



# INTERNATIONAL METHODS HANDBOOK FOR VOCATIONAL ORIENTATION IN GROUP SETTINGS

Leonardo Da Vinci Transfer of Innovation



# International Methods Handbook for Vocational Orientation in Group Settings

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1<sup>st</sup> Edition, June 2012

Funded by the EU programme Leonardo da Vinci, co-financed and supported by AMS Austria, section for labour market research and vocational information as well as by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy  
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This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication [communication] reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



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# 1 Introduction

This Handbook of Methods for Vocational Orientation is aimed at educational and career counsellors who counsel or train people in group settings. It contains tested methods from the guidance methods database of the Austrian Public Employment Service (see [www.forschungsnetzwerk.at](http://www.forschungsnetzwerk.at)) that was developed by abif and also published in the form of handbooks.

In the course of the Leonardo da Vinci project NAVIGUIDE ([www.naviguide.net](http://www.naviguide.net)) running from 10/2011 to 09/2012, methods for vocational orientation have been made available in different European countries. The project partners from six partner countries (France, Croatia, Ireland, Austria, Poland, Turkey) selected 102 French and Austrian methods that have been translated into the languages of the partner countries and will be disseminated in six one-day workshops in all countries.

The methods of the database that will be presented, trained and reflected on together relate to the following subject areas:

- Expectations, getting to know each other, formulating goals
- Orientation, Reframing, Activation, and Motivation: Entry into employment, gender-specific career choice
- Dealing with resistance, conflicts, frustration, and resignation, methods for strengthening self-responsibility
- Educational and career choices
- Practical training
- Developing social skills
- Vocational information, information management, labour market orientation
- Analysis of potential
- Application training and finding a job
- End of the course: Outlook and feedback

All the methods presented here are also available in the online database at [www.naviguide.net](http://www.naviguide.net) that includes a search function with the search criteria of target group, social form, duration, topic and keyword search.

Mag. Karin Steiner

***Executive board abif, Project management NAVIGUIDE***

## 2 Methods

### 2.1 Expectations, Getting to Know Each Other

#### 2.1.1 Introduction to Vocational Orientation – Objectives and Expectations

**Theoretical Background:** For the efficient design of a vocational orientation measure, it is necessary to find out what participants expect from the seminar so that their expectations can be kept in mind in the course of the seminar. By determining Objectives participants move from dependency to self-determination. For migrants who were used to teacher-centred lecture methods in their countries of origin where content is determined by others, this approach is unfamiliar and has to be learnt first.

**Social Form:** Individual work, whole group work

**Objective:** Clarity on the participants' personal Objectives and expectations will be established.

**Source:** Model of vocational orientation of the TIO qualification project; <http://www.tio-berlin.de/documents/konzept.pdf> [January 20, 2012], adapted by the author.

**Description:** Each participant answers the following questions on note cards of different colours:

- What are my Objectives for vocational orientation?
- What do I expect from the trainer?
- What do I expect from the other participants?
- What can I do to reach my Objectives?

The questions can be answered in note form, and the trainer should point out that spelling and expression (in the foreign language) are not important. After that, each participant presents his/her thoughts, explains them if necessary and then sticks his/her note cards onto a prepared wall. Similar ideas are put next to each other. Ideas that do not belong to the vocational orientation stage are sorted out. The cards stay on the wall as wall newspaper during the whole stage.

**Preparation/Material:** Note cards in different colours, pens

**Notes:** Since this approach, as described above, can be unfamiliar to migrants, the trainer should explain the intention in advance.

**Target Group:** All target groups

**Duration:** 15 minutes

#### 2.1.2 Getting Started with Vocational Orientation

**Theoretical Background:** Vocational orientation helps people choose a career or education and supports their integration into the labour market. However, vocational orientation is not a pure information event, but rather a learning and development process in which the participants have to play an active part.

