



# HANDBOOK

*for employability workers*





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# PREFACE

In today's world, access to the labour market (through employment and other means) is a key requisite for personal wellbeing, fulfilment and to fully exercise citizenship.

This challenge is especially demanding for young people. High levels of youth unemployment are a transversal problem in Europe.

In today's globalised world, labour market dynamics are increasingly more diverse and can even be unpredictable.

A job is no longer for life. Professional careers paths are built by working in numerous organisations, in various projects and through an assortment of collaborative means.

Change is an ever-present reality: in today's world of work, change seems to be the only predictable factor. The majority of tomorrow's jobs do not exist yet or are still unknown to us.

In this uncertain scenario, it is a certainty – for those who intervene in promoting employability – that a number of tools and competences will make the difference in supporting the entrance to and remaining within work.

Employability is currently one dimension in life that requires constant updating and a conscious investment by an individual throughout her/his working life.

Soft skills or personal and social skills are especially useful and valued in current work environments. Soft skills are characteristics, attitudes and behaviours that promote performance, good relations and interaction within work settings or other contexts.

Lifelong learning, with special focus now given to previously often under-valued non-formal and informal education, plays a key role in developing soft skills and other Employability competences.

The EMPLAY Tools are a contribution to this aim/intention.

The 4 EMPLAY Tools focus on two broad groups of competences, which we find crucial and central to this theme – transversal competences (or soft skills) and Job Search competences.

A group of Portuguese, Italian and Belgian professionals have build innovative tools that use different approaches and methodologies and can be applied in different contexts and gave concrete answers to the needs they identified previously.

The 4 tools – a Handbook for Employability Workers, a Planner, a Board Game and an App – garner a number of possibilities, challenges and clues to explore employability competences, to develop or reinforce them in an autonomous manner or with support from either professional workers or facilitators.

*Are you ready  
to take up this challenge?*

## INTRODUCTION

This handbook for employability workers is one of the tools created within the Employability Tools Project. It aims to support workers in this area in an unpretentious way through a set of theoretical-practical notes. The handbook will be useful to both understand and actively engage with the other EEMPLAY tools we've produced and help to approach this issue with young people.

# EMPLOYABILITY TOOLS .....

## *the project*

Employability Tools is a transnational project focused on creating friendly and useful tools for young adults to develop their employability competences. It was supported by Erasmus+ Youth in Action, the European Commission, under Strategic Partnerships for Youth (Key-Action 2 Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices) – project nr 2016-2-PT02-KA205-003613.

A group of trainers, youth workers, community workers, career counsellors and project managers from 6 organisations in Portugal, Belgium and Italy shared ideas during 2016 / 2018 to build:

- the EEMPLAY App
- the EEMPLAY Board Game
- the EEMPLAY Planner
- the EEMPLAY Handbook for Employability Workers

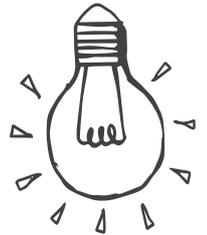
These 4 tools are aimed at different target. Audiences: some are made for tech-lovers, others for those who love the smell of paper. Some are meant to be used in a group, others are for individual use. Most can be used by anyone (students, workers, job-seekers) but also as intervention tools for employability workers, youth workers, teachers, and others.



All the tools aim to support reflection, awareness development and self-improvement for various dimensions of employability. There are no answers or fixed advice. We prefer questions, inspiring ideas and/or challenges, that will allow you to appraise where young people find themselves on their professional life path and what direction they want to take.

You can find these tools for free at [www.emplay.eu](http://www.emplay.eu)

**Contact us or give your feedback [info@emplay.eu](mailto:info@emplay.eu)**



Prior to the process of creating the tools, the partners analysed needs through youth and employability workers focus groups. They also analysed young and not so young people in transitional work situations. The results, the collection of materials and consensus-building discussions formed the basis for building the EMPLAY tools.

*Hence this handbook is divided into two parts, addressing the following issues:*



### 1<sup>st</sup> part

- Concepts that are transversal to the different tools (game, app and agenda). The definitions presented here are a consensus that resulted from compiling and discussing the themes among the various partners.
- The important role of facilitators when working with processes of personal and group development – a few important tips to take into account when working with groups.
- Issues requiring reflection in this area with the aim of opening possibilities for new paths.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> part

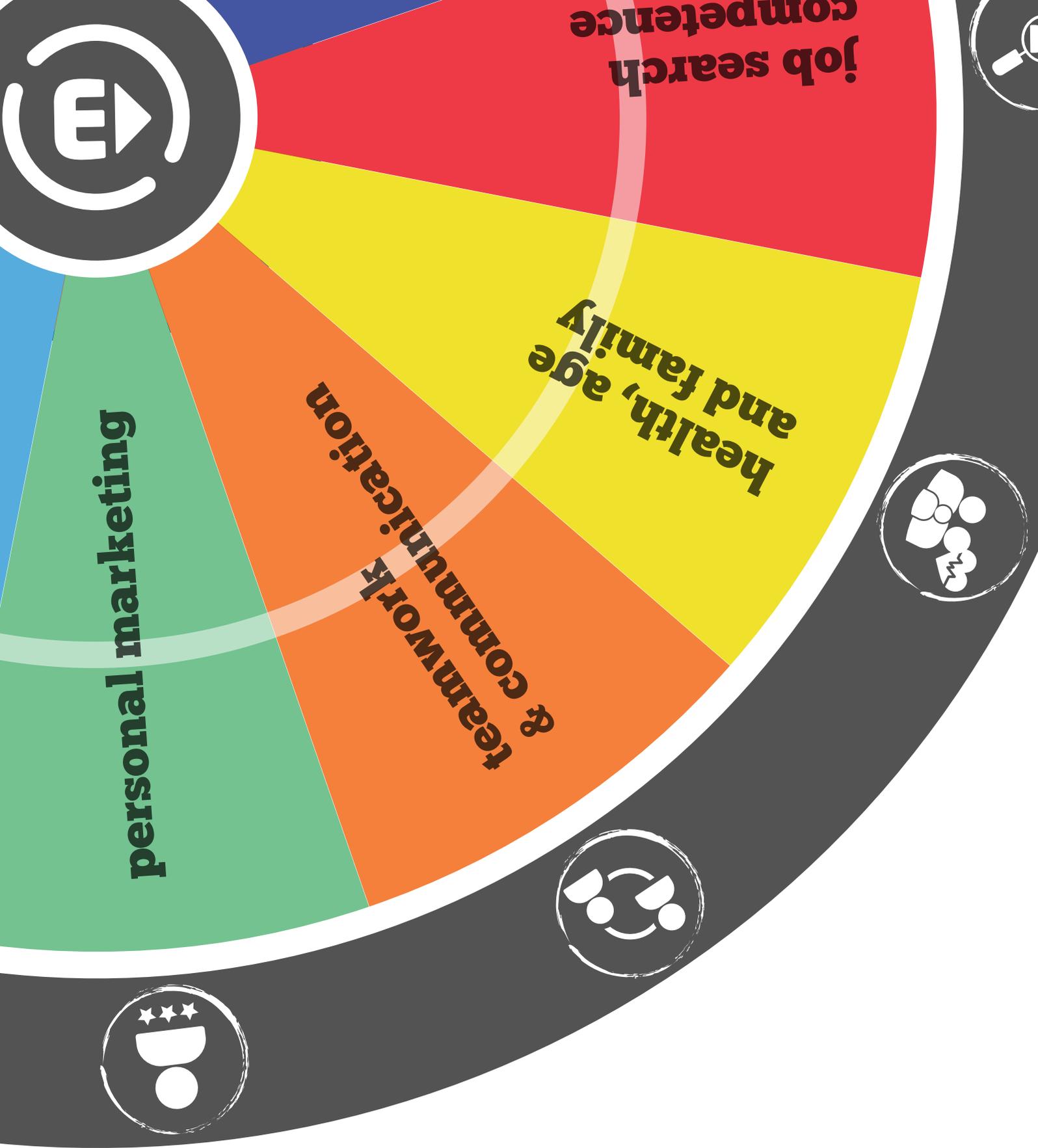
- Practical tips for using the various tools.
- A selection of activities presented by the various partners, which are used to stimulate these issues.

# HOW to use this manual?



- Bear in mind that this handbook is not a theoretical work on the topic of employability but a notebook that is intended to be a living practical tool;
- Use this handbook to question, reflect and discuss the issues of employability;
- Do not follow it like a recipe book;
- You can find our rationale for the concepts developed in EMPLAY (app, game and planner tools, although there are others);
- You can find general tips about the facilitator's role;
- You can find general tips for anyone who promotes practical activities in the field;
- You can find suggestions for activities;
- You can find references / links that can lead you to other approaches, concepts or models within the field of employability.

- Inspire yourself!



# 1<sup>st</sup> PART



# 1.1

## CONCEPTUAL

# framework

### Defining key concepts of the EMPLAY Tools

## work what are we talking about?

Work = productive human activities, paid (occupation or job) or unpaid (voluntary work, house work...), which involve the expenditure of mental and physical effort, with the aim of producing goods and services that cater for human needs.

The Employability Tools project has focused on paid work in its various forms:

- Working for others (employee / on a job)
- Independent work (freelancer or self-employed)
- Company owner / entrepreneur (to create an organisation)

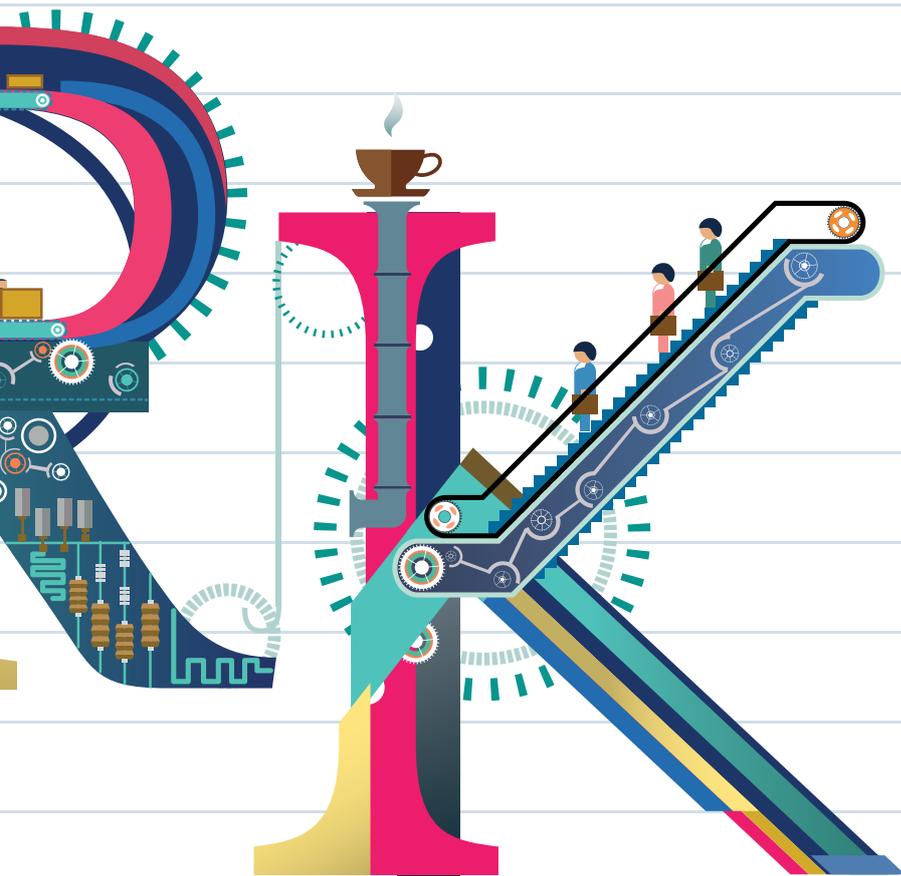
#### Work is not just about money:

Work has an extrinsic function (income) and also intrinsic / social and psychological functions: self-fulfilment, part of personal identity, structuring time, activity, collective goals, citizenship, social status, socialisation. Work usually forms part of personal identity and work satisfaction is a central issue in our quality of life.

#### Work is not all there is in adult life

Work plays a crucial role in people's lives. At certain points in your life, it may be a major role but it's never the only one (you may also be a father, son, friend, citizen, etc.) and all these roles interact. At times, they may either conflict or overlap.





