair the same set of questions and let them discuss everything, or to change pairs and questions during a walk.

Talking object

Length: 30-45 min

Main objective(s): give a space to everyone to reflect

Materials needed: an object, e.g. a small ball, a piece of wood, a small Teddy bear, a stone or anything else

Outline (step by step methodology):

1. Volunteers sit in a circle to be able to see each other faces.
2. Campleaders explain the only rule - everyone keeps quiet, only the person holding the talking object is allowed to speak.
3. Campleaders may ask questions or give a topic to reflect upon, or just start talking as an example. It is possible to speak more times than once., but the person must be always holding the talking object.

Activities for workcamp participants

Mandalas / Beads

Length: 30 mins (depending of how many questions you want to raise)

Main objective(s): To reflect on different aspects (how the participants are doing) or different questions related to learning or evaluation

Materials needed: mandalas or some other abstract pictures to be coloured, coloured pens/markers/crayons / beads (different sizes nad colours), nylon string, scissors

Outline (step by step methodology):

The method is based on two simple activities:

- colouring a picture (a mandala or other pictures, rather abstract ones, that can be used to colour them) with colours that respond to the questions the participants are asked (tip: If you want to use the mandalas, always have also other pictures to colour in case some participants are of different religions and don't want to use mandalas)
- putting beads on the string - colours and sizes the correspond to questions they are asked (tip: use rather beads with bigger holes, if you have the very small ones, it's hard to grasp and put on the string)

What is the instruction for the participants:

I will ask you several questions. Please, colour your picture / put the beads on the string that somehow represent your answers for the questions. Think about the answers, prepare the picture / string and then we will show others and share.

How to use it for different purposes:

A. Reflection of how the participants are doing

- Ask for: How are you doing on this training:

- 1) physiologically (in your body),
- 2) socially (in the group),
- 3) mentally (in your mind)

B. Reflection of the learning

- What was my biggest learning point ("aha moment") of today? When did it happen, what did I realize?
- What else do I need to find out? Which knowledge/skills/attitudes did I realize I'm missing and I need to find them out, practice them?

C. Evaluation

- How is the accommodation/food/personnel in the venue/venue as such?
- How much useful was the programme for me so far?
- What am I missing?
- What am I looking forward to till the end of the training?

...One extra thing to do with the beads: Take one bead and give it later to somebody you would like to appreciate for something.

Notes: Source of inspiration: Youthpass Unfolded: <https://www.youthpass.eu/en/publications/youthpass-unfolded/>, modification by trainers Alena Tomanová and Jan Siegel

Activities for workcamp participants

Speak Easy

Length: according to participants (20 - 40 min)

Main objective(s): to evaluate a workcamp at the end

Materials needed: glasses, jugs, water

Outline (step by step methodology):

1. At the end of the workcamp, select four/five aspects you would like to evaluate (i.e.: accommodation and food, work, free time, acquired skills, group).
2. Write them down in pieces of paper. 3. Lay each ticket near an empty glass.
3. Prepare a bucket or a big jug filled with water and give each volunteer something to pour the water with.
4. Invite them to fill glasses with questions with the quantity of water in the glasses according to his/her tastes/opinions (for example: if s/he thinks the work was poor, s/he can pour just a few drops, or even none, in the respective glass).
5. After sharing the water, each participant is invited to comment the choices, if s/he wants. 6. At the end it will be clear, by observing the quantity of water in the different glasses, wich aspect was strong or poor.

You can also see how the method works in practice: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LhRCB8kjNg&feature=youtu.be>

Notes: min 10 pax. If a glass got filled, you can add a second one.

Source: <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toolbox/tool/water-evaluation.927/>



Activities for workcamp participants

Water evaluation

Length: according to participants (20 - 40 min)