**Social Form:** Small group work

**Objective:** Reflecting on own experiences and expectations concerning vocational orientation and exchanging views.

**Source:** Orientation éducative (Educational guidance)/Catherine Bernardi – Boîte à outils PJP (ProJet Professionnel) destinée aux étudiants de l'Université Paris 3 [Toolbox PJP-ProJet Professionnel (plan for a professional career) for students of the University of Paris III]. The exercise is based on the A.D.V.P. model of vocational training (Activation du développement vocationnel et personnel – Activation of Vocational and Personal Development).

**Description:** Each participant is asked to think about what vocational orientation means to him/her and what he/she expects from it. They should write their thoughts on note cards (one meaning or expectation per card) and put them on a pin board. The trainer then reads out the cards and asks the participants about them when necessary. After that, the trainer states his/her position on the cards, that means he/she tells the participants which expectations will or will not be fulfilled in vocational orientation, what vocational orientation means to him/her and what he/she expects from the participants.

**Preparation/Material:** Note cards, pens, pin board

**Target Group:** Youth and young adults after finishing their education adults

**Duration:** 1 hour

### 2.1.3 Developing Group Rules

**Theoretical Background:** Interactions are interrelations between actions. An interaction occurs when an agent (an individual, a group, an organisation) does not only orient himself/herself to the random or (at that moment) observable behaviour of an interaction partner, but also and first and foremost to his/her expectations and attitudes as well as his/her evaluation and assessment of their shared situation. This mutual or reciprocal orientation of the interaction partners is only possible within the context of a given social structure of shared values, normative patterns, symbols and communication techniques – that is within a shared lifeworld. Lifeworlds, however, are not the same for all people. Lifeworlds differ from each other. If different lifeworlds meet, also various expectations meet. Since social interactions are tied to social roles as elements of social systems (lifeworlds) and governed by norms, defining and revealing these rules does make sense. The method „Developing Group Rules“ is designed to help reflect on these norms and create a level on which a fruitful exchange between different lifeworlds/expectations can take place.

**Social Form:** Small group work, whole group work

**Objective:** To improve general conversational behaviour; to create an open atmosphere for discussion; to encourage active participation in the group; to encourage participants to get to know each other; to reflect on HOW to personally communicate with each other

**Source:** Rabenstein, Reinhold/Reichel, René/Thanhoffer, Michael (2001b): Das Methoden-Set, 2. Themen bearbeiten, 11th edition. Münster, 2.C 33.

**Description:** Groups have rules. Most rules are unspoken; they exist "informally" and therefore defy control. In this exercise the group is asked to draw up its own rules. Communicating the rules and therefore making them known makes it possible to check and follow them.

The group is asked to form smaller groups of 3 to 4 participants. These small groups work on the following questions:

- What hinders good discussion?
- What is necessary to create a productive atmosphere for discussion? (Collection stage)

The aim is to develop group rules in the imperative form (e.g. Don't have private conversations with your neighbours!; see attachment for more examples). The small groups present the rules they formulated to the whole group. Then the participants discuss which rules they consider particularly important and bearing that in mind they compile a common catalogue of rules (ideally about 6 to 10 rules). (Contradictory rules can be part of this catalogue if they are selected by the required majority.)

To be able to check and observe the established rules, a "discussion about the discussion" should be held afterwards (meta-communication). That way the participants reflect on HOW they communicate, which should then lead to the desired open and productive atmosphere for discussion.

At the end of the course the participants are invited to describe (briefly) one after the other how they experienced the course. Here it is important to avoid discussions and the asking of further questions.

**Preparation/Material:** Paper and pens

**Notes:** In large group discussions frustration is often bottled up. The method presented here helps all participants to productively deal with themselves and others with regard to a certain topic and at the same time to create a good atmosphere for discussion. It is questionable whether everything that is needed for a good atmosphere for discussion can be formulated in rules. One example would be the rule: Discussing "interesting" topics. That raises the following questions: How is "interesting" defined and who defines it? Who finds what interesting? In addition it is doubtful that all rules the group can think of are also verbalised. The trainer, for example, has to follow rules as well to establish a good atmosphere. It can be assumed, however, that such rules will probably not be addressed by the group.