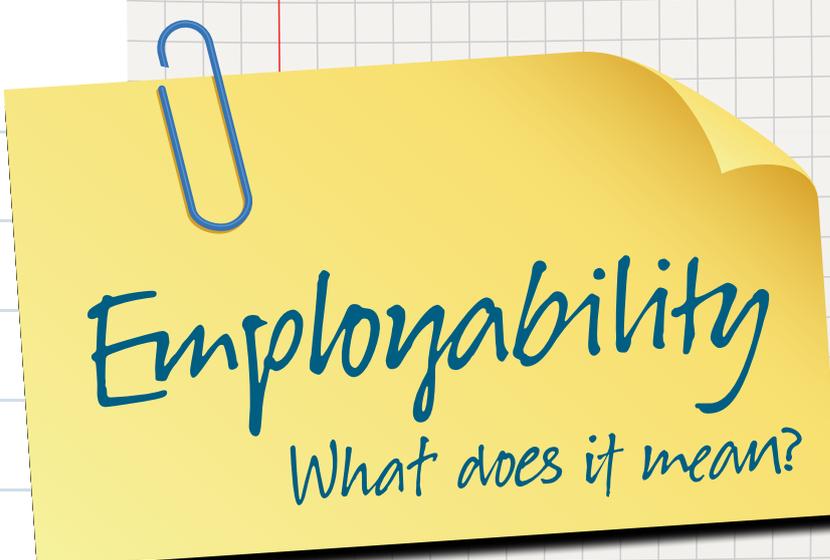
## Youth and the job market

Young people represent a quarter of the world's workforce but they are almost three times more likely to be unemployed compared to adults. Some of the barriers they face in entering the job market are:

- Underdeveloped skills;
- Early school leaving;
- Lack of formal contacts with employers;
- Formal education that's unmatched with market needs;
- Lack of knowledge regarding active job searching;
- The conditions of the job market (= sub-employment): not enough job offers (particularly in southern Europe) + 'not decent/suitable' work (low paid, unstable, no progression, below one's social expectations and wishes) + competences gap (young people overqualified for the job – more in southern Europe);

- The 'youth experience gap': young people have no prior professional experience, which leaves them at a disadvantage with regards to older candidates or leads them to accept more precarious or less well-paid jobs;
- Young people are more often exposed to unemployment: they are the "last in, first out" (due to lower costs of dismissal);
- Psychological factors: young people are in a phase of trying to match work opportunities with their own values and aspirations. This can create instability;
- The tensions that result from the mismatch between young people's expectations and the reality of the job market (constant rejections – the investment made in education may have no practical correspondence to accessing certain jobs);

**For young people, the issue of work is linked to autonomy and emancipation. Being unemployed or sub-employed at an early age may have a negative impact on their life plan and citizenship. Additionally youth tend to value a better work-life balance, putting more weight on their quality of life than previous generations.**



# Employability

What does it mean?

Employability is a combination of factors which enable individuals to progress towards or get into the job market (whether working for others, as an independent worker or entrepreneur), to stay in the job market and to progress during their careers.

## Employability of individuals depends on several factors:



### individual factors

- **Personal attributes** (demographics, physical issues, health)
- **Employability competences** (may be grouped as: Technical Competences, Soft Competences and Job Search Skills)



### external factors

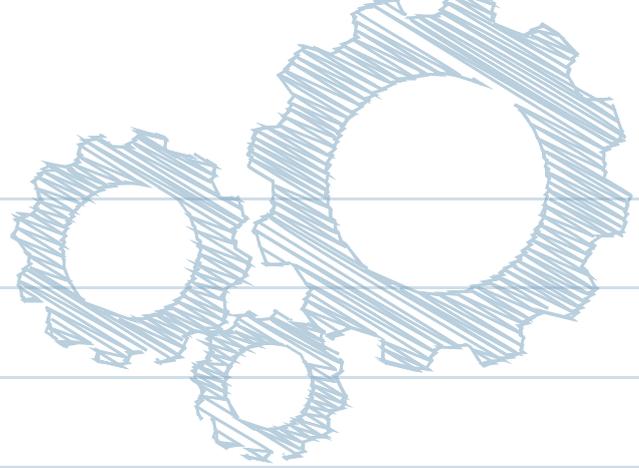
- **Environmental and social contexts** (opportunities to develop skills, employer attitudes)
- **Economic context** (type of job opportunities)

(adapted from Cedefop, 2008 – Glossary and McQuaid & Lindsay, 2005)

Therefore, employability is not only about the individual but an interaction between the person and his-her environment. The factors interact between themselves and employability is an ongoing dynamic process.

Employability competences are the domain where the individual has the greatest influence. Nevertheless, they are constrained by contextual factors (e.g. what and how far one studies is impacted by local job opportunities). Also, less controllable issues may be affected by competences (e.g. the impact of health problems is mediated by how one deals with the situation and type of work being searched).

# Employability Competences



**Competence = The ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development.**

(Cedefop; European Parliament and Council of the European Union, 2008)

For the Employability Tools project, competence is not limited to cognitive elements (involving the use of theory, concepts etc.). It also encompasses functional aspects (including technical skills) as well as inter/intrapersonal attitudes (e.g. curiosity) and values (e.g. integrity).

Even if each competence contains these 4 dimensions, they are not necessarily equally represented, because some may not necessarily be that relevant (e.g. for gardening, knowledge and technical skills may be more relevant than a strong component of attitude/values).

Competences are developed in a whole range of settings (formal, non-formal and informal) and vary from person to person. It is an ongoing developmental process.

Employability Competences can be structured as:

- **Technical competences** – competences linked to a specific professional field + transferable competences that relate to many professional areas (e.g. language or IT skills).
- **Personal and social competences** – competences linked to characteristics, attitudes, behaviours, that facilitate interactions within a work environment and that increase professional performance and promote career plans. They are transversal/transferable to different working areas and are a differentiating factor in the job market, given that technical competences are standardised (two people with the same degree will have probably acquired similar competences)
- **Job search competences** – skills and knowledge that enable a more efficient and effective job search



At the Employability Tools project we focus on Employability Competences related to Soft Competences and Job Search Competences, that we considered more relevant for anyone to enter and remain in the job market and/or to create their own project, namely:

## Personal and social competences

- **Communication**

Expressing oneself assertively and interacting positively with different people in a given work context.

- **Team work**

Working together with others, building cooperation, synergies and constructive relationships, towards a common goal.

- **Self-awareness**

Knowing your own character, abilities, strengths, limitations and motivations and having the will to improve yourself.

- **Proactivity**

Taking initiative to act and solve problems autonomously.

- **Resilience & Hope**

Being self-motivated, coping and persisting after setbacks.

- **Learning & Curiosity**

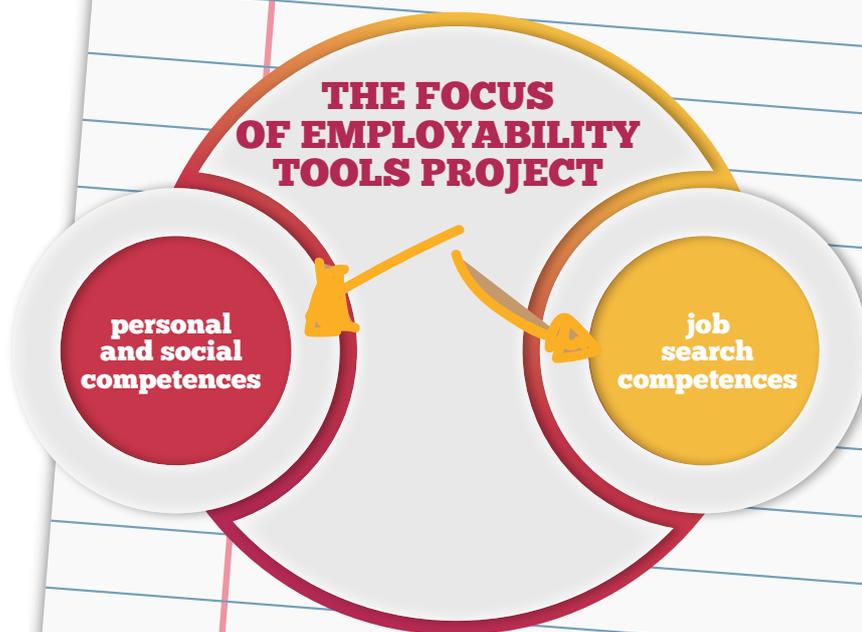
Loving to learn, lifelong and life wide and embracing novelty and the unknown.

- **Flexibility & Adaptability**

Being able to adjust to different scenarios and deal with uncertainty.

- **Creativity & Innovation**

Creating original or unusual ideas and making change or new solutions happen.



- **Problem solving**

Using strategies to explore problems, identify and select alternative solutions to reach a goal.

- **Entrepreneurial Attitude**

Being proactive in looking for opportunities and taking the initiative to solve problems and put ideas into practice.

## Job search competences

- **Personal interests & Motivations**

Knowing one's own personal interests, values, needs and preferences with regards to work, while also acknowledging the conditions that affect our decisions and searching for information on available job opportunities.

- **Knowing your professional fields**

Having up-to-date information on jobs, requirements and opportunities related to "one's potential professional fields", so to give the idea of a broader range of chances to consider.

- **Job search methodology**

Being able to set personal work goals and look for opportunities in a desired work field. This involves planning ahead and managing time and information during job searches.

- **Networking**

Actively building and maintaining professional relationships, that are mutually beneficial, and that may be resourceful for information, advice, referrals and/or opportunities. Social networks play a big part in networking today.



- **Knowledge of the labour market**

Knowing how the labour market works in general and the formalities and legal issues concerning work relations.

- **Administrative organisation**

Dealing with the bureaucratic issues of job searches and applications.

- **CV / Resumé**

Building a clear, neat and concise CV and tailoring it for each applications.

- **Motivation letter**

Writing focused letters with personal motivations and strengths, tailoring them to the recipient and intended goals.

- **Job interviews**

Preparing beforehand and communicating effectively during interviews.

- **Personal marketing**

Being aware of one's own strengths and the value one can bring to an organisation or team and being able to communicate one's identity and goals in a coherent way, both online and in person.

In order to increase employability, it is fundamental to have an open attitude towards learning and to incorporate the concept of lifelong learning.

## The key features of lifelong learning include the principles that learning:

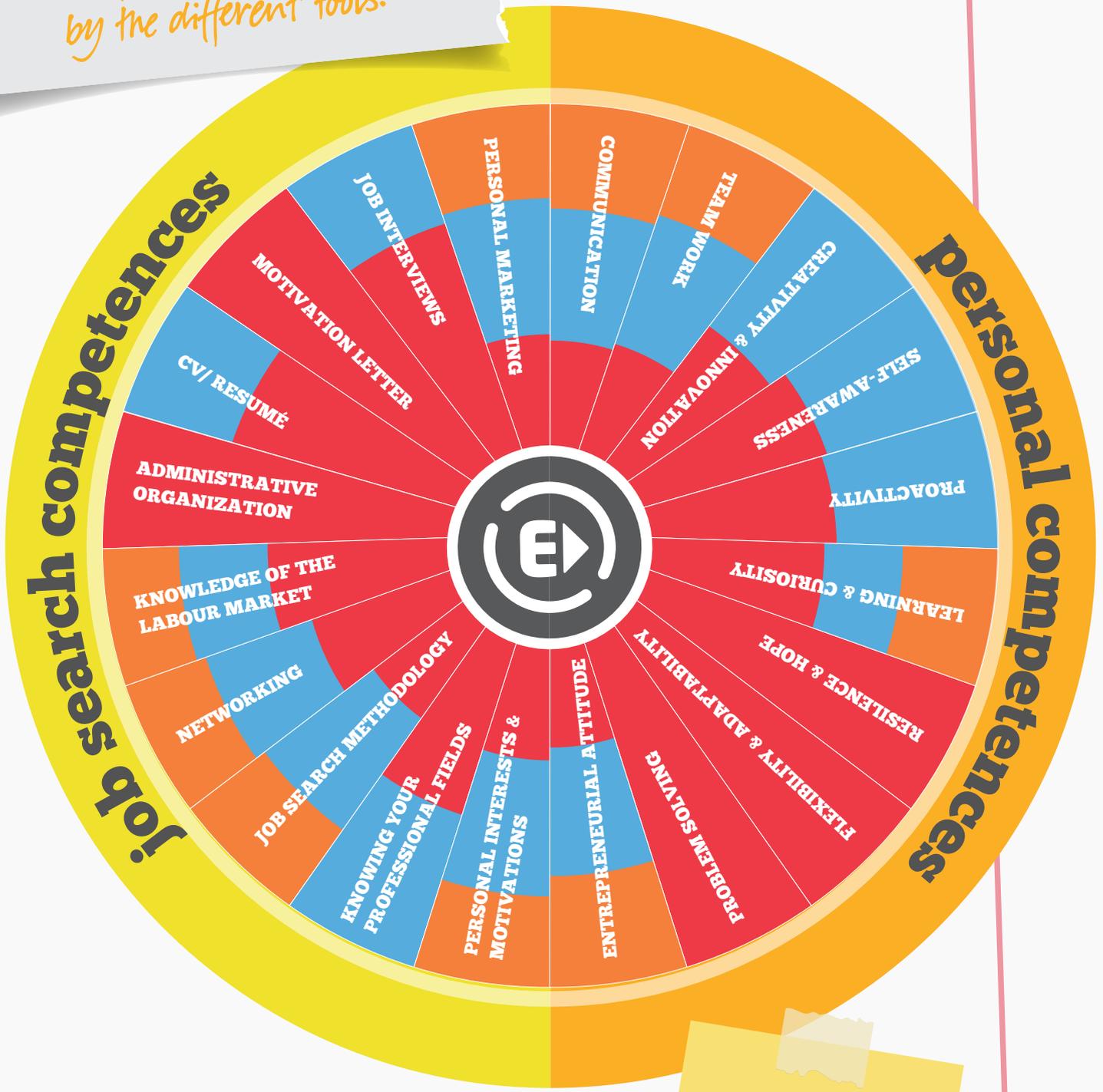
*RE* The European Commission has defined lifelong learning as: "all learning activity undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective". *DD*