Main objective(s): to evaluate a workcamp at the end

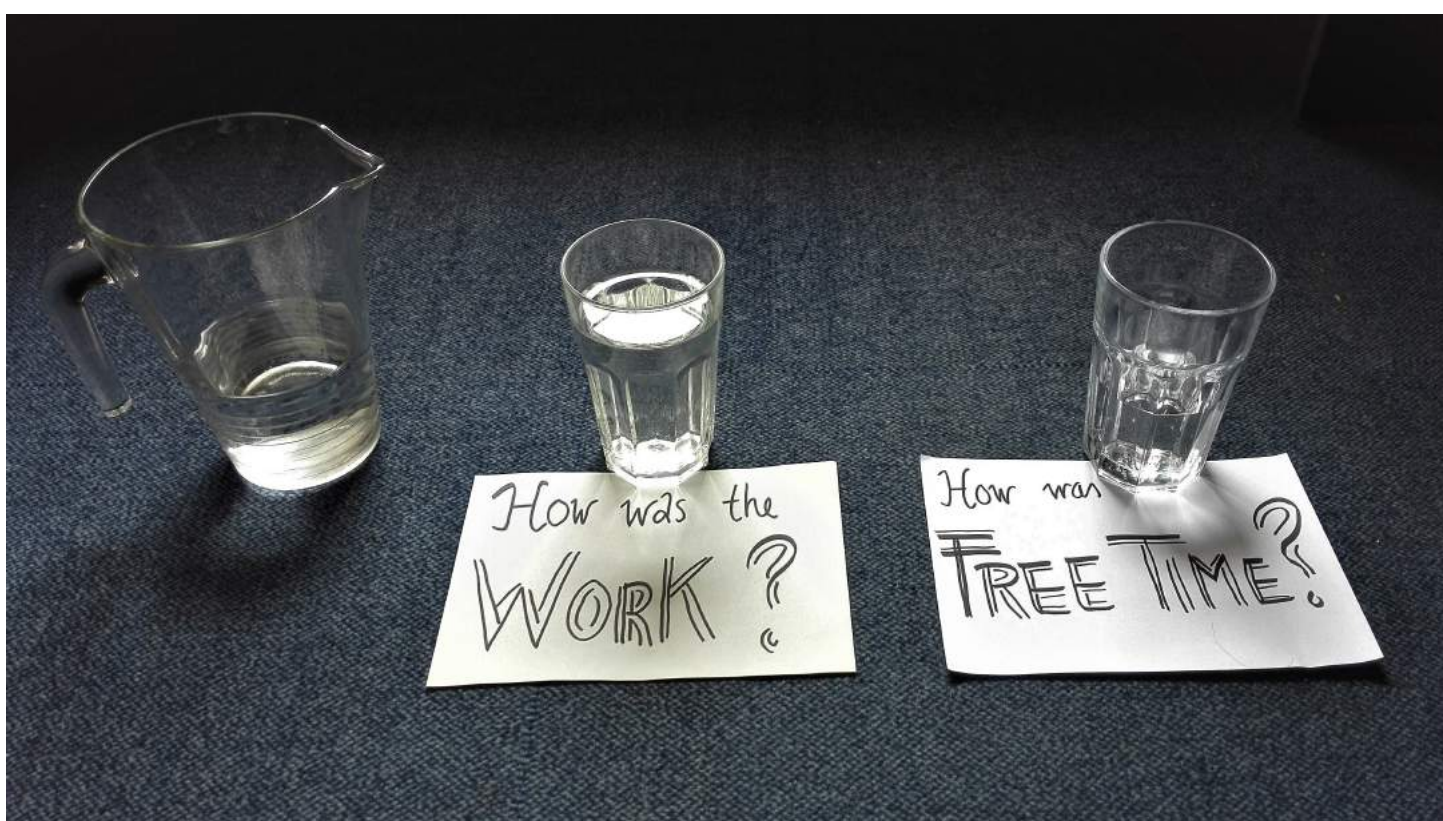
Materials needed: glasses, jugs, water

Outline (step by step methodology):

1. At the end of the workcamp, select four/five aspects you would like to evaluate (i.e.: accommodation and food, work, free time, acquired skills, group).
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Notes: min 10 pax. If a glass got filled, you can add a second one.

Source: <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toolbox/tool/water-evaluation.927/>



Activities for workcamp participants

The Abacus of Evaluation

Length: 20 min

Main objective(s):

- evaluate all the project activities in a funny way
- actively involve all the volunteers
- allow to volunteers to express their level of satisfaction in an anonymous and non-verbal way
- create an image that exactly reflects the group evaluation of the activities.

Materials needed: a large coloured sheet of paper, a felt-tip marker, fingercolours with 4 different hues

Outline (step by step methodology):

1. Draw the structure of an abacus in a large coloured sheet of paper: an horizontal line where to write, one by one, all the activities carried out during the project; from each activity a vertical line start.
2. Write a legend with four colours, each of them corresponds to a different level of satisfaction (es. white = excellent; red = good; blue = average; black = below average).
3. The volunteers should have at their disposal some fingercolours for each level of satisfaction.
4. Stick the sheet on the wall and put near it the fingers colours tubes.
5. Each volunteer should create the balls of the abacus by leaving his finger print for each activity on the column corresponding to each activity implemented during the exchange.
6. At the end of the activity, you will have a complete abacus full of coloured spheres!

Resource: According by Davide Di Pasquale, <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toolbox/tool/the-abacus-of-evaluation.1441/>



Evaluation by Weather Forecast Tools

Length: 30 min

Main objective(s):

To evaluate the feelings of the volunteers regarding personal, group and campleaders and other elements related to the workcamp.

To be aware of the fulfillment of the objectives for every proposed activities of the workcamp.

To give the possibility to the volunteers to express their position regarding the impact of every activity.

Materials needed: 4 flipchart papers

Outline (step by step methodology):

1. Draw in advance 4 flipchart papers (one paper with a sun, the second one with a sun and clouds, the third one with rain and lightings, the forth one with clouds).
2. All the papers are hanged on the four different corners of the room.
3. One of the campleaders is reading every activity according to the programme and after this the volunteers are moving around in the room where they consider, according to the success of the activity.
4. And then volunteers are asked to tell why they choose the sun/clouds/rain.

Possible questions:

- Group Dynamics
- Food, accommodation and atmosphere
- Workcamp in general
- Volunteers relations
- Balance between work and free time
- Your own contribution
- Campleaders

Source: According to Ali Oktay KOÇ, <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toolbox/tool/evaluation-by-weather-forecast-tools.769/>

Multiplex cinema evaluation

Length: 15-20 min

Main objective(s):

- evaluate all the workcamp activities/daily activities in a funny way
- actively involve all the volunteers
- allow to everybody to express their level of satisfaction in an anonymous and non-verbal way
- create an image that exactly reflects in a visual way the group evaluation of the activities.

Materials needed: Black finger colors or small stickers, colours, as many representations of an empty cinemas as are the activities you want to evaluate, a flipchart paper and a tape to display.

Outline (step by step methodology):

1. Draw as many empty cinema theatre (or print out the template) as are the activities that you want to evaluate.
2. Colour them and write in each screen the evaluated activity.
3. All the cinema theater have to be stucked on a big paper on the wall, so to obtain a multiplex cinema!
4. Explain the volunteers that they are asked to evaluate each activity by drawing from 0 to 3 heads of people emerging from the armchairs of the cinema, by dipping their finger in the black finger color and making the number of desired printings on the upperside of the armchairs.

About the different levels of satisfaction, they could be 3 finger printings = EXCELLENT; 2 finger printings = VERY GOOD; 1 finger printing = ADEQUATE; no finger printing = POOR.

Notes: You may use small black stickers instead of finger prints.

Source: According by Davide Di Pasquale, <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toolbox/tool/multiplex-cinema-evaluation.1632/>



Activities for workcamp participants

Thermometer evaluation

Length: 20min

Main objective(s): To prioritize and to evaluate different aspects of a project

Materials needed: flipchart, markers, pens, index cards

Outline (step by step methodology):

This activity is very good to use after the first days of a project or for mid-term evaluation.

Give to participants index cards / post-its on which they have to write the problems/ issues which need to be solved or very positive aspects they want to highlight (one per paper).

On a flipchart paper draw a thermometer.

Ask participant to position their cards on the thermometer scale, the positive aspects in the hot part of the thermometer (the better - the higher), negative aspects to be improved to the cold zone - the more urgent, the lower the paper will be.

After that discuss the matters raised and try to reach a consensus regarding the importance and the order in which the issues should be solved.

The questions might be focused on accommodation, food, organizers, support in general, group, work, programme...