**Tip:** If there are tensions in the large group or if everything seems to come to a halt (the discussion is progressing very slowly), it is advisable to conduct a short "lightning round": One participant after the other is asked to say how he/she feels at that moment. If possible there should be no further questions or discussions. The "lightning round" is used to put participants in a relaxed mood and to improve conversational behaviour.

**Target Group:** Youth and young adults facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 1 hour

### 2.1.4 Differences and Similarities

**Theoretical Background:** Different groups always show various differences and similarities. When dealing with diversity, the focus should therefore not only be on the differences (thereby risking to overemphasise what separates us from others), but also always on similarities (revealing what we have in common).

**Social Form:** Whole group work

**Objective:** Getting to know each other; revealing similarities and differences

**Source:** Sociogram according to Moreno, adapted.

**Description:** The trainer asks the participants to stand in a circle and then explains the exercise. The explanation could sound like this:

*With your help I would like to reveal differences and similarities that exist in this group. For this purpose, I will ask you to get together in small groups with participants who you have various characteristics in common with.*

- *Get together in groups according to similarity of **occupation** (e.g. technical profession, caring profession etc.).*
- *Get together in groups according to similarity of **education** (e.g. technical education, commercial education etc.).*
- *Get together in groups according to similarity of **age** (e.g. under 20, 20–40, older than 40).*
- *Get together in groups according to similarity of **religion** (e.g. Catholic, Muslim, Serbian Orthodox etc.).*
- *Get together in groups according to similarity of **origin** (e.g. Austria, Poland etc.).*
- *Get together in groups according to similarity of the favourite **leisure activity** (e.g. sports, culture etc.).*

During the group formation stage it can get rather loud, as the participants (have to) talk to each other in order to find out about their similarities and differences. As soon as it gets quieter, the group formation stage seems to be completed.

The trainer can also ask the groups which difference it makes for them in Austria, at the work place etc. to have this characteristic. For example: With the invitation "Get together in groups according to the similarity of origin (e.g. Austria, Poland etc.)" the trainer could ask: "What does it mean for you to be of Polish origin in Austria, at the workplace or what differences do you observe in comparison to people from other countries of o

**Notes:** Important: The characteristics should be selected with care. There are characteristics that are a taboo, as for example sexual orientation (those should be completely left out in this exercise), or characteristics that people do not talk that easily about, as for example age, religion etc. (you should think twice before selecting these characteristics for a group) and characteristics people can quickly provide information on (occupation, education etc.). The guiding principle of this exercise should be that nobody should be forced to reveal any characteristics. People should also be careful when asking further questions.

---

**Target Group:** All target groups

**Duration:** 30 minutes

### 2.1.5 On One Axis

**Theoretical Background:** Moving around helps reduce insecurities and tensions. That is why the stage of getting to know each other will be more relaxed and easier when the corresponding exercises are combined with physical activity. This exercise provides the opportunity to get hints about shared personal circumstances and to feel like belonging to a group of people because of having something in common (e.g. the number of people in one's household). That way the participants can get into conversation with the help of harmless topics and they can get an overview of the whole group.

**Social Form:** Whole group work

**Objective:** Getting to know each other; discovering similarities

**Source:** Braun, Barbara/Hoffmann-Ratzmer, Diana/Lindemann, Nicole/Mauerhof, Johannes (2007): Die Job-Lokomotive. Ein Trainingsprogramm zur Berufsorientierung für Jugendliche. Weinheim und München: Juventa.

**Description:** The participants are asked to take their place along an imaginary line according to a given scale. Possible scales are:

- How many beings (people and animals) live in your household?
- number of siblings
- age
- birthday (according to month: from January to December)
- shoe size
- body height
- alphabetical order of first names

The scale can also be three-dimensional, as for example: Into which cardinal direction would you like to fly someday (first indicating where north, south, west and east are in the room)? After the line-up the participants briefly talk about it.