1# is an integral part of life from cradle to grave;

2# should be accessible to all in the forms, at the times, the stages and in the places people want and need to learn;

3# and takes place across the continuum of informal, non-formal and formal education and training in all spheres of life.

competences developed  
by the different tools:



- GAME
- PLANNER
- APP

*EMPLAY tools also include other aspects of employability that have great impact:*



### **HEALTH, AGE AND FAMILY**

These are the least controllable aspects of employability, which also influence the chances you have in the job market. Nevertheless, every health, age or family condition can have different impacts according to the person's attitudes and choices.



### **EDUCATION AND OTHER QUALIFICATIONS**

The school or educational level one has completed, whether a general course or related to a specific field of knowledge or profession. It also includes other courses or training attended outside formal educational frameworks, as well as self-training.



### **PROFESSIONAL AND OTHER EXPERIENCES**

The work situations one has experienced in the past, including paid and unpaid work, long or short-term experiences influence future job opportunities. This dimension also includes other situations not directly related to work (in your family, leisure, travelling, etc.) yet very valuable as learning opportunities.



### **IT COMPETENCES**

The ability to make the most of available technology in order to develop work tasks (e.g. using editing software, searching information online), and its use for personal learning, self-organisation, networking and socializing. It also includes being aware of the perils and disadvantages linked to technology.

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## 1.2

### a few tips about the FACILITATOR'S ROLE



*"The facilitator encourages full participation, promotes mutual understanding and cultivates a shared responsibility. By encouraging everyone to do their best, a facilitator enables group members to seek inclusive solutions and build sustainable agreements."*

Kane (2007)



The facilitator's role is sometimes more important than the tools or activities undertaken, for it is in the dialectic of relationships in play that individual and group development takes place.

In this way, the role of the facilitator can enhance the tools being used in the development of employability.

In the brief overview we're making to this theme, we refer to the facilitator's role in a general way. It is up to each professional to adapt these tips to their context, objectives, individuals or target groups.

### **In short, it is the facilitator's responsibility to:**

- Prepare the activities according to the various outlined objectives by choosing the most appropriate methodologies.
- Mediate dynamics, using techniques that facilitate participants and the group to reach objectives in an interactive and constructive way.
- Coordinate the process, reassessing, adjusting, recreating and progressing.

The facilitator's profile is also critical in this process. The development of his/her own individual competences is fundamental, for e.g.

- Interpersonal communication (ability to communicate clearly and assertively)
  - Conflict management skills
  - Ability to listen
  - Ability to remain 'neutral' and facilitate the processes of the various members while respecting differences
    - Understanding different social realities
    - Common Sense
    - ... Among others...



# The role of the facilitator / youth worker

The facilitator's role is crucial in determining how the activities are selected, presented and conducted. He/She conditions their success and the performance of the participants. Regardless of individual style or personality, all facilitators should take a few points into account.



MOTIVATOR



GUIDE



QUESTIONER



BRIDGE BUILDER



CLAIRVOYANT



PEACEMAKER



TASKMASTER



PRAISER



FACILITATOR

## 1. Session preparation

Preplanning and preparation ensures better-consolidated and more conscious sessions.



## 2. Introducing the activities

Explain rules in a clear and concise way. Be prepared to respect participants doubts and to clarify them. Tone of voice and volume as well as body posture can contribute towards a better development of the activity.



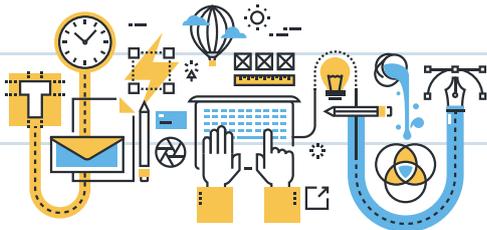
## 5. Facilitator's Attitudes

The facilitator's attitudes are of the utmost importance in the unfolding of the activities and in the relationships that are created. Knowing 'how to be' is an extremely important quality in facilitation models.

- o Empathy: to be able to put yourself in someone else's shoes can make it easier to make the right decisions;
- o A constructive attitude can enable positive thinking and the overcoming of obstacles;
- o Valuing and respecting each person's individuality promotes the acceptance of difference.
- o Knowing how to motivate and stimulate 'group spirit' while safeguarding and respecting individuality allows for genuine problem-solving experiences and increases group cohesion within a fun environment.
- o Knowing how to communicate effectively and manage conflicts facilitates situations inherent to group dynamics.
- o Questioning without judgment allows for reflection and spontaneity.

## 3. Flexibility and adaptability

It is important that the supervisor or facilitator is able to create, modify or adapt what was previously planned. Observing the participants and understanding if immediate adaptations are necessary is fundamental (e.g.: is the activity plan actually in tune with the emotional state of the group today? If not, you must have a plan B...). Making room for spontaneity is also fundamental.



## 4. Observe the participants

Practice 'reading' the individuals and groups, without judgment or prejudice, but gauging their motivations, levels of frustration and rhythm of the activities. Look at how participants interact, whether they all contribute, whether there are ones that monopolise the session or if there are others that do not participate. These observations can help you make decisions on-the-spot for the next sessions planning or for the post-activity reflection.



## 6. Self-awareness

Practicing your own self-awareness is the best way to be prepared and legitimately involve individuals and groups while putting your technical knowledge to its best use.

# Making the most out of group dynamics and activities



## Session Planning:

Make an effort to take into account:

- The goals;
- The characteristics of the target-group;
- The physical space and any materials. The matter of space is often underestimated but it can play a crucial role in how the session flows. Safety, acoustics, light, ventilation, noise and the type of flooring are important factors when deciding a location according to the aims and planned dynamic;
- Linking activities from session to session (in the case of long projects);
- Adequate use of methodologies and strategies for the specificity of both the group and the goals;

## Session Structure and Development

Session organisation includes some considerations about structure, choice of contents and the methodologies to use. These issues can be looked at separately but are interdependent. A session generally follows a three-part structure: **opening & warm-up**, **development** and **closing** phase.

This guiding structure does not need to be stated or explained to the target audience but rather acts as an internal compass for the facilitator, together with the continuous observation of the reactions and interactions of the group and individuals.

## Basic structure

### → OPENING & WARM-UP

This is the stage of the reception, the presentations and the first personal contacts, with exercises and dynamics that facilitate the well being of the group. In this warm-up phase the group will be prepared to open up to the themes and join the dynamics of the session. The facilitator prepares him/herself mentally for the session, so as to welcome the group warmly and confidently. The warm up phase can be divided in two moments. A general moment, with exercises to ease overall interaction; a specific

warm-up moment, where themes can be introduced in order to be developed later in the session – this acts as preparation for the roles and skills that will be required later during the development.  
**WARM UP / STIMULATION / PREPARATION / FOCUS**

## → DEVELOPMENT

At this stage the proposed activities should be focused on the purpose of the session, facilitating the exploration of the theme according to personal and group characteristics.

**CREATION / EXPLORATION / PRESENTATION / TRANSFORMATION**

## → CLOSING

At this stage it is important to close any exploration and dynamics developed in the development phase. It is time to distance oneself, relax, reflect, and integrate. Various reflection techniques can be used. Sometimes it is also the phase for evaluating the process, sharing thoughts, comparing experiences to other contexts or summarising contents. It's time to relax, to come back and integrate.

**INTEGRATION / FEEDBACK / REFLECTION / EVALUATION**



## OTHER ASPECTS:

### FEEDBACK

Feedback is present in every phase, both in the facilitator's overall attitude and in-between activities, using an action-reflection methodology. This may occur both in a spontaneous or directed manner. Apart from the more frequent verbal interaction, feedback may include other activities such as drawing, writing, collage, watching a film, reading a text and many more.

### RITUALS

Certain activities may be used as session opening or closing rituals; or for participants to foresee and adapt to the next situation. The use of rituals allows the group to interiorise the session structure. Rituals make more sense when used in longer projects and have major impact on certain target audiences.

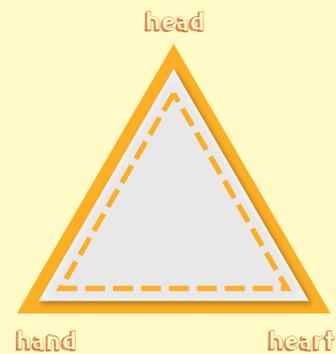
# GROUP DYNAMICS

Group dynamics are a tool for group study and also a term used for group processes. They can be used as a strategy to approach different themes and contexts, as a methodology or can be used as a mere recreational instrument.

Groups develop several dynamic processes that include norms, social roles, relationships, developments, social influences and effects on behaviour. The field of group dynamics takes this reality into account and often uses it to enhance and promote personal growth.

As far as our field of action is concerned, group dynamics are used in many situations as a process that facilitates the realisation of experiential awareness and a way of learning about themes.

There are people with a greater taste for more practical activities, either of fine motor or gross motor praxis (hand); others are more prone to emotional activities (heart) while yet others enjoy activities of a cognitive character (head). Balancing your proposals with a diverse range of activities, covering all these aspects, guarantees a greater possibility of meeting the audience's diversity.



For some, the activities can be very challenging; for others, less so. It's important to bear in mind that learning must be challenging (taking learners out of their comfort zone) yet not a panic zone. This is why it is so important to know the group and the individuals, in order to both challenge and provide them with comfort zones too.



Games and activities can be grouped in different categories according to criteria that we choose. We've arranged the activities as follows:

## Activities focused on the impact they may have on the group:

### Icebreakers and the like

Games that promote initial contact between different groups of individuals, aimed at breaking social barriers between participants and creating an atmosphere that's favourable and safe for each one of the participants.

### Trust-building activities

Games and actions that enable situations of risk (real or not). The experience of overcoming it successfully reinforces group trust.

### Activities of cooperation

Problematized situations aimed at collective problem solving to promote cohesion, group spirit and team organisation.

### Activities of Interpersonal communication

Where active listening, non-verbal communication, conflict mediation and feedback are essential.

### Energisers

Activities that require little time, have plenty of rhythm and that are used to increase energy and fun in the participants.



# Activities with a narrowed focus



## **Self-awareness activities**

Games or activities that promote knowledge of oneself by appealing to inward reflection, to assist the process of making conscious choices in various fields of life.

## **Activities within the themes of employability**

Games and activities that stimulate the development of knowledge and attitudes that enable active job searches, the development of one's being, promote action and increase awareness and knowledge of the job market (see the different competences of employability).

## **Activities promoting active citizenship**

Activities and games that appeal for social conscience, active participation, critical thinking, community and initiatives.

## **Artistic or project-based activities**

Individual or cooperative creative making, using artistic approaches such as collage, photography, roleplaying, fine-art exhibitions, etc.

NOTE: Any game or activity can and should be adapted to each group and individual context.