Aquarium evaluation

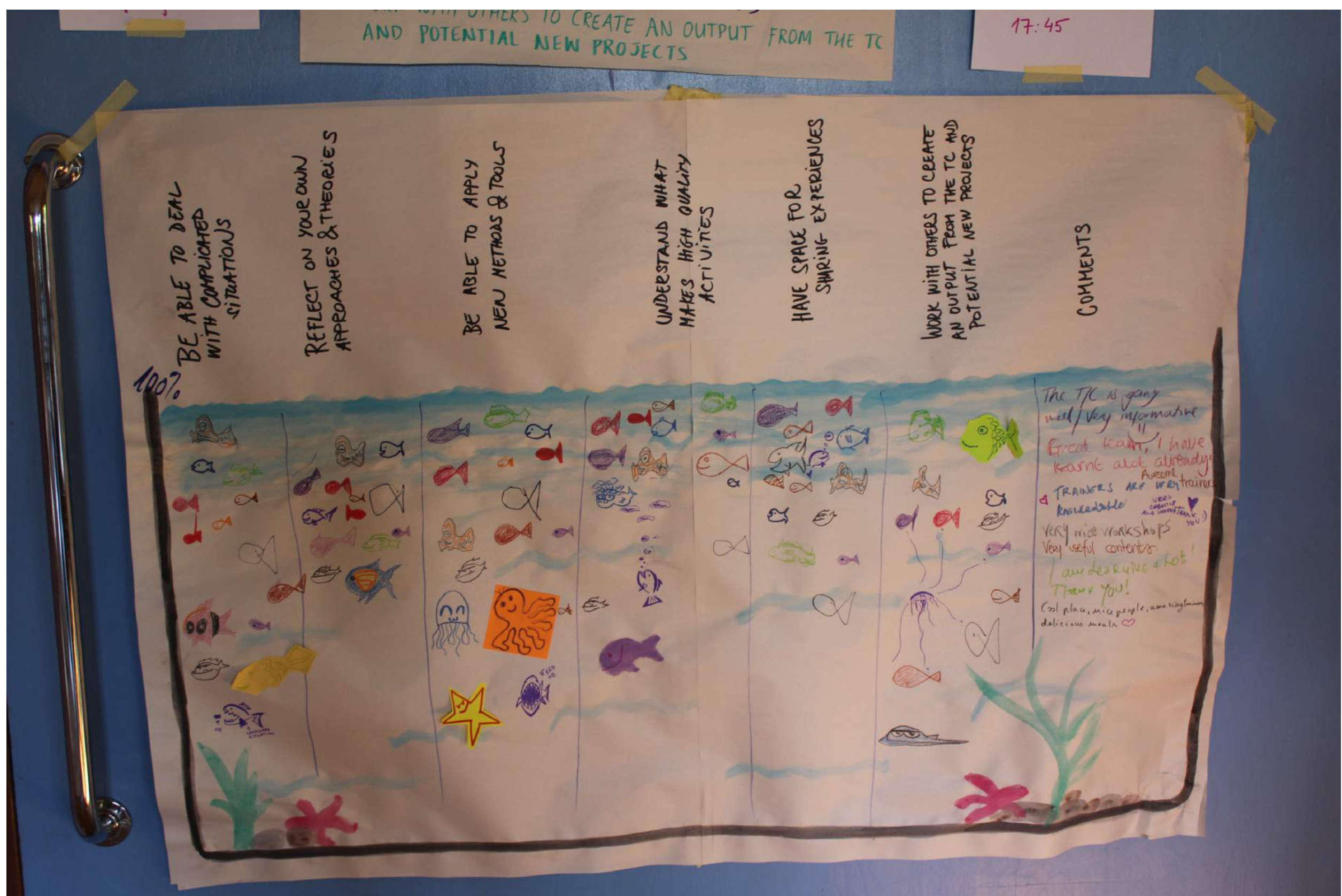
Main objective(s): To evaluate e.g. in the middle or at the end of the project

Outline (step by step methodology):

How to do it?

The instruction for the participants is:

On the picture, you can see we wrote objectives of a training and let participants evaluate there; but you can also ask to assess some other practical aspects such as group, project leaders, food etc."