**Target Group:** Youth and young adults facing career and educational choices; youth and young adults after finishing their education; young migrants facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 15 minutes

### 2.1.6 Priority Game

**Theoretical Background:** Priorities reflect individual preferences that in turn reflect internalised values and socioculturally formed needs. Preferences are likes or also dislikes that an individual has for a sought-after service (e.g. a vocational orientation course) or a sought-after good (e.g. integration into the labour market). That way they govern social actions and therefore – consciously or unconsciously – individual

decision and choice behaviour (e.g. career choice). Preferences do not only influence actions, but they themselves can also be influenced (e.g. through counselling, information).

The variety of preferences of an individual is hierarchically structured (order of priority). Depending on the individual's social background or lifeworld, they are weighted differently. Experience has shown that the "priority game" is a proven tool to get access to such rankings. Since individual expectations grow out of preferences and since their "disclosure" is of particular interest for vocational orientation measures, the "priority game" can be considered a suitable introductory exercise that both "relaxes" the participants (getting to know each other) and helps to identify the participants' individual interests/likes/preferences in a playful way.

**Social Form:** Small group work; individual work

**Objective:** Encouraging interaction and participation in the group; reflecting on ones goals concerning "vocational orientation"; presenting personal expectations of the seminar

**Source:** Rabenstein, Reinhold/Reichel, René/Thanhoffer, Michael (2001): Das Methoden-Set, 1. Anfangen, 11th edition. Münster.

**Description:** Each participant receives a copy of statements on different goals of a "vocational orientation course". The participants rank the statements (6 to 7) according to their personal preferences. They are asked to put the number "1" in front of the statement that they consider the most important feature of an effective vocational orientation course. Features that participants consider least important for a good orientation course are ranked 6th or 7th.

After that, the participants are asked to form groups of four. These small groups are invited to agree on a common ranking of the first three or four statements within 10 to 15 minutes (time pressure is important).

Possible continuation of the exercise: The groups present and explain their decisions. The whole group then finds reasons why these goals on the top of the list.

**Preparation/Material:** Handout

**Notes:** In order to be able to allow learning processes, new insights and experiences to take place, it is important to become aware of one's own goals. The exercise "Priority game" is a good way to initiate such a process. With this method the trainer is able to find out about personal views and expectations of the participants. For the participants themselves, verbalising and arguing for personal views and expectations means becoming aware of their own preferences. The objective of this method is to encourage participants to get to know each other and to reflect on their own expectations of "vocational orientation" by individually ranking given statements. In addition to that, working in groups of four will help to reveal ambiguity and contradictions that can then be resolved. That is why this method of the "Priority game" is used as activating method in adult education.

**Tip:** If the trainer, above all, intends to gather information about the expectations of the course participants (focus on the content) with this exercise, it is advisable to provide a larger range of statements (e.g. 20 to 30 statements). A larger choice of statements allows for a greater variety of

possible answers. In this case each participant chooses four statements that he/she considers most important.

**Target Group:** All target groups

**Duration:** 45 minutes

### 2.1.7 Training Contract

**Theoretical Background:** The participants' continuous active participation is crucial in the course of the training. For that reason it is important from the beginning to motivate the participants to take an active part. The formal signing of a contract should establish a sense of obligation between trainer and participants.

**Social Form:** Individual work

**Objective:** Making agreements on the course of the training; providing information on the training; clarifying mutual expectations

**Source:** Petermann, Franz/Petermann, Ulrike (2007): Training mit Jugendlichen. Aufbau von Arbeits- und Sozialverhalten, Göttingen: Hogrefe Verlag.

**Description:** At the beginning of the course all terms of the training are discussed. The trainer points out some of the goals of the training and explains why it is important for the young people to pursue those goals. In a next step, the participants are asked to think about which training goals to set for themselves. After the terms of the training have been clarified, the participants each receive two prepared training contracts (see attachment) that are then personalised and signed by the participants and the trainer. The participants and the trainer each keep a copy.