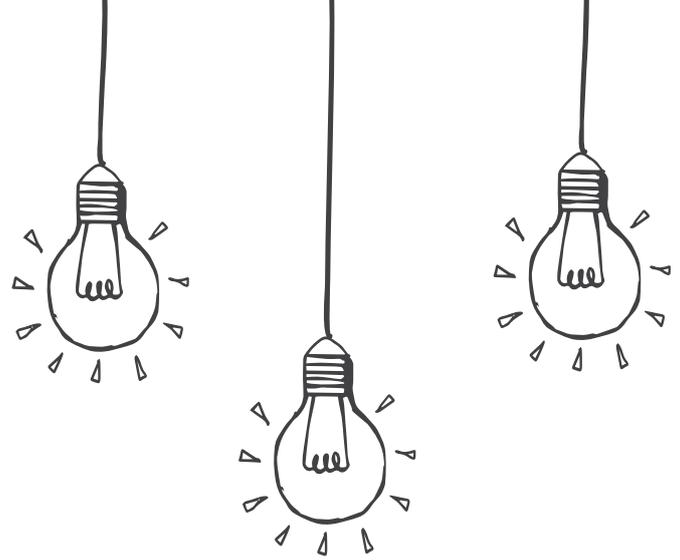


- Know the game rules and operations well.
- Know your target audience.
- Prepare the game's setting in advance.
- Be available to welcome the participants.
- Introduce the game briefly and clearly (goals and basic rules) without explaining it all in one go.
- Make sure any questions are answered.
- Any questions that arise should be respected and addressed. Facilitate communication, encouraging tolerance from the beginning.
- Gradually introduce more complex instructions.
- Look out for the emotional changes of the participants and their level of involvement.



# DEBRIEFING

The methodology of **Action-reflection** is fundamental to the dynamics of activities. It allows participants to link the game to reality.



## Action-reflection -action

is a learning methodology of reflective practice where, after a proposed activity, participants reflect on aspects of the relationship between their experience of the activity and real life. This opens up possibilities to make bridges and transfers between the two. These new ways of thinking thus become new possibilities for action in future situations.

Reflection is therefore an important determining part of the activity. Action is practice and reflection is thinking about that practice. This dynamic enhances internal processes of transformation. New paths of thought open up which also become possibilities for new actions.

## We can use different aspects of reflection:



- How was it? (action)
- What did you feel? (emotion)
- How would you do it again? (reworking the action)
- What did it remind you of? (memory)
- In what other settings or situations in life has this happened to you? (transference)
- What did you learn from this experience? (learning )
- What will you do in a real situation? (anticipating the action)

## When facilitating please consider:

- Weighing up how much reflection to carry out. Sometimes 'Less is more'.
- We can use different methods that use different languages (photography, painting, body language or others).
- Avoid reflections that don't favour the development of individuals or that don't fulfil the desired aims.
- To respect and ensure everyone respects different opinions and feelings.
- The facilitator's position in this methodology is to question, listen and reply when necessary.



### ▶ space for reflection ◀

REGULATION

THINK PRAXIS

DEAL  
with  
COMPLEXITY

INSIGHTS

place to stay  
which is still  
undefined

avoid the tendency  
of control



(with explanations,  
interpretations,  
methodologies...)



*... if men are beings of doing is exactly why their doing is action and reflection. It is praxis. It is the transformation of the world. And in the very reason that doing so is praxis, all doing has to have a theory that necessarily enlightens it. Doing is theory and practice. It is reflection and action.*

Paulo Freire



# 1.3

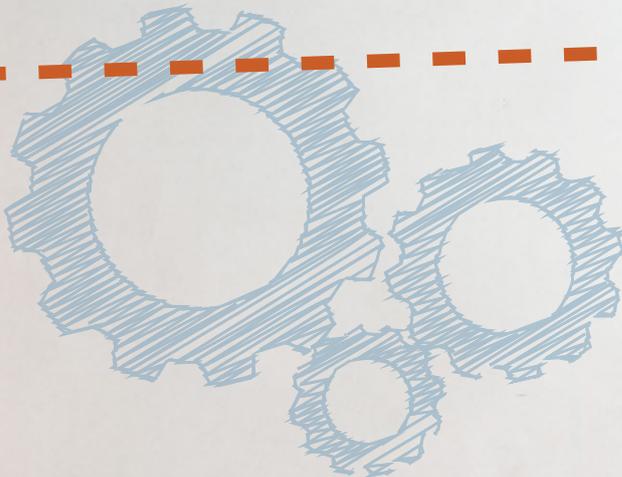
## TOPICS FOR REFLECTION

*for employability workers*

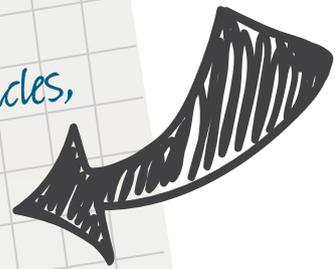
To question opens up possibilities to deconstruct rigid or preconceived ideas while creating space for new understandings.

It is essential that employability workers can also reflect on themselves as professionals, with regards to contents and methodologies, the political aspects of their actions, the current state of affairs in the world and the future.

To elaborate good and powerful questions is to open doors to new and innovative solutions.



If we already help young people to overcome obstacles, why do we spend time trying to find ways to facilitate?



## Will a CV be important in five years time?

Whose responsibility is it to create jobs?

How can society rearrange itself when there's work on offer?

As a facilitator, am I required to have the competences that I am developing in others?

What am I doing to become a better professional?



Is it possible to prepare young people for unpredictable scenarios in the world of work?

What single thing matters the most in developing youth employability?

Leisure and work  
- what do they mean in this new era?

Give us your thoughts

# Inner Readiness for Employability

Mark E. Taylor, Strasbourg May 2018

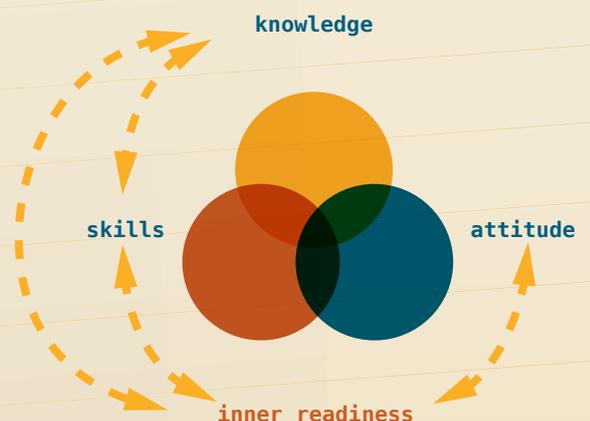
When asked to contribute this little article, I jumped at the chance because I have seen how useful some of the ideas about inner readiness can be in helping (young) people find ways to put their competences into action. If they can do this, then their chances for employability will increase.



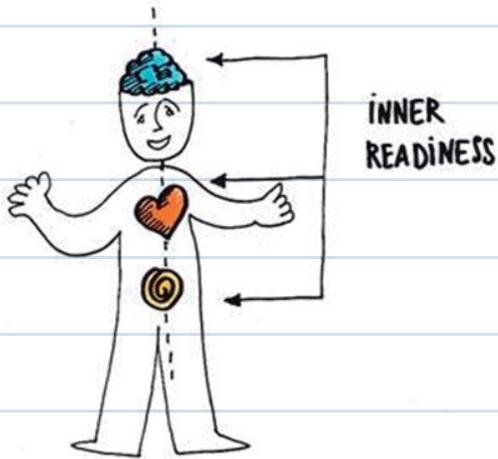
We all know occasions when things just don't seem to work and we are somehow not able to perform well. For instance, I think I'm a pretty good trainer: I

know my stuff; can sometimes facilitate really large groups; and can follow learning processes and am alive to different group dynamics. Yet, there are times where the flip chart falls over, the tiny powerpoint presentation will not reach the digital projector, an introduction goes on too long, participants are looking bored and your trainer colleague comes up and has to help rescue the situation. On reflection, I realise that my inner readiness to put my competences into action in THAT space at THAT time was missing. What should I have done?

For quite a few years, when talking about competences we usually talk about three major factors: having the right Skills, Knowledge and Attitudes to do something. Inner readiness is what helps unify them:

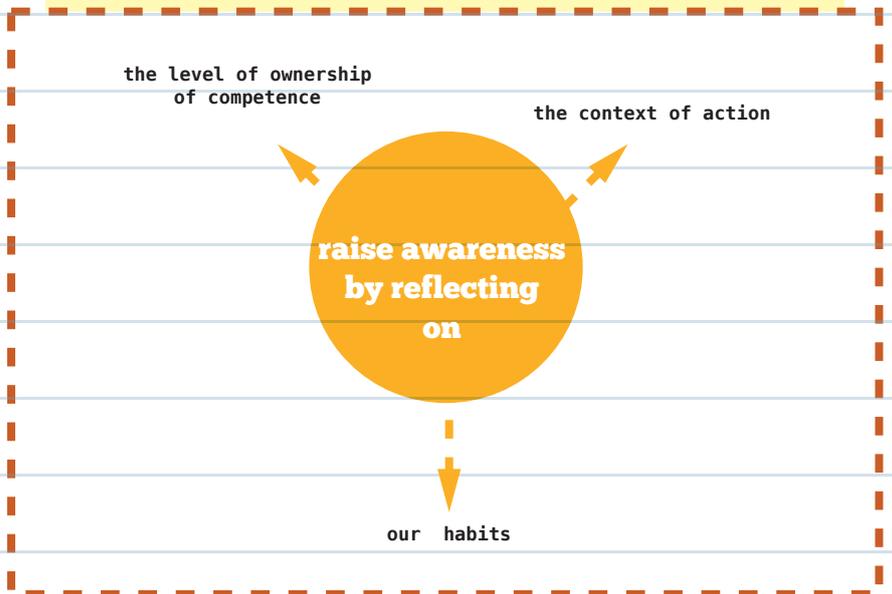


Another way of looking at this is to think of inner readiness bringing together what you think, feel and do:



Illustrations by Coline Robin.

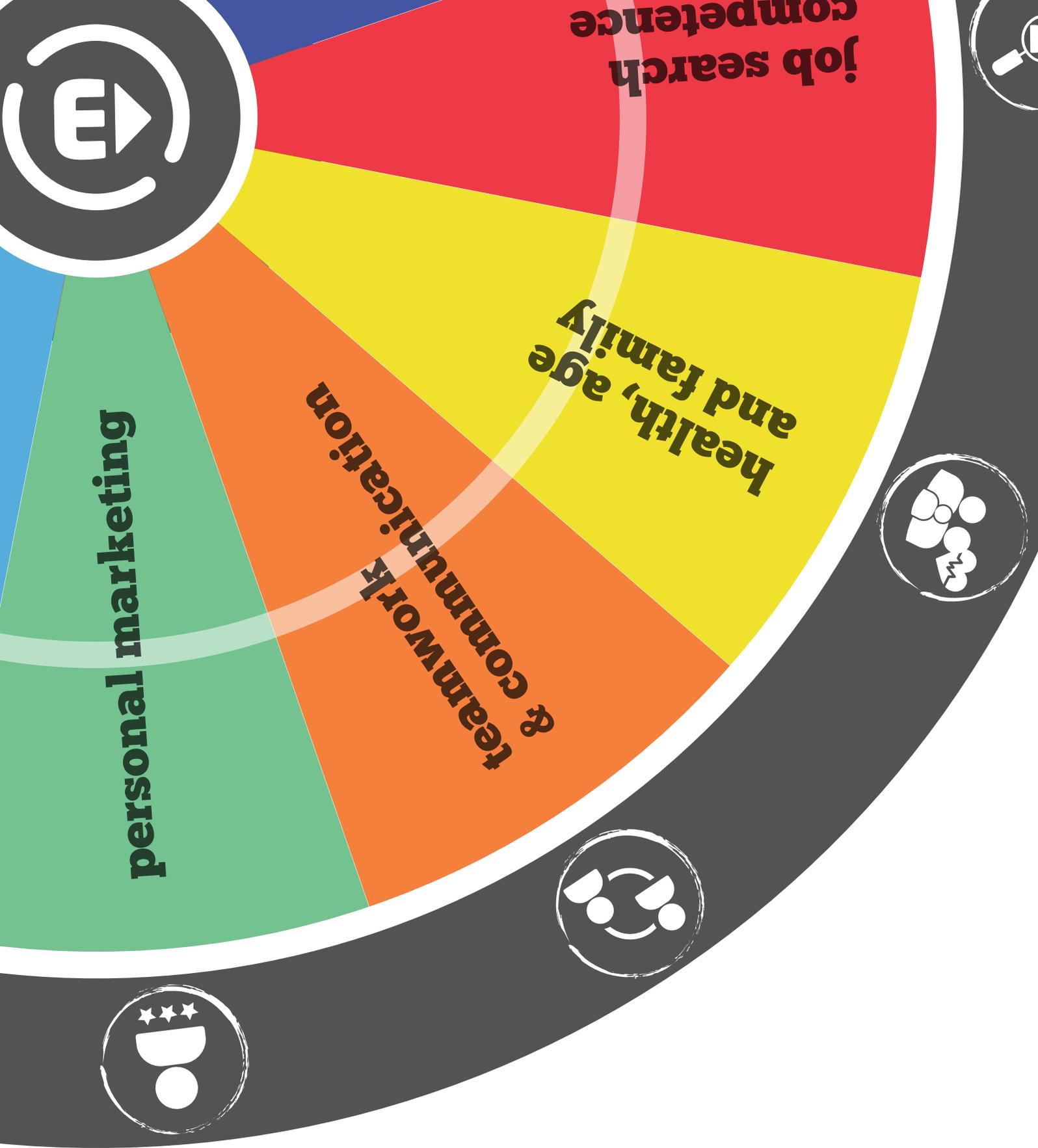
So how does this work? The answer, my friends, lies in being able to reflect about your situation and raising your awareness about, again, THREE FACTORS. This helps you to analyse what is blocking your ability to put your competence into action in the here-and-now.