Activities for workcamp participants

Five Fingers

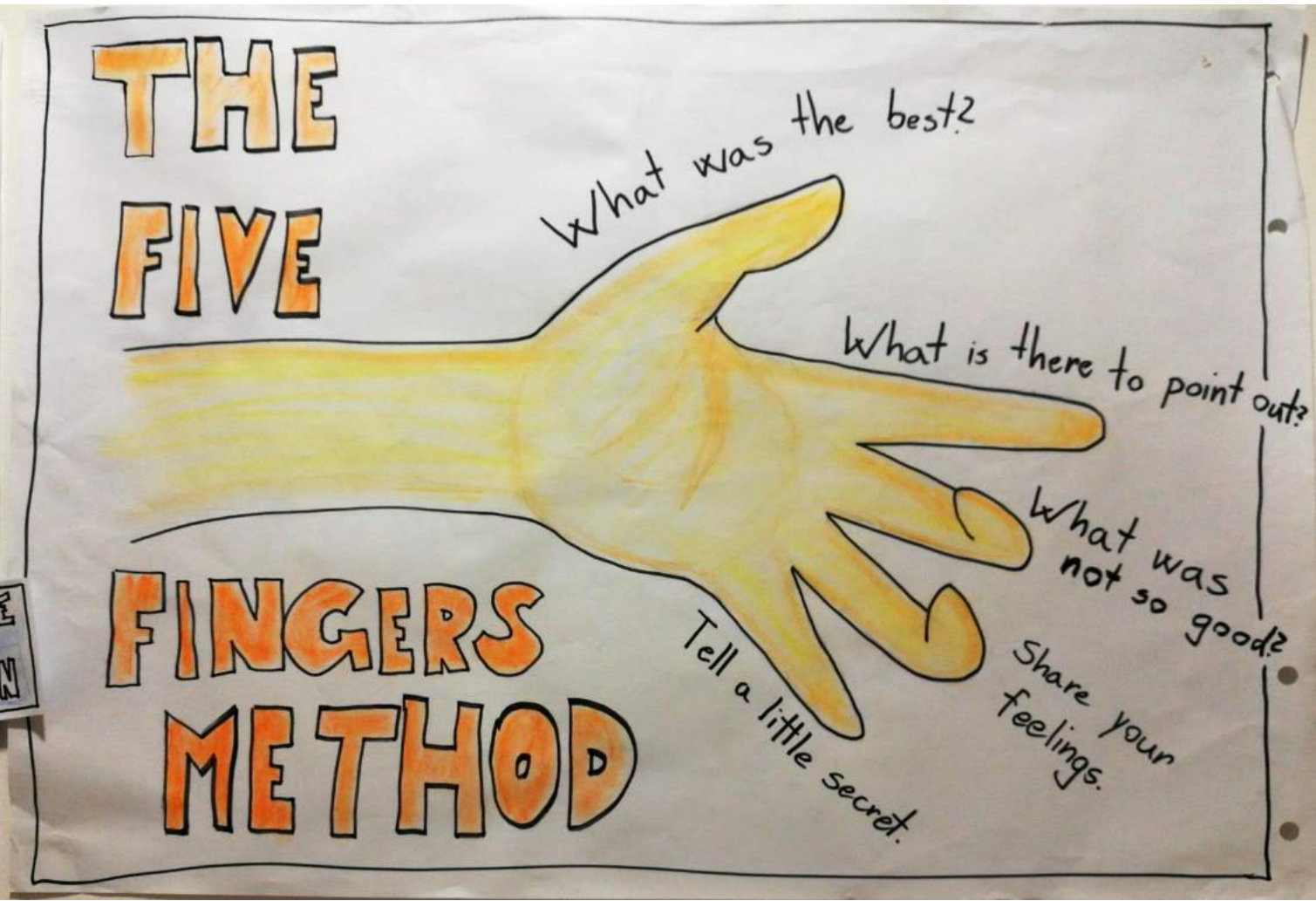
Length: 15-30 min

Main objective(s): give a space to everyone to evaluate

Materials needed: a sheet of paper for everyone, a ready sheet with instructions, a pen for everyone

Outline (step by step methodology):

1. Leaders may divide volunteers into smaller groups if possible (e.g. 2 groups with a campleader in each).
2. Leaders explain the importance of evaluation, and ask volunteers to trace their hand on the blank sheet of paper.
3. Leaders show the ready sheet with description of each finger, and ask volunteers to write their comments into each finger - THUMB: the big thing of the day, POINT FINGER - what I want to highlight, MIDDLE FINGER - what I didnt like (at all), RING FINGER - my biggest "aha" moment (biggest learning point or realisation of something imprtant), LITTLE FINGER - a small thing that made me happy.
4. Volunteers read and comment on their sheets of papers.



Activities for workcamp participants

The hot chair

Length: 10-20min

Main objective(s): evaluation of the day/week

Materials needed: chair

Outline (step by step methodology):

Put a chair in the middle. Participants are invited to mingle around the "hot chair", sit on it and give statements about the programme. Rest of the participants sit in a circle around the hot chair. When a volunteer gives a statement on the hot chair, participants move closer or further to the one in the middle, depending how much they agree with the statement. The limits of disagree is the circle of chairs. You can invite participants additionally to comment their position. You can additionally give frames for evaluation (space, food, leaders etc.), so that participants find it easier to think about statements.

Tip: Make a clear agree-disagree scale.

Tip2: Participants can sit on the chair when they have a statement on their mind, not one by one. In this case it's also important to encourage everyone/most of the group not to be afraid to say something.

You can also see how the method works in practice: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cLr6Bp1JLX4&feature=youtu.be>



Activities for workcamp participants

What is competence? 1

Length: 45 minutes

Main objective(s): Understanding what competence means and what it consists of

Materials needed: post-its, markers, flipchart board

Outline (step by step methodology):

The word competence can be defined as "the ability to do something well. It is a set of knowledge, skills and attitudes, that allow people to do something".

There are three components of the competence:

Knowledge is the theoretical understanding of a subject = understanding of information.

Skills are the ability to perform practical tasks.

Attitudes and values are a personal perspective towards a subject based on motivation, personal goals, preferences, self-concept = internal drivers of behaviour

Let's try to understand it better:

PRACTICAL EXERCISE 1:

Give the participants post-its (3 colours) and pens or markers. Their task will be to write knowledge on one colour of post-its, skills on second colour and attitudes on third one. (ideally one per a post it)

The question for them is: ""Imagine you are going for a bike trip. Which knowledge, skills and attitudes you must have to do that? Make a list of at least 5 of each and write them to the post its.""

Give them about 5 minutes of time to come up with knowledge/skills/attitudes.

Then ask the participant to put all their ideas on one flipchart, group knowledge, skills and attitudes together.

Go through the post- its with the group, put together those that are the same.

Discuss with the group, possible questions:

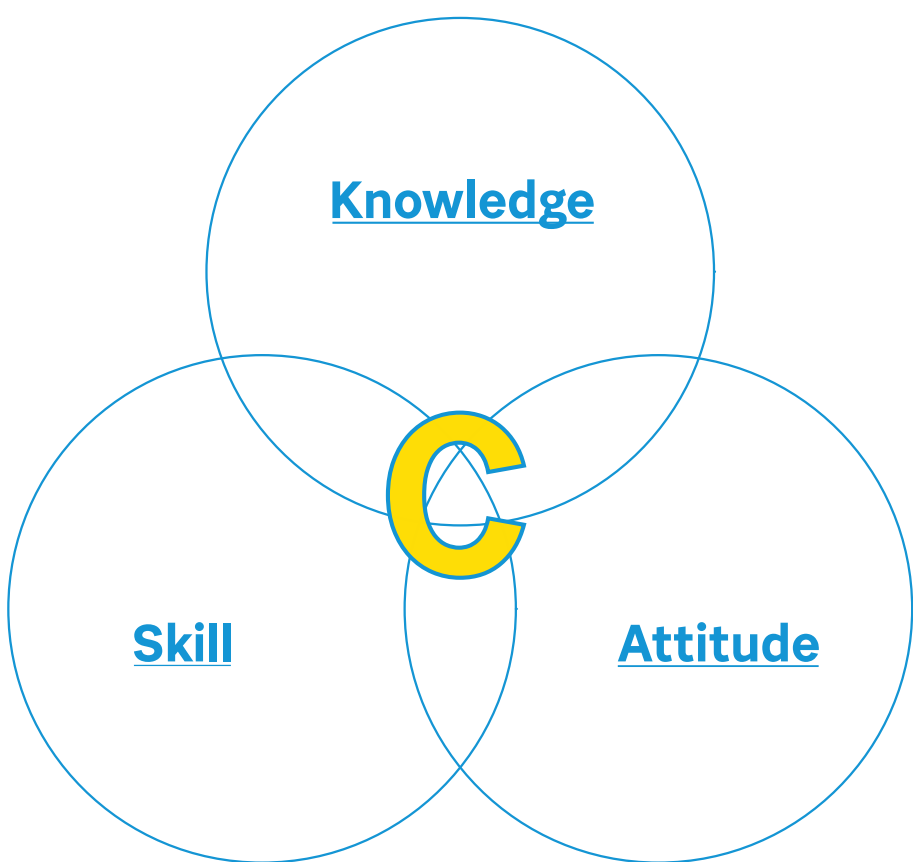
- Why did you put this (e.g. communication) in skills? Can it be knowledge? Why?
- Can you explain what does this mean? (in case there's something not clear to everyone)
- The answers showed in all parts are usually competences - hard or so(for more, see the theoretical part)