**Preparation/Material:** Copies of the handouts

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; youths and young adults after finishing their education

**Duration:** 1 hour

### 2.1.8 Business Cards with Topics

**Theoretical Background:** In order to orient themselves in the complexity of the world (variety of behavioural options), individuals develop behavioural assumptions in the course of their socialization - based on their experiences in their lifeworlds (= total of all possible options for action) -, by means of which they free themselves from the necessity to continually develop new ways of acting that are appropriate to the situation. Occurrences within their own lifeworlds (= total of all possible options for action) become expectable.

The individual, however, does not exist on his/her own. Other individuals (alter ego) who also are a source of their own experiences, lifeworlds and preferences for action, but who belong to other lifeworlds, share the world with him/her, a fact that on the one hand causes insecurity, but that on the other hand is also



enriching. Even if the probability that certain expectations are not fulfilled increases with the number of interacting alter egos (the individual can never be completely sure how alter ego will react), it is exactly the existence of different alter egos that opens up a wealth of perspectives for the individual that would otherwise be kept from him/her for reasons of lacking opportunities for realisation (?).

**Conclusion:** The interaction with alter ego offers the individual the chance to empathise with the "other I", to adopt his/her perspective, to get an insight into his/her experiences, to learn about behavioural preferences of the other and thereby to expand his/her own horizon without needing a great amount of time. The exercise "Business Cards with Topics" is designed to connect different lifeworlds through communication. Participants are supposed to learn about other behavioural assumptions in order to extend their range of options for action.

**Social Form:** Individual work, pair work

**Objective:** Getting to know each other, establishing a connection to the course content, relaxing and reducing fears; working together for the first time; formulating personal expectations of the seminar.

**Source:** Rabenstein, Reinhold/Reichel, René/Thanhoffer, Michael (2001a): Das Methoden-Set, 1. Anfangen, 11th edition. Münster, 1.C 5.

**Description:** Each participant receives a small strip of paper and is asked to fold it into five sections and to write their names on each section (they are still kept together). Then the trainer presents his/her questions prepared on a flip chart to the group (the list of questions can be altered):

- What was your last occupation?
- What is your dream job?
- What do you expect from the course?
- If you could start from scratch, would you do anything differently with regard to your educational and professional career? If so, what would it be?

Each participant is invited to answer the questions and write the answers on the back of the paper segments, the back side of the first segment staying blank. On the back of the other four segments the participants write their personal answers to the questions (a different answer on each segment). Afterwards the paper is cut into 5 strips that are then attached to the chests of the participants (e.g. with adhesive tape.)

The participants are then asked to find conversational partners, to introduce themselves, to exchange cards and to talk about the topic they addressed on the back of the card.

**Preparation/Material:** A4 size sheets of paper cut in half, questions prepared on a flip chart

**Notes:** In seminars with a lot of participants who do not know each other, conversations in pairs as a rule are very suitable to stimulate a first "coming into contact". The method of "Business Cards with Topics" facilitates relaxation through movement and also encourages participants to get to know each other "in passing", by "approaching each other". In this way, existing insecurities and inhibitions to communicate are playfully reduced. In addition to that, the exercise serves to introduce the subject. By answering the questions the participants are prompted to reflect on their expectations and goals.

**Tip:** This relaxing method involving movement described here is also suited for later stages of the seminar. It does not make a lot of sense if a seminar starts with movement and then continues with participants being seated. If the room in which it is held does not allow for flexible seating arrangements, it is recommended to carry out the "stage of getting to know each other" in another room.

**Target Group:** All target groups

**Duration:** 30 minutes

### 2.1.9 Story Cards

**Theoretical Background:** Pictures stimulate people to show openness, attention and curiosity. They encourage ideas, associations and creative thinking. Playful methods help to make the stage of getting to know each other more relaxed.