If you are interested in exploring further the concepts of inner readiness and reflection for learning you can find all the documents related to the REFLECT project here:

[www.reflecting.eu](http://www.reflecting.eu)





# 2<sup>nd</sup> PART

# 2.1

## EMPLOY TOOLS: HOW TO USE THEM?



They were developed as interactive educational tools for people from 16+ and with no upper age limit. They are intended for people currently studying, working, looking for work or in any other situation. They are suitable for people with and without work experience.

### NOTE

**Whenever possible promote engagement with the planner to make sure it's seen as useful and interesting to use**

E.g. offer the planner only after working on some of its activities in a session



## EMPLOY PLANNER

The Planner combined the different background and skills of all the partners mixing their expertise in career guidance and non-formal education, with a special focus on youth.

Its aim was to create a tool that allowed users to develop their employability competences and skills in a spontaneous and creative manner.

The Planner's backbone relies on 5 key themes:

### WHERE DO I WANT TO GO?

(Employability plan / Development / Lifelong Learning)

### WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO TO GET THERE?

(Job Search)

### Organisational elements

Inspiration / Motivation / Challenging oneself / Relax

The Planner is conceived as an individual tool, but it can also be used as a support instrument for coaching or career advice.

If you are working with young people who want to improve their employability, you could suggest they print this unique diary and consider it their new friend. They'll have fun while undertaking pleasant challenges.

The Employ agenda can be used in different ways, namely:

- If you are working with a group of young people, you can select some exercises to do (eg: If you are working on the theme of the CV, you can create small groups. Give

each group a photocopy of the exercise "Curriculum, true or false ? "; Allow time for their accomplishment; see which group got more right answers or open discussion on the most controversial answer);

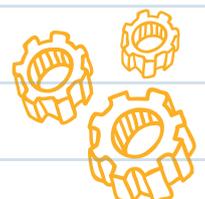
-If you perform individual follow-up to redefine professional / life projects, you may select some proposed exercises; - Some of the exercises may also be presented as points of connection between sessions (individual or group). They can be self-made works that will be starting points in the next session (eg: ask them to do the "Who am I?", conference and in the next session introduce to the others.)

It was conceived with a 'social' spirit in mind, with many exercises aimed at improving interaction with others, both to develop knowledge of oneself (with a special focus on personal skills) and to network, as it is common knowledge that this is crucial in job searching.

If you are working with a youth group, some of the tasks can be used as 'homework', using deadlines to reinforce time management skills.

In any case, anyone is free to choose his/her own favourite way to use this Planner. One can start from the beginning, open it at random or even start at the end - why not?

And there are no fixed rules about how often to use it. Maybe everyday; maybe every weekend. The only condition is that users find their own method and apply it thoroughly because perseverance is a personal competence essential for employability.



# EMPLAY APP

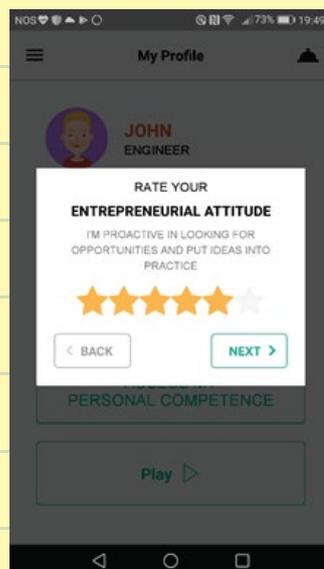
The EMPLAY App is a personal mobile phone tool that can be used at one's own pace and will. It was designed to stir self-reflection, prompt the user to act and experiment while being fun and conveying a sense of achievement. It can be used as part of a group activity or individual guidance process. Its mobile interface is attractive and interactive and it relies on principles of gamification to engage users to fulfil challenges that promote the awareness and /or development of employability competences. EMPLAY App is available for Android and IOS.

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN USING THE APP?

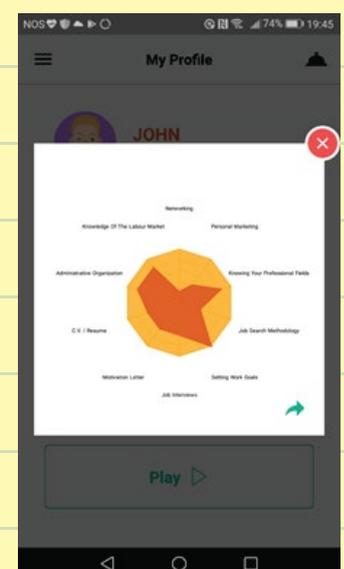
To use the app the user must register using an e-mail, Facebook or Google account. Then he/she chooses an avatar, a nickname and a profession. These elements will become visible to other users later (although no personal identification data is ever shared).

### Assessing one's own employability competences

Users start by taking a self-assessment on 20 employability competences using a 6-point scale: 10 personal competences + 10 job search competences. These competences are not exhaustive; they were the ones selected as most relevant within the Employability Tools project. This exercise requires self-reflection and brings awareness of what may be considered employability competences in general.



After completing each set of 10 competences, results are graphically represented in the form of a competences radar.



## Taking app challenges to get to know/develop competences

To 'Play' means to receive one random challenge at a time related to one of the 20 existing competences. Challenges might be:

- **Questions about yourself or your environment** (e.g. You're part of a team. Name your 3 strongest points that contribute to good teamwork; Who do you know personally that is most capable of building and nourishing a network of professional contacts? What could you learn from him/her?).

- **Questions about work issues** (e.g. Choose the 3 issues out of a list of 11 that are most important to you in a job. How do you prepare for a job interview? Tick options from the list).

- **Tasks to complete away from the device** (e.g. Interview a friend or relative working in a totally unknown professional field you never thought about for yourself. Be curious about his/her

activities and workday; Collect at least 4 job ads in your field of work from different companies. What do they ask for? Look for similarities).

The variety and sequence of challenges have been selected as motivating and engaging. However users may skip the proposed challenge and move to another.

Users type their answers or notes and the challenge is saved (so users can come back to it them at any time). Completed challenges earn 1, 2 or 3 points, depending on what is required and the time set.

For each completed challenge the competences radar raises one level in the corresponding competence, meaning that that the user has improved that specific competence. The visualisation of the entry level vs. newly achieved levels reinforces progress and nourishes self-betterment.

## The game: getting hired and hiring

Points earned from completing challenges are added up and are visible in the user's profile page at any stage. Points are organised according to levels that roughly correspond to a typical career progression: trainee, junior, pro, senior, team leader, manager, entrepreneur, businessman / woman, investor. This does not mean this is the only career path that exists in the job market. It just represents a motivational point system.

Players at higher levels are able to see the competence radar of those in levels below and can make them job offers. Users that receive an offer must be quick to accept or they may miss the opportunity (just like in real life...). Job offers are saved in the user's profile.

From the entrepreneur level upwards, users have the chance to start their company by choosing the service or product delivered and the company's name. From this level onwards, users can browse candidates' radars and make job offers while continuing to complete further

challenges (even company owners need to keep up developing their employability competences!). Levels corresponding to company ownership represent roughly the stages of business development: seed, start-up, growth, establishment, expansion and maturity.

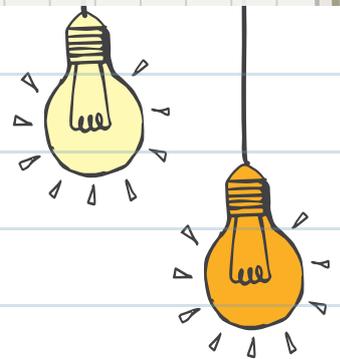


# THE STORY

## around the concept

Navigating the EMPLAY App means that the user is deliberately working on his/her employability competences and gaining awareness of the various aspects linked to personal development and the world of work. Level progress in the app symbolically shows that improving competences makes one more appealing to potential recruiters and allows one to grow as a professional in the job market. Users can even reach a point where they may feel they can start their own company. If they become company owners, a user can potentially have a better understanding of a recruiter's perspective (e.g. "what will I look for in a candidate?"), hence complementing his/her previous experience as a candidate. Having the recruiter's perspective may be insightful. EMPLAY App users can experience a replica of the world of work using their competences as a starting point and transversal theme.

## how to use the app as an intervention tool?



As an employability worker, you may either recommend the individual use of the EMPLAY App or help the user navigate the app during your individual guidance sessions. For example, you may want to apply a competences' evaluation to help the user assess his/her own competences (using both categories or just one depending on your intervention goals), set development goals and/or work through their individual competences (e.g. by asking for evidence of behaviour associated with each competence in their life or in general). Challenges may also be completed during sessions while you, as a counsellor, may ask further questions, give information or provide feedback. Talking about the competences and situations provided by the app challenges will convey a deeper understanding of the issue, a more layered perception of the self, enable greater links to real life and provide solid learning outcomes.

Another option is for the user to navigate the app by him/herself while you arrange to have regular talks about his/her experience as part of the guidance process. Some possible questions to pose:

- Which challenges did you find the most interesting? Revealing? Hard to do?
- How did you feel about completing the challenges? What thoughts and feelings did it bring up regarding your current situation / your future?

- What type of challenges do you prefer doing? Why these?
- Did you skip any challenges? What were the reasons? Might they relate to something you're resistant to work on or develop?
- How does this challenge relate to real life? Can you remember any real past situations where the same issues arose? Can you imagine any of these situations arising at work?
- What real life challenges do you face that may relate to this particular competence?

In a group intervention or training event focused on development of employability competences, you may suggest participants use the app outside the sessions and share their experience, progress and results back to the group. Your role here may lie in facilitating the discussion and giving further information, if needed.

Using the app may also be a side-activity, external to your intervention or training event. This can result in users bringing back common themes that stir informal interactions within the group, with participants competing and / or trying to hire each other.

# THE EMPLAY BOARD GAME

## An engaging way to develop employability.

The board game includes a board with 12 segments ('employability dimensions'), 50 job cards, 132 EMPLAY Cards (10 cards for each dimension + 1 blank card for each dimension) and the Facilitator's Guide. It can be played in groups of 4 to 5 players (or by up to 5 teams with a maximum of 3 players each – 15 players). Variations of this educational game include using it as a one-to-one coaching tool or even as an individual exercise (see the Guide).



## how to play? .....

Place the board in the centre of a table along with the 4 piles of EMPLAY Cards and gather the players around it. After introductions, we suggest the facilitator explains or asks players about the meaning of the 12 dimensions. Then, each player or team chooses 2 job cards and explains the reasons why they have chosen those jobs, thus working on vocational and professional choices.

The competition starts when players turn over their job cards to find 3 icons representing 3 of the 12 employability dimensions. Players have to grab EMPLAY Cards that display the same icons. They should be fast because other players may

want the same cards. Afterwards, players give answers to what's on their EMPLAY Cards and can move up levels towards the centre of the board in the dimensions they're in.

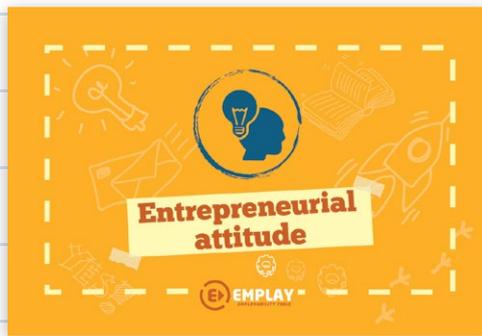
The game finishes when a player or team reaches the centre of the board, in at least 2 dimensions, or the time set for the game runs out. A maximum duration of 2 hours is recommended. It is totally possible to play EMPLAY board game several times. Thereby also improving the chance to symbolically 'win' the game and also systematically improve player(s) competences in the field of employability

## Facilitating learning

Your role of the facilitator is to prepare the environment for the exercise, to facilitate its flow, to provide information and assistance during the exercise and to run the debriefing session afterwards. It is recommended that you have some experience or understanding of non-formal education practices and competence in employability issues.