Make some examples of hard and soft competences:

“Hard competences” - something you can learn from books or by heart and practice by hands, such as math, accounting, programming or IT in general, graphic design, writing articles, statistics, etc.

“Soft competences” (sometimes referred to as “soft skills” or “people skills and self- management skills”) - are the activities that you do to manage yourself and manage or work with other people, such as communication, flexibility, independence, teamwork, or leadership.

At the end of this activity, make sure they all understand what is knowledge, skill, attitude and competence - you can ask them to show you on a scale from zero (thumb down) to 100% (thumb up) how they are understanding this now. If it's mostly above 50%, it's fine, if not, let them ask questions or explain once more.



Activities for workcamp participants

What is competence? 2

Length: 1h

Main objective(s): Understanding what competence means and what it consists of

Materials needed: flipchart papers or A4 papers, markers, beamer and notebook to project the video (ideally with speakers to hear the sound), internet is good but not needed - if you don't have it, download the video in advance

Outline (step by step methodology):

The word competence can be defined as "the ability to do something well." It is a set of knowledge, skills and attitudes, that allow people to do something.

There are three components of the competence:

Knowledge is the theoretical understanding of a subject = understanding of information.

Skills are the ability to perform practical tasks.

Attitudes and values are a personal perspective towards a subject based on motivation, personal goals, preferences, self-concept = internal drivers of behaviour

Let's try to understand it better:

PRACTICAL EXERCISE 2:

Here is a Cartoon called 'Shaun the Sheep'. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WeQw6utcU_g&t=47s (if you don't have the internet, download it in advance).

Play it to the participants once, so they have fun and observe which characters are there.

Before the second round, split the group into 4 sub-groups - each one will get one character:

- Shaun (the main sheep)
- the dog
- the group of sheep
- the pigs

(You can do this division by drawing these characters on papers - as many papers as you have the participants - and decide on the composition of the groups by drawing lots.)

Give the participants half of flipchart paper or A4 paper and marker and ask them to work together. The question for them is: "Observe your character in this cartoon. Which knowledge, skills and attitudes they have or need? Make together a list of at least 5 of each and write them to the flipchart."

Play them the cartoon once again and then give them about 5-10 minutes of time to finalize. Then ask the groups to come and present what they came up with. Discuss with the group after each presentation, questions such as:

- Is there any knowledge/skill/attitude of this character missing? What did you notice?
- Why did you put this (e.g. communication) in skills? Can it be knowledge or attitude? Why?
- Can you explain what does this mean? (in case there's something not clear to everyone)

The answers showed in all parts are usually competences - hard or soft (for more, see the theoretical part)