**Social Form:** Whole group work

**Objective:** Getting to know each other in a playful way.

**Source:** This exercise is based on the technique of "Photolangage" ([http://www.erle-verlag.ch/site/downloads/textzugaenge\\_012.pdf](http://www.erle-verlag.ch/site/downloads/textzugaenge_012.pdf)).

**Description:** The trainer prepares a stack of postcards. At least twice as many cards as people participating (including the trainer) are needed. The trainer walks around the room and asks one participant after the other to draw two postcards from the stack of postcards (turned upside down). Each participant chooses one of the two cards and briefly thinks about what he/she could tell the others about himself/herself in less than one minute using the postcard as a basis. One after the other the participants show their cards to the group and introduce themselves. When they are done, they choose the next participant who will then talk about himself/herself. The trainer also takes part.

**Preparation/Material:** Different postcards (at least two per participant)

**Notes:** The exercise can also be used to introduce a certain topic.

**Target Group:** All target groups

**Duration:** Variable (depends on the number of participants)

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## 2.2 Orientation, Reframing, Activation, and Motivation

### 2.2.1 Career Decision Funnel – First Floor: Fields of Interest – What Are my Preferences?

**Theoretical Background:** Career choices are primarily based on the knowledge of the skills supposedly needed for the job and of corresponding interests. The wish to pursue a certain career path, the need to follow a specific course results from individual interests and skills. As individuals are not always clear on their interests and skills, however (Note: This is especially the case with young people.), becoming aware of their fields of interests (cf. this method) and areas of aptitude (cf. "Career decision funnel – Second floor") is necessary for them to be able to choose a career that matches their personal preferences and characteristics. This method is designed for participants to identify their own interests.

**Social Form:** Small group work, individual work

**Objective:** To reflect on one's own interests; to become aware of individual preferences

**Source:** Frass, Bernhard/Groyer, Hans (1994): Berufsplanung ist Lebensplanung. Vol. 2. Wien, pp. 40f.

**Description:** In a first step, the trainers put ten posters on the floor on which ten different interest fields are described (see attachment). The participants are asked to stand next to the interest field to which they feel they belong. In these interest groups they formed (small groups of 3 to 4 participants), they try to explain why they are standing there and in which activities in particular they have discovered their interests. After the participants have discussed their interests, each group brainstorms occupations for their own interest group and writes them down on note cards that are then attached to the posters or the wall. All participants can look at the other posters and occupations and add further occupations (Note: Career information brochures should be available as an aid.).

**Alternative:** Note cards with job titles (see attachment) are spread on the floor. The participants are asked to find occupations that match their interest fields and pin them to the poster. They can also write other similar occupations on cards and put them there.

**Preparation/Material:** Posters, pin board, career information brochures.

**Notes:** This exercise is designed for participants to reflect on their interests and to either confirm or revise them in an exchange of opinion with like-minded people.

**Tip:** Participants often find it difficult to decide on one interest field. They should still choose their favourite field, but are allowed to change to another field in the course of the exercise (twice at the most).

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 2 hours

### 2.2.2 Mary and Jack

**Theoretical Background:** Young people are seldom aware of traditional views of gender roles. They are acting within what is labelled male or female, taking it for granted, and contribute to maintaining gender relations by "doing gender". The following method is equally suitable for girls and boys and it would make sense to use it in mixed groups. Participants can become aware of their views of gender roles by working with the text "Mary and Jack", and they can compare how they filled in the blanks differently. In the end, the point is to develop common visions of a world of work (paid and unpaid work) that is not as sexually coded and to think about what one's own professional and personal future should look like.

**Social Form:** Individual work, whole group work

**Objective:** Becoming aware of traditional views of gender roles; developing visions for ones professional and personal future

**Source:** <http://www.genderundschule.de/> [January 30, 2012]

**Description:** The participants receive the cloze text entitled "Mary and Jack" and are asked to fill in the blanks with the names "Mary" or "Jack".