The EMPLAY Cards were conceived to promote reflection, discussion and awareness of the various issues involved in employability, and are the main learning source in the game. For some of their questions, there is a clear 'correct' answer. Others are open reflective questions that apply to either one individual or all the players. For these, there is neither a correct nor wrong answer. Some cards suggest an action to be performed during the game.

As a facilitator you can adapt the game to your target, being more or less strict, encouraging a more competitive or cooperative approach.



**How would you explain to a 6-year old child what an entrepreneurial attitude involves?**

READ AFTER ACTIVITY: The other players consider your explanation and decide if you move up 1 or 2 levels.

1/2 up 1 or 2 levels



**Name 2 advantages of being older and 2 advantages of being younger when looking for a job. Check if other players agree or not.**

[TEAM: each team member names 1 advantage for each option]

1 up 1 level



**Your knowledge of basic IT has given you an advantage compared to other people.**

You move up 1 level and move 2 other players of your choice down 1 level within the IT dimension.

YOU 1 up 1 level  
2 players at your choice 1 down 1 level

The Facilitator's Guide includes the game rules, ideas on facilitating the game and conducting the debriefing session, and possible variations in playing the game.

According to your needs and interest, the following aspects of the game can easily be adapted:

- Changing the time required to play by changing the total score required to finish.
- Reducing the number of dimensions allows you to focus on those most pertinent for you.
- Organising a pedagogical string of board game moments, by focusing each round on a different set of dimensions or group of cards.

This educational board game, including the Facilitator's Guide, Cards and Board can be downloaded online and easily assembled by yourself.

A hard copy (including wooden pieces) can also be purchased by contacting the partners involved: [info@producoesfize.com](mailto:info@producoesfize.com)

## 2.2

### A SELECTION OF PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES

Apart from the activities already proposed by the EEMPLAY Planner, App and Board Game we would like to suggest a few others that may be useful when working with groups. Choosing to play one of these games goes a great deal beyond its set gaming goal. The same activity, played with different groups can lead to different results and provoke different afterthoughts. In this lies the wealth of this dynamic. The process and all it offers is more important than reaching an end result or a product.

#### ACTIVITIES

#### COMPETENCE

Cutting and peeling

Communication

**Sneak a peek**

**Team work/ Communication**

Youth game

International youth project / Employability competences

**Download bar**

**Self-awareness / Proactivity**

Highlight your skills

Self-awareness / Knowledge of the job market

**Mini-market economy**

**Knowledge of the labour market**

Hat of fears

Self awareness

**Meet eye to eye**

**Communication**

The model professional

Self-awareness / Personal interests & Motivations

**Tic Tac**

**Team work**

Use your paper

Creativity & Innovation

**Job interview simulation**

**Job interviews / Job search methodology**

Blind square

Problem solving / Team work

**Agree/Disagree about work**

**Knowledge of the labour market**

I am like...

Self-awareness / Creativity & Innovation

# 1. CUTTING AND PEELING



<b>THEME</b>	Communication Interpretation
<b>GROUP SIZE</b>	irrelevant
<b>TIME</b>	5-10 min
<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	Having a better understanding of different realities and ways of listening
<b>INSTRUCTIONS</b>	<p>Give every participant a piece of paper. Ask them to close their eyes and then</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1- fold the paper in two</li><li>2- fold it again in two</li><li>3- cut off the right hand corner</li><li>4- turn the paper over</li><li>5- fold the paper in three</li><li>6- cut off the left hand corner.</li></ol> <p>Then open your eyes and see what you have made. Compare yours with the others.</p>
<b>MATERIALS</b>	One piece of paper for each participant.
<b>TIPS FOR THE FACILITATOR</b>	<p>Use consistent vocabulary during the exercise. Ask how they felt during the exercise. Ask what was there first feeling when they opened their eyes.</p>

## 2. SNEAK A PEEK



<b>THEME</b>	Working together Communication
<b>GROUP SIZE</b>	8 – 24 participants per facilitator
<b>TIME</b>	30 min
<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To explore differences in communication</li> <li>- To explore creativity</li> <li>- To promote listening without interpretation or judgment</li> </ul>
<b>INSTRUCTIONS</b>	<p>1- Divide the group in teams of 4.</p> <p>2- Every team decides who will be their Sneak and who will be the Instructor. The remaining team members will be builders.</p> <p>3- Explain the rules – There is a piece of art already assembled on a table. Each group must build a replica of this art piece by assembling the loose parts that are on the table. To do so, they have to follow the instructions of the instructor who cannot touch the parts. The instructor receives his information from the Sneak who is the only one allowed to see the piece of art. The two are only allowed to talk to each other while sitting back to back.</p> <p>4- At the start of the game, the builders stand in the corner. The instructor and the Sneak sit back to back on two chairs. The Sneak can approach the table and observe the piece of art for 10 seconds. He then goes back to his chair and has 30 seconds to describe the art piece to the Instructor, only using his voice.</p> <p>5- The Instructor will then give instructions to the builders for 30 seconds. Then the builders have 1 minute to re-build the art piece. This dynamic continues until one team thinks they have finished the construction.</p>
<b>MATERIALS</b>	<p>An assembled art piece.</p> <p>Enough materials for all the groups to build an identical art piece.</p> <p>2 (back to back) chairs per team</p> <p>Something to cover the piece of art and the constructions.</p>
<b>TIPS FOR THE FACILITATOR</b>	<p>Be strict about the timing and communication – the Sneak cannot see the constructions, the instructor and the builders can not see the piece of art. The Sneak cannot talk to the builders or make any gestures.</p> <p><b>For the debriefing:</b></p> <p>ask how they felt during the exercise, what went well, what was difficult, why?</p> <p>What would they change to make it easier?</p> <p>what went well with regards to the communication?</p>

## 3. YOUTH GAME

<b>THEME</b>	International youth projects / Employability competences
<b>GROUP SIZE</b>	1 - 30 participants per facilitator
<b>TIME</b>	Between 4 hours and 2 weeks
<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	To know key competences during an European project
<b>INSTRUCTIONS</b>	<p>1- Organise a sort of Treasure Hunt in which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Each key competence may be directly related to one or more tasks. Every task can be completed individually or in a group.</li></ul> <p>2- Once the participants/volunteers have finished all their tasks, a plenary meeting needs to be organised in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Analyse the learning outcomes achieved through the game;</li><li>- Reflect on what the Youthpass is and what it's used for.</li></ul>
<b>MATERIALS</b>	You need a Youthgame task Form: <a href="https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toolbox/tool/youthgame.1442/">https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toolbox/tool/youthgame.1442/</a>
<b>TIPS FOR THE FACILITATOR</b>	After the Game and the plenary Providing each participant with a Learning diary where they can regularly write down the activities they develop during the process and the competences developed in each specific field.

## 4. DOWNLOAD BAR



<b>THEME</b>	Self-awareness / Proactivity
<b>GROUP SIZE</b>	5 - 15 participants
<b>TIME</b>	45 min
<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	Support people realising their objectives and help them take small steps to achieve them.
<b>INSTRUCTIONS</b>	<p>1- Each participant notes down three goals on a piece of paper.</p> <p>2- Draw one horizontal bar per goal.</p> <p>3- In each bar the participant must fill the bar with a different colour representing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- how far he/she has reached towards the goal (colour 1)</li> <li>- how much depends on him/her to reach it (colour 2)</li> <li>- who can help fulfil the goal (colour 3)</li> </ul> <p>4- For each objective the participant should write three small steps towards achieving it.</p> <p>5- They must note down the probability of fulfilling each represented goal in percentage terms.</p> <p>6- Draw another bar to mark with different colours representing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-how much it depends on you to fulfil the goal,</li> <li>-how much it depends on others to reach your goals.</li> </ul> <p>7- Share and reflect as a group.</p>
<b>MATERIALS</b>	Paper, colouring pens
<b>TIPS FOR THE FACILITATOR</b>	<p>This exercise can also be done individually.</p> <p>You can use a similar exercise at the EMPLAY Planner</p> <p>Reflect about the capacity to have initiative, the locus of internal control and self-determination.</p>

## 5. HIGHLIGHT YOUR SKILLS



<b>THEME</b>	Self-awareness / Knowledge of the job market
<b>GROUP SIZE</b>	4 – 15 participants
<b>TIME</b>	60 min
<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reflecting on the link between skills developed in everyday life and the job market.</li> <li>- Developing greater awareness of employability skills.</li> <li>- Reinforcing self-esteem by identifying strengths.</li> <li>- Promoting knowledge of oneself, the ability to reflect on experience and learn from it.</li> </ul>
<b>INSTRUCTIONS</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- Start by introducing the topic of competences by asking what employability competences are.</li> <li>2- Ask participants to tell personal stories, elaborating situations they found challenging and how they solved them.</li> <li>3- Consider the characteristics of the group you are working with and invite them to tell their stories by making reference to a specific context, e.g. if they have participated/are participating in a transnational mobility scheme (as individuals) or in some group experience (i.e. youth camps), about previous work/educational/sport experience.</li> <li>4- Use participants' contributions to identify skills and competences various protagonists put into practice in order to solve their situation.</li> <li>5- Highlight the relationship between these situations and the job market.</li> <li>6- Facilitate translating these results into possible aspects to include in a CV in order to improve self-marketing.</li> </ol>
<b>MATERIALS</b>	<p>A comfortable space where people can sit in a circle.</p> <p>A blackboard and materials to share concepts (post-it, pens, marker) can be useful, but not necessary.</p>
<b>TIPS FOR THE FACILITATOR</b>	<p>Ask open questions.</p> <p>Allow the participants to find their own answers.</p> <p>Make it interactive.</p> <p>You can make this exercise more visual by using post-its on which participants can write skills, paste them on a board and then group them by macro-areas in the debriefing.</p>

## 6. MINI-MARKET ECONOMY



<b>THEME</b>	Knowledge of the labour market
<b>GROUP SIZE</b>	Up to 16 (a larger group can be subdivided)
<b>TIME</b>	15 – 20 min
<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To deepen understanding of a market economy based on exchange and how work fits into the circuit.</li> <li>- To introduce concepts that relate to types of work and types of work organisations.</li> </ul>
<b>INSTRUCTIONS</b>	<p>1- The facilitator distributes 1 or 2 resources per participant and asks them to gather around a large sheet of paper (size of flipchart paper) on the floor or around a table.</p> <p>2- The group accepts the 'creative challenge' of creating a chain that gathers all the available products and services. All the resources must be used.</p> <p>3- The group must display the resources on the sheet of paper and register the relationship between the objects. The facilitator offers no suggestions, merely questioning participants in order for them to elaborate on the relationships they establish (for example, is the accountant to be hired by company X or does he own a company that sells to company X?). Also questioning them about the type of organisations created by the group (e.g. is that service going to be sold as freelance, are they going to create a company or a co-op?). For each organisation created, the facilitator registers its name and asks them to register it in the scheme on the flipchart paper.</p> <p>4- In the end, the group must explain the whole chain they've created while the facilitator stresses the relationships created among the various actors - suppliers, collaborators, freelancers, landlords, business to business deals, business to consumer deals, etc.</p> <p>5- Afterwards the facilitator launches a discussion about the process that has happened and how it relates to work. The facilitator may follow up this activity by giving information about types of work organisations and their differences (a registered company, sole trader, limited company, cooperative) and or about job categories (freelancer, employee, company owner, cooperative member).</p>

## MATERIALS

- 1 large sheet of paper + pens
- Suggestion of resources (may use others):  
apples, lemons, sugar flour, butter, citrus squeezer, 2 clothes items, ball, small notes saying "I'm good at selling", "I know how to do company accounts", "I have a shop to let", "I know how to make good cakes ", "I'm an entrepreneur and I want to create a business", "I can speak several languages", "I have a van".

## TIPS FOR THE FACILITATOR

It's important that the facilitator doesn't interfere with the choices of the group but he/she can pose questions so the group can manage a wider sample of alternatives before settling on a final solution. The facilitator should ensure everyone participates. They can instigate a more dynamic experience (and add new dimensions) by presenting new hypothetical situations (e.g. competition between companies, mergers and acquisitions, employees that receive new job offers).

This exercise works well in an initial session of a young people's training course as it stimulates creative thinking and generates interaction among the participants. It also allows the facilitator to refer back to the game during the ensuing training sessions (referring to the companies created, participants roles, etc.) in order to make the training contents feel more concrete and realistic.