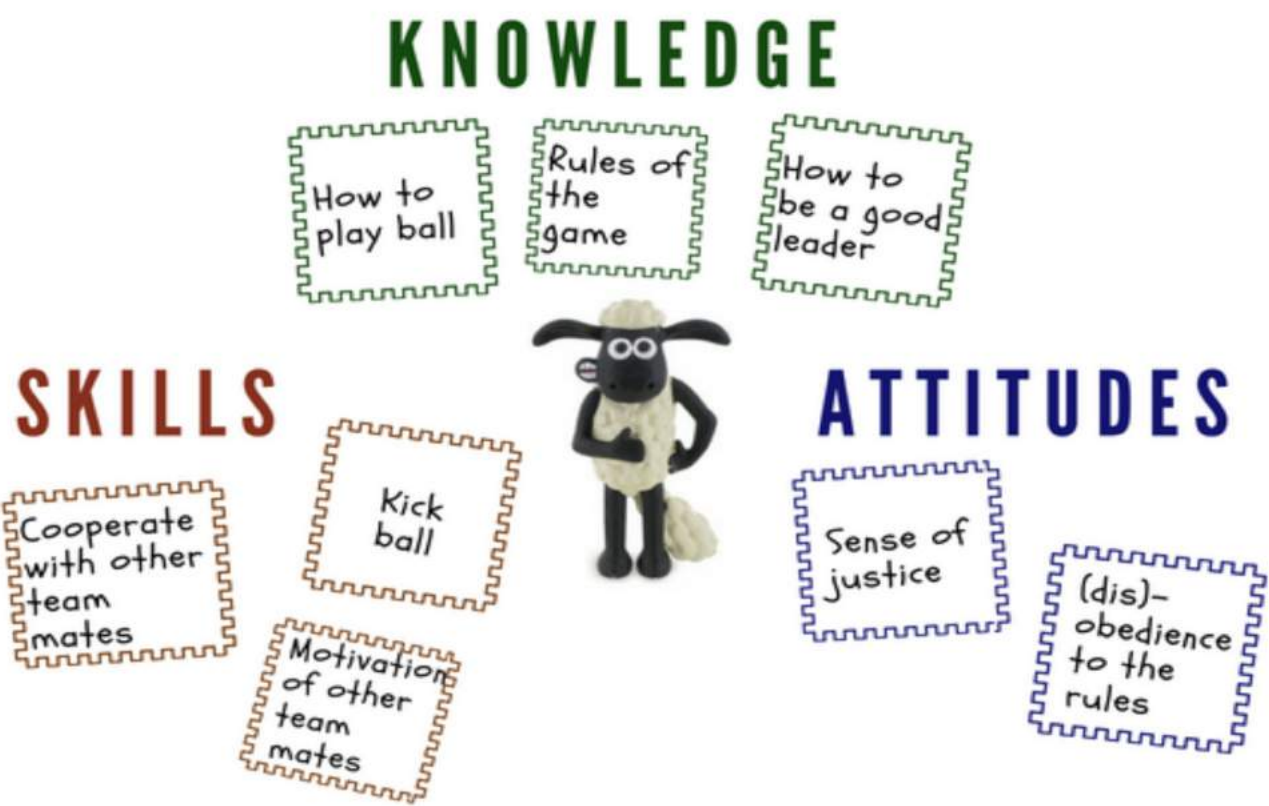
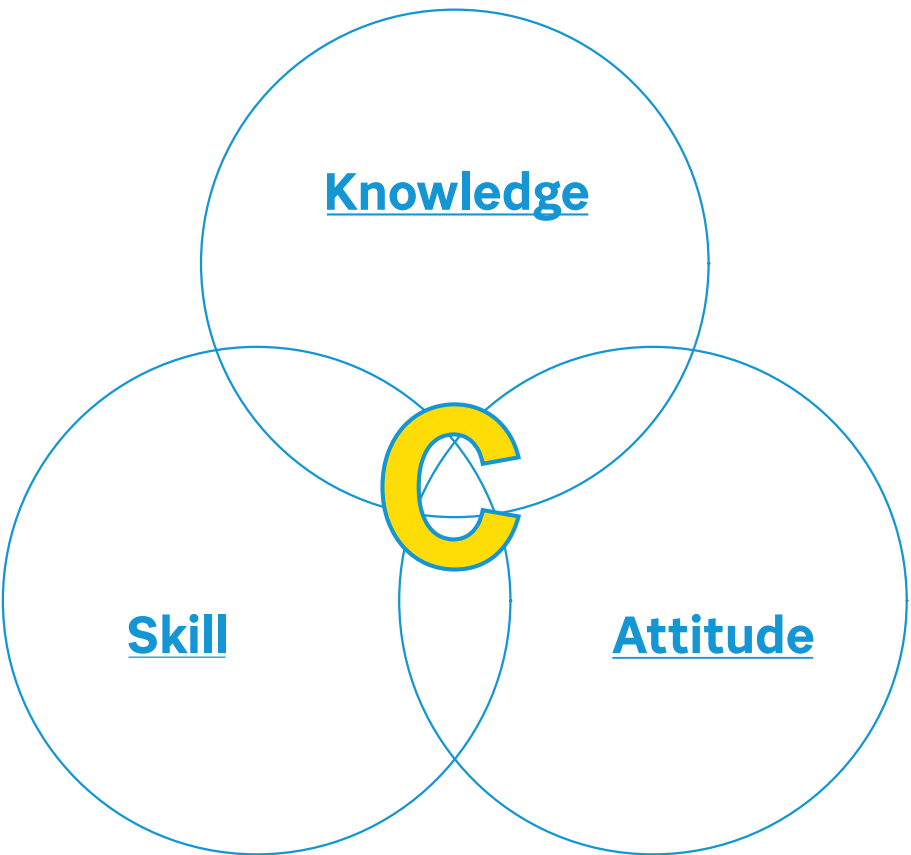
Make some examples of hard and soft competences:

"Hard competences" - something you can learn from books or by heart and practice by hands, such as math, accounting, programming or IT in general, graphic design, writing articles, statistics, etc.

"Soft competences" (sometimes referred to as "soft skills" or "people skills and self-management skills") - are the activities that you do to manage yourself and manage or work with other people, such as communication, flexibility, independence, teamwork, or leadership.

At the end of this activity, make sure they all understand what is knowledge, skill, attitude and competence - you can ask them to show you on a scale from zero (thumb down) to 100% (thumb up) how they are understanding this now. If it's mostly above 50%, it's fine, if not, let them ask questions or explain once more.

Notes: Source of inspiration: <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toolbox/tool/shaun-the-sheep-off-the-baa.1704/>



IM-PROVE application introduction

Length: 10 minutes intro + 20 minutes work

Main objective(s): Understanding how IM-PROVE works and how its usage can help the participants; exploring the IM-PROVE themselves

Materials needed: each participant or in couples - smartphone, with internet connection, if you have a beamer you can project the presentation or a video, but you will manage without it. For the internet - if you only ask them to download the app in advance, they can do it and then you shouldn't need the internet to use it during the project.

Outline (step by step methodology):

IM-PROVE is a simple application accessible on-line (improve.inexsda.cz) or in app store for iOS and Android.

Basically, it's the on-line tool that help volunteers in different roles (participants, leaders, trainers...) reflect on what they learnt during their volunteering activities. You can have all the volunteering activities recorded here and the app will "translat"" your experiences into the language of competences, especially the soft competences.

How does it work? Easily:

Step 1 - Sign up on improve.inexsda.cz

Step 2 - The application will lead you through filling in your profile (if you want to)

Step 3 - You can enter your first project - this project you're on now. The app will lead you through it. You basically put some info about the type of project, your role in it, select few experiences you have already done in the project (such as I've come to the venue of the project by myself) and put some details to these. After this process, the application will show you, which competences have you developed by these experiences.

Step 4 - Then, you can either add other experiences to the same project, add new projects or browse through other functionalities of the application.

Other things IM-PROVE can help you with:

- Your CV - to fill in, which competences you have
- Your Youthpass - in case you have participated in a project granted by the Erasmus + Programme, you should fill in what you learnt at this project to Youthpass - IM-PROVE will advise you, how to do it.
- Presenting your profile on the outside - if you want, you can activate your IM-PROVE public profile and show the world (friends or potential employers), which competences you have developed by volunteering.
- Recognition of the experience - for each project, you can ask for an eBadge, which will be confirmed by the organizer of your project. This eBadge will display on the public profile and will prove you really have the experience your public profile is showing. It raises credibility of this page, especially for example if you apply for a job.
- Selecting your personal goal(s) and the competences you would like to focus on - better target your learning and choose the next volunteering activities based on what you actually need to work on.

To sum up, IM-PROVE will help you realize what you learnt and what you're able to do, plan your next steps in volunteering and present your valuable experience on the outside (e.g. on the labour market) to show, that volunteering is - among other things - valuable tool how to learn important competences for personal and professional life.

Once this presentation is done, ask participants to work themselves (or in couples in case some of them don't have a smartphone), register and follow the steps you were presenting to actually touch the application and find out which competences they have already developed at this project. You can use this self-reflection time of putting experiences into the app every day or every two days to motivate the participants to use it and reflect by themselves regularly.