After that, the trainer takes down how often each name was mentioned in a list on the flip chart that he/she prepared according to a template and then fills in one cloze text with the names that "dominated". Then the trainer reads out the filled-in text and initiates a discussion by asking the following questions:

- How realistic do you think the text is that came out in the end?
- Why does the name "Mary" predominate in some activities and tasks (name the results!) and the name "Jack" in others (name the results!)?
- What should the distribution of occupational and non-occupational activities and tasks be like in your opinion? (At this point, the trainer should try to carefully challenge stereotypes without interfering too much in the discussion process.)
- How do you want to do this in the future?

**Preparation/Material:** Flip chart, (green and blue) thick felt tip pens, cloze texts, list prepared on the flip chart according to the template

**Notes:** In mixed-sex groups it makes sense to additionally differentiate between the results of boys (e.g. green) and the results of girls (e.g. blue) in the evaluation. In the discussion the following additional questions should be addressed: Are there differences in the results of girls and boys? Why do these differences exist or why are the results so similar?

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; youths and young adults after finishing their education

**Duration:** 1 hour 30 minutes

### 2.2.3 My Most Important Values

**Theoretical Background:** Values considered important in their professional career differ from person to person because of their socialisation. Recognising one's own values is of particular importance in vocational orientation and can serve as a basis for the future career choice.

**Social Form:** Small group work, individual work

**Objective:** Recognising and determining values that are important to a person when following an occupation.

**Source:** Adaption by Itinéraires Formation from the compilation of common approaches.

**Description:** The trainer starts with briefly presenting the method and explaining its different stages.

Stage 1: Each participant receives the handout "List of values" (see attachment 1). The participants are asked to choose those values from the list that are most important to them and to list them in the table "List of my most important values". After that, the participants should choose those values from the list of values that are least important to them and enter them into the table "List of my least important values".

Stage 2: The participants should rank their values according to their importance, putting a 1 next to the most important value, a 2 next to the second most important and so on. They do the same with the "List of my least important values". Here they put a 1 next to the least important value, a 2 next to the second least important value and so on.

Stage 3: If requested or required the trainer may ask the participants to write a short text on the following topic or to think about it: "Choose one situation from your professional experience in which (important or unimportant) values played a big role and that you can describe to the group. (If the participants have not worked before, they can think of observed work situations: as clients, costumers etc.). Describe this situation in a few sentences, explaining how you experienced it and why a certain value was of importance."

Stage 4 (if desired or required): After each participant has found out what is important to her/him at work, they can discuss the following questions in pairs:

- What does it mean to me if important values are not met?
- Where would I have to/could I make compromises?
- What conclusions do I draw from these considerations?

**Preparation/Material:** List of values (see attachment); tables "List of my most important values" and "List of my least important values" (see attachment).

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults after finishing their education; adults

**Duration:** 2 hours

### 2.2.4 Careers that Suit Me

**Theoretical Background:** Young women and men are still thinking in relatively narrow and gender-coded schemes of career choice without exploring in detail their interests, skills and how they can put them into practice in a job. This exercise is designed to encourage young people to reflect on their interests and aptitudes and relate them to possible occupations. In conversation, ideas are made concrete and if necessary alternatives to gender-typical careers are pointed out.

**Social Form:** Small group work, individual work, whole group discussion

**Objective:** Working with different occupational activities that participants are interested in; pointing out alternatives to gender-typical careers

**Source:** [http://www.gendernow.at/gesebo/go?/into/berufsberatung/welche\\_berufe\\_passen\\_zu\\_mir](http://www.gendernow.at/gesebo/go?/into/berufsberatung/welche_berufe_passen_zu_mir) [January 20, 2012].

**Description:** Each participant is asked to make a list of activities they enjoy. The following questions can help in doing that:

- What are my hobbies?
- What tasks do I enjoy helping my mother, my father etc. with?
- What do I enjoy doing with my friends or alone?
- What am I interested in, what fascinates me (e.g. working with people, animals, computers, working alone or with others, physical activity, playing and doing handicrafts, working outdoors etc.)?

In a next step, each participant looks through career information to find careers which include as many of their collected activities as possible. Participants are asked to write down the occupations they found and to add which of their interests they could pursue in these occupations.