## 7. HAT OF FEARS



<b>THEME</b>	Self awareness
<b>GROUP SIZE</b>	Irrelevant
<b>TIME</b>	15 – 20 min
<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	To promote expression and sharing of typical fears and anxieties when entering the labour market.
<b>INSTRUCTIONS</b>	<p>1- The facilitator introduces the Hat of Fears and the Motivation Cap and distributes small pieces of paper.</p> <p>2- The participants write down their fears on one notepaper and what motivates them on another and place them inside the Hat and the Cap (anonymously).</p> <p>3- The facilitator reads the pieces of paper mentioning the common aspects and facilitates a discussion around the contents.</p>
<b>MATERIALS</b>	<p>1 Hat and 1 cap</p> <p>Small notepapers</p>
<b>TIPS FOR THE FACILITATOR</b>	<p>A few topics for discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is there such a thing as the perfect job?</li> <li>- Are there workers that are 100% satisfied everyday?</li> <li>- “first job blues” – frequent disappointment during one’s first experience of work</li> <li>- School culture vs job culture– any differences?</li> <li>- How can young people ease their entry into the world of work?</li> </ul>

## 8. MEET EYE TO EYE



<b>THEME</b>	Communication / energiser
<b>GROUP SIZE</b>	5 – 30 participants
<b>TIME</b>	5 – 10 min
<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	Icebreaker To promote the first few interpersonal contacts among the group.
<b>INSTRUCTIONS</b>	<p>1- The facilitator invites the group to walk around the room as if they were out on the street, changing directions at different speeds. The facilitator steers the dynamics by controlling the rhythm and amount of instructions given according to goals he/she sets.</p> <p>2- The facilitator gives instructions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Walk in a hurry, walk sad, fast, as if you're heading for an interview, feeling confident, enthusiastically...</li> <li>- Meet someone, stop opposite each other, look the other in the eye, allow yourself to be looked at...</li> <li>- Meet and greet someone with a handshake; greet as if you were old friends, as if you're aliens, inventing a greeting...</li> <li>- Meet someone with a common taste or interest (e.g. the same football club, same hobby ...)</li> <li>- Meet someone who dislikes something you like</li> </ul> <p>Other suggestions may be presented to ease the introductions.</p>
<b>MATERIALS</b>	Music (optional)
<b>TIPS FOR THE FACILITATOR</b>	<p>You can use the exercise in more playful ways to break the ice. The facilitator's creativity and rhythm can make all the difference. You can reflect on the impact of the issues created by looking in the eye, greeting, smiling and other non-verbal communication strategies and their impact on employability.</p>

## 9. THE MODEL PROFESSIONAL



<b>THEME</b>	Self-awareness / Personal interests & Motivations
<b>GROUPE SIZE</b>	5 – 15 participants
<b>TIME</b>	20 min
<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To be aware of personal worth.</li> <li>- To allow for reflection about characteristics that are valued in professionals (both technical and behavioural) .</li> <li>- To allow for sharing different ways of seeing and feeling to understand the importance of soft skills.</li> </ul>
<b>INSTRUCTIONS</b>	<p>1- The group is asked to sit down comfortably, close their eyes and allow their thoughts to be guided by the facilitator's voice.</p> <p>2- The facilitator begins by asking each person to think of a professional they regard as a model (either one they personally know or someone in the public eye).</p> <p>3- The facilitator suggests that each person visualises how they dress, how they behave, what characteristics they admire in him/her, what makes this professional stand out from other ones, what does this person do well, why is she/he a model...</p> <p>4- At the end of this mental journey, the facilitator asks each person to write down on a piece of paper the main characteristics of their model professional. Sharing and group reflection.</p>
<b>MATERIALS</b>	Paper and pens
<b>TIPS FOR THE FACILITATOR</b>	<p>Explore questions and issues that may arise from the exercise.</p> <p>What is the profile of a model professional?</p> <p>What does each participant value?</p> <p>Is there anything in common?</p>

# 10. TIC TAC



<b>THEME</b>	Team work / Energiser
<b>GROUP SIZE</b>	12 – 35 participants
<b>TIME</b>	30 min – 1 hour
<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To promote interest in the needs of others and to support each other mutually in a voluntary engagement.</li> <li>- To explore how we can become confused by simple tasks when we're in the middle of them.</li> <li>- To promote mutual help and solidarity amongst participants by implementing a simple task and challenge.</li> </ul> <p>1- To link this experience to employability. 1- Seat participants in a circle.</p>
<b>INSTRUCTIONS</b>	<p>2- Tell the group you will do a short, fast and fun exercise in order to get their minds ready for the following sessions.</p> <p>3- Show them 2 coloured markers and tell the group that both markers are very good friends of yours, given that they're your daily companions in work. One is named 'Tic', the other one 'Tac'. You will pass both markers around in the circle so all members of the group get to meet both your companions.</p> <p>4- Explain that you will make it easy and participants can forget the name of the markers, as you will remind them each time they move in the game.</p> <p>5- Give an example to explain the structure. Example: I pass the marker to the person on my left side and say 'This is Tic'. That person will ask me: 'What?' and I will say 'Tic'. Then, that person passes the marker on to the next person sitting on his/her left saying 'This is Tic'.</p> <p>6- That person will also ask 'What?', but here instead of answering 'Tic', there will be a wave answering 'What?' until it reaches me. I will say 'Tic' and then all will say 'Tic' (as a wave in the opposite direction) until this word reaches the person that is holding the marker. Demonstrate the above with the first person on your left, so everyone in the group has understood the system.</p>

	<p>7- Then tell the group you will pass the marker named 'Tic' on your left side, and the marker named 'Tac' on your right side. Both markers will make the full circle until they are back to you.</p> <p>8- Before the second round, ask someone to swap places and start the exercise again.</p> <p>9- Debrief when finished, reflect and evaluate.</p>
<p><b>MATERIALS</b></p>	<p>A circle of chairs (one for each participant) 2 different markers</p>
<p><b>TIPS FOR THE FACILITATOR</b></p>	<p>Once the markers cross each other at the point when they reach the same person, confusion will break out and the system will get stuck. Allow some time for this confusion to happen and then stop the exercise. Provoke the group by saying statements like: "Hmmm, clearly not everyone has understood the rules properly", "Well, everyone doesn't appear competent enough to remember some simple rules", etc. Don't give space to lengthy explanations and tell the group you will do it again.</p> <p>A proposed debriefing in a circle setting.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- How did you feel about this little fun activity? Go around the group so everyone can express one feeling, without elaborating it further.</li> <li>2- Allow space for people to explain the feelings they express. Ask questions like: "How did you feel when I called some people incompetent?", "Were there moments you felt (you were getting) stressed?", "How did you feel when I asked you to swap places?"</li> <li>3- What has happened? What caused this confusion?</li> <li>4- Were there too many rules? Were the rules too difficult?</li> <li>5- Did you try to help those who were confused? How?</li> <li>6- How could you possibly link this exercise and reality?</li> <li>7- Do you have examples of situations where people are 'judged' by outsiders?</li> <li>8- How would you link this exercise to the topic of 'employability'?</li> <li>9- Can you imagine some jobs that look easy from the outside, but are much more complex once you're in them?</li> <li>10- What can you take out of this exercise for yourself?</li> </ol> <p>When provoking the group with statements about 'competence and incompetence', make sure that you clarify this in the debriefing by explaining this is part of the exercise, and not a judgement.</p>

## 11. USE YOUR PAPER



<b>THEME</b>	Creativity & Innovation
<b>GROUP SIZE</b>	Minimum of 10 participants
<b>TIME</b>	15 – 30 min
<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- To explore how well we understand the set rules and how we subconsciously set limits on ourselves.</li><li>- To promote a critical attitude towards 'obvious behaviours and interpretations'.</li><li>- To explore the attitude of 'who says that ...'</li><li>- To explore similarities and differences.</li></ul>
<b>INSTRUCTIONS</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1- Tell the participants that you need them to split into different groups for the next activity.</li><li>2- Inform them that to facilitate this process, you will give each of them a secret paper. Give a small piece of paper to each participant, in a secretive manner.</li><li>3- Once they all have their little paper, tell the group that on a signal from you, they should stand up and show their paper to the others in order to form a required number of groups.</li><li>4- Tell the whole group that they have 1 minute to form the required number of small groups.</li><li>5- Walk around the room and keep saying the same sentence: "Use your paper to form the groups".</li><li>6- As soon as you notice that any small group has been formed, ask them to sit together on the side, while the rest continue.</li><li>7- Once all the participants have managed to form the required number of groups, go round to each group and ask: "What was the criteria that brought you together?"</li><li>8- Start the debriefing.</li></ol>

Keep the small groups sitting where they are and stand in the centre if the room so everyone can see and hear you well. Ask the following questions (some or all, depending on the feedback and answers given):

- How do you feel about this activity? What do you think about it?
- How did you go about creating your groups? Was there a particular strategy?
- What was easier and what was more difficult?
- What do you think the goal of this activity was?
- How do you perceive this exercise now?
- What if we would do this exercise again, do you think the result would be different? Would you have a different strategy?

What might be links and similarities between this exercise and reality?

- Do you believe that freedom is often limited by assumed, but non-expressed, interpretations? Do you have an example of this in real life?
- What can you take from this exercise for you, related to your employability?

**MATERIALS**

A set of little papers with different symbols in one side.

**TIPS FOR THE FACILITATOR**

Cut the papers out before hand. Have few extra as backups. Even though this exercise can stand on itself, it is interesting to use the formed groups for another exercise. Therefore decide beforehand how many groups (with how many members) you ask them to form.

If someone asks you 'how to use the paper', you simply reply each time the same: "just use your paper to form the groups". Participants assume they have to use the symbol on one of the sides of the paper in order to find similarities, even though the mission itself never mentioned that. The fact you have a little paper is on itself enough to form a group with other people who have ... also a little paper.

Even though you told the group they have 1 minute to form the different groups, they will take more time. Pretend you are a bit confused and you can say things as: "Hmm, this is supposed to be easy", "Come on folks, use your paper, it is meant to facilitate this process", "It should be done already".

In case of big groups, some little papers can be repeated, as long as they are not repeated the same number as the groups are supposed to have members.

**Examples of symbols**



# 12. JOB INTERVIEW SIMULATION



<b>THEME</b>	Job interviews / Job search methodology
<b>GROUP SIZE</b>	4 – 16 participants
<b>TIME</b>	4 Hours
<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To have the opportunity to experience being in the situation of a job interview while in a contained learning environment.</li> <li>- To become aware of the use of verbal and non-verbal communication in interviews.</li> <li>- To give an opportunity to have an outsider's look in order to facilitate gaining awareness about one's general posture in interviews</li> </ul>
<b>INSTRUCTIONS</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- Each participant will take the role of interviewer and interviewee.</li> <li>2- Each participant must choose the organisation and job he/she is applying for in line with his/her real interests and motivations.</li> <li>3- All participants hand in their applications to the facilitator so that he/she can decide who interviews who.</li> <li>4- The participants must prepare their interviews, both as interviewers and as interviewees.</li> <li>5- The participants must watch the interviews in silence and attentively.</li> <li>6- Each candidate must wait and be welcomed by the interviewer as if it was a real situation (wait outside the room, greet with a handshake, smile, introduce oneself, etc.)</li> <li>7- At the end of all the interviews proceed to evaluate each one, with everyone giving feedback.</li> </ol>
<b>MATERIALS</b>	Table and chairs Paper and pens
<b>TIPS FOR THE FACILITATOR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The interview setting must be as close as possible to reality.</li> <li>- Reinforce positively what went well.</li> <li>- Film the event, if possible, for better analysis.</li> <li>- Make the experience as real as possible (for example, ask people to dress adequately and research the organisations or companies they represent or are applying for in some depth...).</li> </ul>

## 13. BLIND SQUARE



<b>THEME</b>	Problem solving / Team work
<b>GROUP SIZE</b>	5 – 15 participants
<b>TIME</b>	20 min
<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To understand a problematic situation in a realistic manner.</li> <li>- To promote the ability to organise as a group using problem solving methodology.</li> <li>- To be able to transfer the learning to other contexts, namely employability.</li> </ul>
<b>INSTRUCTIONS</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- In a large room, the facilitator asks the participants to stand in a circle and cover their eyes with blindfolds.</li> <li>2- One rope is handed out for all the participants to hold</li> <li>3- The task for the group is to turn the circle into a square without letting go of the rope or swapping places.</li> </ol>
<b>MATERIALS</b>	<p>One rope Blind folds</p>
<b>TIPS FOR THE FACILITATOR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The facilitator may ask the group to form a triangle or a rectangle before asking to form a square</li> <li>- To increase the level of difficulty start with the group all tangled up instead of starting in a circle</li> <li>don't allow any talking</li> <li>- To reflect on the perception of problems when we are deprived of one of our senses.</li> <li>- To reflect on the key people that solved the problem and the different strategies the group tried</li> <li>- To reflect on what learning is transferable to employability; flexible thought in problem resolution and the ability to adapt or change</li> </ul>