Activities for workcamp participants

Seed planting

Length: 15-30min

Main objective(s): Participants share lessons learned and reflect on the most significant thing which was planted.

Materials needed: seeds

Outline (step by step methodology):

Explain to participants it is important to reflect on the learning of the workshop.

Explain that a good analogy for the work they do is seed planting. The workcamp has hopefully provided participants with new information, knowledge, networks and the impact of this experience may be felt right away or tomorrow or perhaps in months, years from now. When we plant seeds, we do not immediately see the products and we might be surprised of the magnitude, size, color of what blossoms and grows.

Distribute the seeds, 1 per participant, and explain the analogy of the seed. Ask participants to think about what seeds have been planted for them as a result of the workshop/project and how they intend to nurture and encourage these seeds to grow. Be sure that everyone has a chance to share.

What seeds have been planted for you as a result of this workshop? How will you nurture and encourage these seeds to bloom?

You can also see how the method works in practice: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBv-PRVt7Pw&feature=youtu.be>

Notes: EPTO



Activities for workcamp participants

1 min Match

Length: 2 min for explanation + 1 min per participant

Main objective(s): reflect on the day, or the week. Summarize briefly the most important thing

Materials needed: matches, lighter

Outline (step by step methodology):

Ask participants to sit in a circle, preferably on the ground, close together. Present the matches to participants and tell them, they will be invited to answer the question:

What am I taking away from this workcamp?

They will be able to share as long as their match will be lit. So they will have to KISS it (keep it simple and sexy - since the match wont last long, so they will have to make it fast and precise. When one participant is done he/she passes the matches and a lighter to the next participant in the circle, until everyone is finished sharing. Close the sharing by saying thank you to everyone.



Activities for workcamp participants

Dice

Length: up to 60 min.

Main objective(s): Emotional evaluation is done by dice evaluation where volunteers have chance to steam out and say goodbye.

Materials needed: dice, flipchart board and flipchart papers

Outline (step by step methodology):

1. Write the numbers and sentences on the flipchart beforehand.
2. Explain the rules - in turns, everyone throw the dice, and finish the sentence under the number:
 - 1: I feel...
 - 2: I would like to wish something to somebody...
 - 3: I would like to thank somebody for something...
 - 4: I learnt...
 - 5: I understood...
 - 6: I would like to say ...

Notes: You may use 6 different cards instead of dice.

Source: According to Mara Arvai, <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toolbox/tool/dice-evaluation.787/>

Paper on the back

Length: 20 min

Main objective(s): personal evaluation, saying goodbye

Materials needed: a4 papers, pens, tape

Outline (step by step methodology): We invite participants to paste each one a4 paper on their back. Now they should think about something nice, a feedback or a message, something they learned from a person- and write this on the persons back. We put some music for the background.

Activities for workcamp participants

Ball of wool

Length: 20 min

Main objective(s): personal evaluation, saying goodbye

Materials needed: ball of wool

Outline (step by step methodology):

Participants stand in a circle. We explain the rationale. We will be passing a ball of wool, from person to person. I will start and I will choose someone I want to say thank you to, for something this person has shown me, taught me or gave me during the week. When I finish saying my appreciation I hold on to the string of the wool and pass the rest to the person I was talking about. This person is invited to pick another one, say appreciation and pass the ball of wool, while holding a string him/herself. We will say thanks to each other until everyone is connected in a net of appreciation. We can finish by saying: Although this project is over, remember the faces you have met here, laughs you have laughed, lessons you learned from each other and this is an invitation to stay connected and offer support to each other also a er the workcamp.



Activities for workcamp participants

Seeds exchange

Length: 20 min

Main objective(s): appreciation, learning reflection, saying goodbye

Materials needed: bags of seeds (as many as participants)

Outline (step by step methodology):

As a farewell, divide bags of seeds to participants. Invite them on an exchange.

When music in the background stops, participants should find a person, tell him/her what they appreciate in them or for what kind of a gift they are thankful from them (a feedback, reminder, lesson etc.) and exchange bags of seeds.

We repeat the procedure couple of times. At the end, we can continue with the other activity Planting Seeds from this handbook.

MEASURING IMPACT

IMPACT OF VOLUNTEERING ON PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

What seems to be the impact of volunteering?

While the impact of volunteering on society and its development is undoubted, it is less known that the society is not the only one to benefit from volunteering. Here, we have decided to focus on questions what kind of impact volunteering makes on the volunteer itself, how can we measure it and use it for assessing the quality of volunteering programs they have participated at.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS FOR THE VOLUNTEER?

The list of all potential benefits is not definite, depending from concrete circumstances and the volunteering experience. However, we could single out some of the key benefits one has from volunteering experience.

Volunteering increases self-confidence and motivation and provides sense of purpose.

Working for a cause we believe in, gives both support to a cause and boosts personal motivation as a driver towards satisfying future.

Fulfilment in doing something for common good, helping others, supporting values we believe in – **helps improving ones' mental health.**

Through volunteering, one gains experience and has opportunity to show his/her own skills and knowledge. Also, **developing new skills and improving existing ones** is one of the most precious part when it comes to practical benefit used in any sphere of live.

Additionally, volunteering activity gives us the **opportunity to try out new roles, explore** various topics – with no necessity for expertise, do something we love, but haven't had a chance before... The sky is the limit!

Volunteering **connects us to others** - commitments to a shared value brings people together.

Joining volunteering activities can help us increase our social skills, such as communication, empathy, mutual understanding and much more.

When volunteering abroad, aware of it or not, we are involved in **intercultural learning**. This happens whenever we expose ourselves to new surrounding - when we are "out of the box".

By meeting new people from different countrises and societies, we are actually **exploring new contexts, countries, cultures and what is the most important - ourselves**. Gained experience and knowledge, developed skills and all that we accomplish by volunteering gives us green light for looking for a job and career advancement, as well as in any other surrounding.

Join the community of voluteers and you will see benefits!



HOW CAN WE TELL?

Are we (trainers, youth workers and organizers of volunteering) the ones who should track the progress of volunteers involved in our programs, or that is beyond our concern?

Should we aim to develop meaningful programs – we have to take care they are the ones to answer to both needs of community and volunteers. As discussed above, volunteering is potentially very beneficial activity for self development of volunteer.