# 14. AGREE / DISAGREE ABOUT WORK



<b>THEME</b>	Knowledge of the labour market
<b>GROUP SIZE</b>	5 – 20 participants
<b>TIME</b>	20 min
<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	To promote the debate, the exchange of ideas and different perspectives on the motivations for work, the social value of work and the centrality of the role of worker in life.
<b>INSTRUCTIONS</b>	<p>1- Hang a sheet of paper on one end of a wall that says DISAGREE and another on the opposite end that says AGREE. Keep the space between them free.</p> <p>2- The facilitator explains that he/she will say sentences and asks the participants to imagine a line midway between Agree and Disagree. Participants must position themselves closer to either end as their reply to each sentence. Participants are therefore expressing their personal opinion and may change their positioning as the debate unfolds.</p> <p>3- The facilitator first introduces two unrelated yet stimulating sentences to ensure all the participants clearly understand the instructions (e.g. it's hard being a young person; living in town X is good). To increase understanding of the statement, have them written on paper sheets.</p> <p>4- The facilitator reads one sentence at a time and keeps the paper sheets visible while participants take their positions.</p> <p>5- He/She then questions some of the participants who have taken opposing positions, i.e. with opposite opinions. Debate should happen amongst participants but the facilitator must intervene to ensure everyone participates in the discussion.</p> <p>Suggestions for sentences:          "If they didn't need money, people wouldn't work."          "My job defines my identity."          "Work is neither a virtue nor an honour; I rather see it as a need and condemnation." (Agostinho da Silva)          "Work does nothing other than exhaust us, unless we dedicate ourselves to it with joy." (R. Tagore)</p>

“Each person is born for a vocation.”  
“If I don’t have a good job I won’t be happy.”  
The group may suggest other sentences.  
This activity may close with the filling in of individual questionnaires about how central work and ones motivations are.

### **MATERIALS**

Two sheets of paper – Agree and Disagree and the sentences

### **TIPS FOR THE FACILITATOR**

The facilitator decides when to introduce a new sentence for discussion. It’s good to do it after the group expresses a few divergent ideas and defends them; but before it becomes tiring.  
If some participants monopolise the discussion the facilitator can question quieter members directly in order to open up the debate.

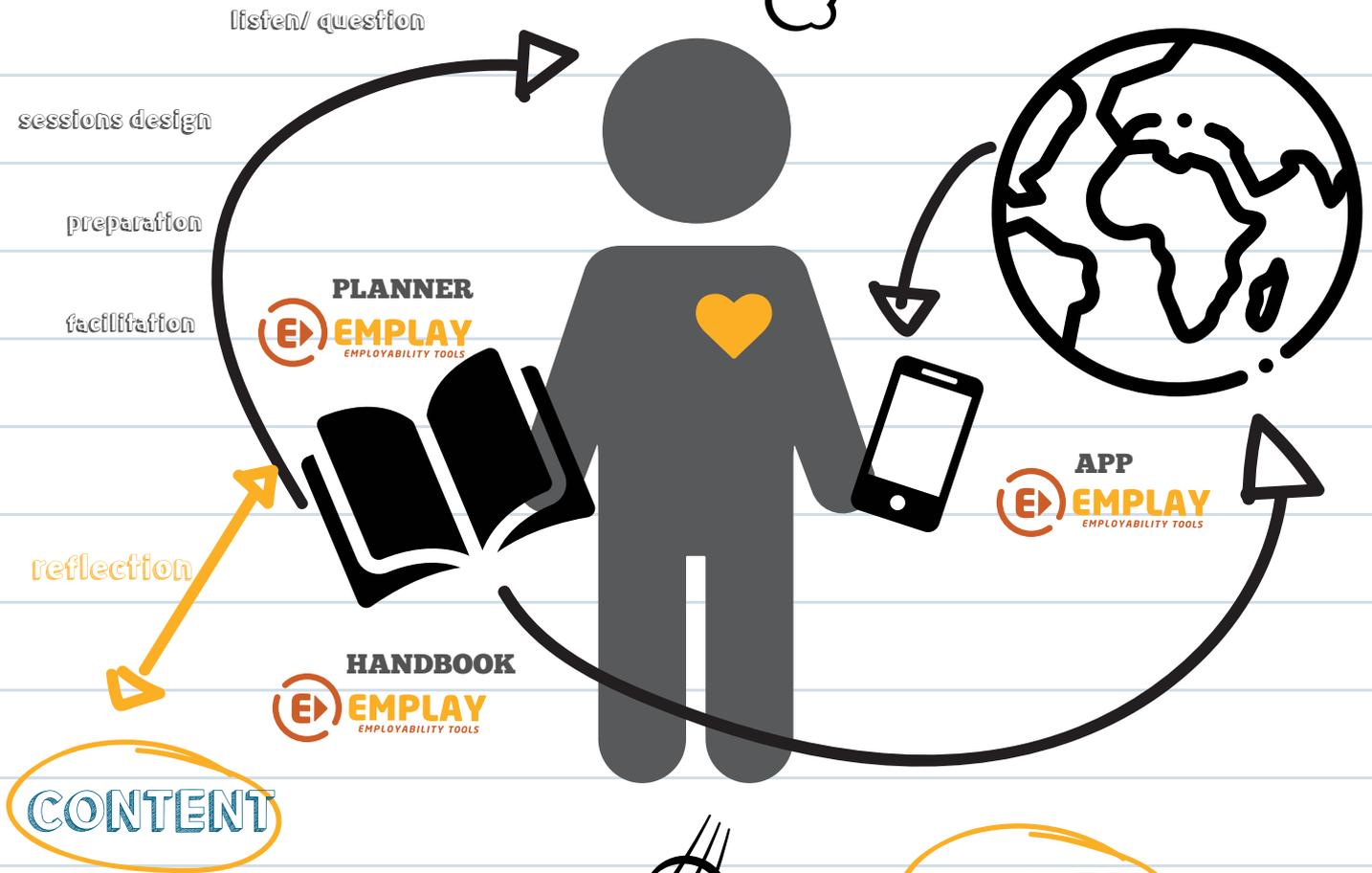
## 15. I'M LIKE..



<b>THEME</b>	Self-awareness / Creativity & Innovation
<b>GROUP SIZE</b>	4 - 16 participants
<b>TIME</b>	1 hour
<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To become aware of one's personal characteristics through others.</li> <li>- To allow for less rational expression.</li> <li>- To become aware of the importance of other types of language.</li> </ul>
<b>INSTRUCTIONS</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- Each participant receives a sheet of paper that reads I AM LIKE...</li> <li>2- Each participant should finish the sentence with a metaphor about him/herself (a metaphor representative of who they are).</li> <li>3- After they all have written them, the facilitator gathers the sheets, shuffles them and, distributes them again to the participants.</li> <li>4- Each participant will receive someone else's metaphor.</li> <li>5- The facilitator suggests that each person colours/paints the metaphor as they please. Reinforce that they don't need to know how to draw.</li> <li>6- After they all colour them, gather in a circle for everyone to present their 'work of art'.</li> <li>7- The person who wrote the sentence (coloured by another) expresses and shares their experience of seeing it (what is different from how they see themselves, what do they relate to, what is unexpected, what goes against the sentence... or simply how they feel).</li> </ol>
<b>MATERIALS</b>	<p>A small sheet of paper with I AM LIKE...</p> <p>Brushes and watercolours /gouaches/ crayons/ wax crayons</p> <p>Paper</p> <p>Music</p>
<b>TIPS FOR THE FACILITATOR</b>	<p>You can direct your request towards your goals (i.e. a metaphor about your greatest quality...)</p> <p>Allow time for the colouring/drawing/painting and help those who are too fast to appreciate letting go and facilitate the ability to gaze.</p> <p>Avoid interpretations and value the eco of each experience.</p> <p>You can draw bridges with other employability dimensions and issues of quality of life.</p> <p>Reinforce there is no need to know how to draw.</p>

# WHAT DOES A FACILITATOR DO?

How am I working my own employability?



**CONTEXT**

**FACILITATOR**  
do for yourself  
what you  
say is good  
for others

**PARTICIPANTS**

# Employability Tools Project Partners

**DNA Cascais** is a non-profit association in Cascais – Portugal, aiming at contributing to the general promotion, encouragement and development of entrepreneurship, with a focus on the promotion of youth and social entrepreneurship in Cascais. Throughout its 12 years of existence, it has supported the creation of over 300 new companies and 1.670 new jobs. Its acronym DNA stands for Developing New Attitudes, something the association has achieved in the community through actions like the DNA Cascais School Entrepreneurship Programme that has involved over 38.000 students, 50 schools and 300 teachers from various grades. DNA Cascais manages a business incubator (where more than 60 companies operate), runs the Business Ideas Competition, manages the "Business Angels Club", and organises seminars, conferences, training in entrepreneurship and study visits at national and international level. It also develops studies and publications on entrepreneurship.  
[www.dnacascais.pt](http://www.dnacascais.pt)

**Câmara Municipal de Cascais** is Cascais City Council – Portugal, a city of around 200.000 inhabitants. The partnership in this project forms part of the intervention of the Employability Unit, the mission of which is to "promote employability and employment, empowering citizens, enhancing the involvement of local organisations working in the field of employment and training, and promoting economic investment and entrepreneurship. The City Council actively engages with young people through its Youth Unit which works to "contribute to the empowerment of young people through the implementation of targeted strategies for the development of their personal, social and professional skills, with the aim to empower them with the necessary skills and conditions for the practice of a complete citizenship". Cascais won the European Youth Capital award in 2018.  
[www.cascais.pt](http://www.cascais.pt)

**Produções Fixe** was created in 2010 as a private social company with the objective to create a community support system in the rural village Vila da Marmeleira – Portugal, aiming to create employability at a local level and using local resources and principles such as complementary relations, cooperation, innovation and creativity. It is active in 4 different fields: training (both at a national and international level) on socially sensitive issues (e.g. democracy, financial literacy, conflict resolution, team work, social inclusion, employability...), development and design of educational tools (e.g. simulation exercise Plan B: see youth workers magazine Coyote nº 10), the production of these educational tools (through the creation of a small local 'factory' employing inhabitants) and the community project 'The Rural Centre of Non Formal Education'.  
[www.producoesfixe.com](http://www.producoesfixe.com)

**DNA.  
CASCAIS**  
Empreendedorismo e Comércio

**CASCAIS**  
Tudo começa nas pessoas



**Vzw Elegast Wijkwerking** is a 'community service' located in Antwerp – Belgium. It organises activities for the community and empowers people with less opportunities. Some examples: free use of computers, computer lessons, play afternoons, craft workshops, Dutch classes, cleaning actions, sports activities, community celebrations, network meetings... It also works on awareness and prevention of possible pitfalls in life (social, financial...). Involving volunteers in every part of the job (giving and taking responsibilities) is part of the job.

[www.elegast.be](http://www.elegast.be)



**Xena Association** is a non-profit cultural association based in Padova – Italy. Founded in 1995 to promote intercultural learning, non-formal education and active citizenship, its team includes trainers, experts in European programmes, educators, psychologists, animators, facilitators, experts in youth training, information and guidance and language teachers. The role of voluntary work is also valuable, provided at all levels by members from various nationalities. It has always promoted both local and international projects, mainly in the framework of European Programmes (i.e. "Erasmus Plus" KA 1 and 2 for youth, VET, adults and former "Youth in Action", Lifelong Learning: "Leonardo da Vinci", "Grundtvig"). Since 2010 it is part of the Euroguidance network.

[www.xena.it](http://www.xena.it)



**Insight\_education** project design is an association established in 1990 in Martano – Italy. It's active in the field of youth-work, addressing mainly young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, with a specific focus on involving young people through innovative educational approaches, arts, cultural events and social work. In 2001 Insight\_epd started its European experience promoting and participating in youth exchanges, seminars, training courses with the EC Programs like "Youth", "Youth in Action", "Erasmus+". Insight\_epd is also active at the local level cooperating with and supporting other NGOs, institutions and schools, mainly introducing non-formal education in formal settings, and supporting social workers, teachers, officers and managers in creating better working environment and improving their competences in working with young people.

[www.facebook.com/INSEPD/](http://www.facebook.com/INSEPD/)



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