How could we measure success of our voluntary programs in terms of impact made on volunteers? There are several tools you can use to ask the right questions and get reflection on program impact. Some of the options are listed below.

1. Ask volunteers for their opinion

(Dis)satisfaction of your volunteers is important indicator if you are utilizing them in the correct way. Is the voluntary experience overwhelming for them? Do they make the most with their skills?



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2. Educate volunteers on competences and progress tracking

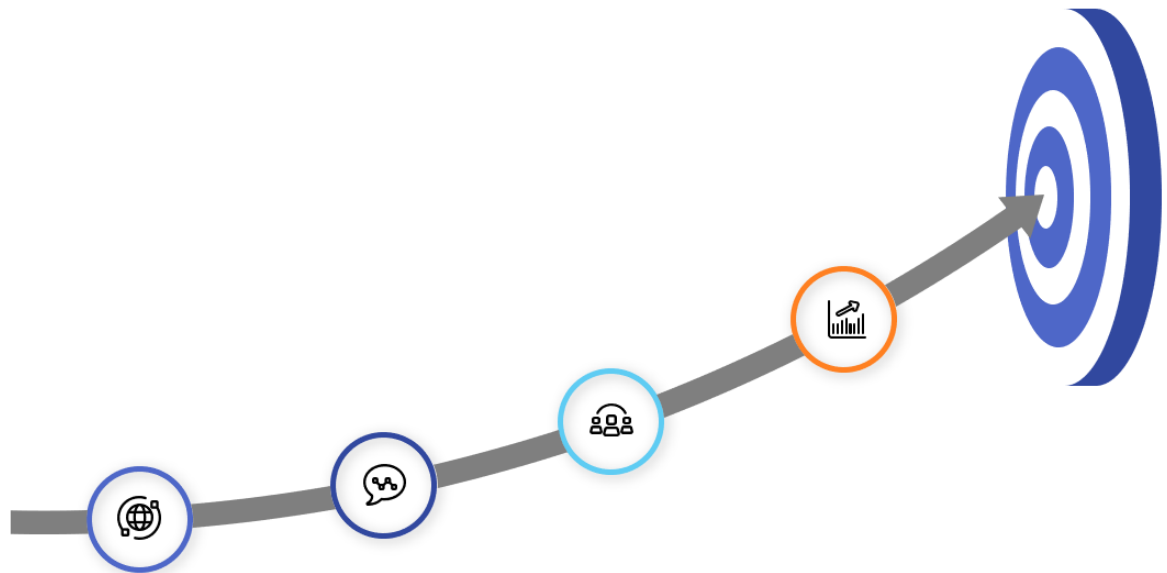
Moderate their progress: starting from self-assessment; running continuous and final evaluation of progress. Some of the activities you might use are available in this Handbook:

- What is competence? Intro 1
- What is competence? Intro 2
- Orientation game
- Creative Competence Reflection Performance
- 3xWhat
- Mirror reflection
- Frankenstein
- Mandalas/Beads
- Intro to the IMPROVE application

3. Track the progress and achievements of your volunteers

Have you ever checked if the development of your volunteers matches with competencies your program aims to develop?

Truly, tracking once development can be a demanding task, but there are free tools you can use. IM-PROOVE app is certainly a great solution.



For short-term activities:

Present the app to the volunteers before the start of the activity. At the end of the activity, the volunteers can use the app and define which competences did they gain.

For long-term activities:

Present the app to the volunteers before the start of the activity. Make regular reminders and support for volunteers to revise their progress and fill the app after each stage of the project. At the end of the activity, the volunteers can use the app and sum up their progress. Thus, you'll have a clear idea how did your activity impact their development.

4. Track New and Repeat Volunteers

Find out how do volunteers find your organization and programs they apply to. Examine what percent of volunteers are joining more than one project within the organization (repeating the volunteering) to determine the retention rate. The number of repeat volunteers is important indicator of impactful program. It is beneficial for your organization as well. Each time your volunteers come back, this means you have fewer costs associated with training and onboarding them into your programs – and more money for your mission. Help your volunteer recruitment process – nevertheless they might leave the organization, this support is valuable for volunteers and they will appreciate it.

5. Follow Your Project Outputs

Volunteers play a key role in maintaining the success of programs they take part in. Start from your program outputs, the level of reaching set results can help you better understand the impact your volunteers are having on your organization.

Finally, share the insights of your findings. Community of volunteers is curious to know if their work and time is making an impact. To prove their engagement valuable, you can rely on metrics and data analyses. Communicating the impact of volunteer work in your organization will help you retain volunteers and enable them to feel the part of success.



IM-PROVE APP

FOLLOW THE IM-PROVEment

In online version of this Handbook, you can find materials that might help you introduce the concept of competences and present the IM-PROVE app to different target groups. Feel free to use or tailor them to fit your needs. You can choose from:

- IM-PROVE App introduction presentation
- Session plan for large groups PDF
- Session plan for workshop at workcamps PDF
- IM-PROVE poster PDF



SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS

So, you have learned about competences and the importance of measuring impact of volunteering. Perhaps, you have discovered the IM-PROVE app and you find it useful.

We want to makeShould you have some original ideas how to communicate impact measurement and present IM-PROVE app to different target groups, we will be happy to learn about it.

In case you have some questions or proposals, please, find us available. it easier for you to educate your youth workers / youth leaders / volunteers to use and present IM-PROVE app.



ABOUT US...

WHY IM-PROVE?

IM-PROVE is an app and on-line tool, which was created to support volunteers in their self-reflection. More info on IM-PROVE App (www.improve.inexsda.cz).

When IM-PROVE was created, it was necessary to also support leaders of youth and volunteering projects to lead learning reflection and evaluation during the projects, that's why this IM-PROVE handbook came to life. We hope it will support also trainers, facilitators and youth workers to get more aware of the possibilities to reflect learning in their activities, support their knowledge and inspire them with various useful activities.

WHO WE ARE?

This handbook was created by a team of experienced trainers and youth workers working with three organisations - INEX-SDA, Czech Republic; Zavod Voluntariat, Slovenia and Young Researchers of Serbia, Serbia. These trainers have collected important basic theories and concepts connected to learning, tips on how to reflect on it, and various activities that can be used (some simple ones, some a bit more challenging for experienced facilitators).

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