Then the trainer and the participants look through the notes and talk about the respective occupational fields, the tasks and requirements paying particular attention to gender-typical attributions. If a girl states, for example, that she is very clever with her hands, not only does the career of a hairdresser suggest itself, but also the career of a precision engineer or a surgeon. If gender-stereotypical patterns show up, it is important to make the participants aware of alternative educational opportunities in the course of the conversation and to talk about the labour market situation, potential earnings and training options.

**Preparation/Material:** Paper and pens, various sources of career information

**Notes:** It is important for the trainer to think about which occupations with male or female connotations match certain skills and interests in advance so that he/she is able to discuss alternatives with the participants.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; youths and young adults after finishing their education; women in technical professions and skilled trade

**Duration:** 1 hour

### 2.2.5 Daily Soap Operas

**Theoretical Background:** In the course of vocational orientation, daily soap operas that are so popular with young people lend themselves to analysis in order to challenge the ways of life that are shown there. The gender aspect should be kept in mind, but does not necessarily have to be the main focus. The point rather is to reveal that many of the shown ways of life are extremely unrealistic. You can see young people who already share a posh flat although still at school, who, for months after having finished school, do not know what they should do and who apparently do not have to bother about money – in any case that is hidden from the viewers. It happens quite often that they almost accidentally get a very lucrative job, suddenly take over the management of a business or even own it.

**Social Form:** Small group work, individual work, whole group discussion

**Objective:** Critical reflection of clichéd ways of life; making a connection between "daily soap operas" and one's own reality

**Source:** <http://www.genderundschule.de/iracer3/index.cfm?uuid=7E38F7557FB411D7B43B0080AD795D93&index=gender&pad=697> [January 30, 2008].

**Description:** First the participants are informed that they are going to watch and analyse a "daily soap opera" or parts of it. A handout with questions is distributed to the participants beforehand and serves as a basis for the analysis. The participants get about five minutes to read the handout and are asked to watch the video with these questions in mind and to take notes if necessary.

Then the video is shown to the group.

After that, the participants are asked to form small groups and to analyse the video based on the questions and on their personal notes.

Then the results are presented to the whole group and potential discrepancies between the results of the small groups are discussed.

**Preparation/Material:** Handouts (see attachment); an episode or parts of different episodes of a TV series (e.g. on DVD); TV set, DVD player

**Notes:** The analysis of such a series should only be carried out after the participants have already given some thought to career choice and life planning because this way it is more likely that they look at it with a critical eye.

The following TV series, for example, lend themselves to analysis:

- "7th Heaven"
- "Malcom in the Middle"
- "The O.C."
- "Gilmore Girls"
- "90210"
- "One Tree Hill"
- "Gossip Girl"

**Tip:** The exercise can be modified as follows: The group determines a TV series of which each participant individually watches two to three episodes while making notes in answer to the questions on the handout. In the next vocational orientation session the series is analysed according to the questions and if necessary an episode is watched again.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; youths and young adults after finishing their education

**Duration:** 2 hours

## 2.2.6 The Elephant

**Theoretical Background:** There are differences in the language used by women and men or girls and boys. This can be observed again and again in daily communication. In most cases, men talk longer, they ask questions less often, but make factual claims, whereas women rather talk about relationship topics, take into account different perspectives etc. These experiences are sometimes so engraved in our minds that we forget that it does not have to be like this. This exercise helps direct your attention to what is possible.

**Social Form:** Small group work, whole group discussion

**Objective:** Discussing gender-specific behaviour in a humorous way; causing an "aha effect".

**Source:** Spieß, Gesine (2006): Voll gesellschaftsfähig! – mit einer gendersensiblen Lehre. Eine Materialsammlung. In: Mörth, Anita/Hey, Barbara, Koordinationsstelle für Geschlechterstudien, Frauenforschung und Frauenförderung der Universität Graz (ed.): geschlecht + didaktik. Graz, p. 17.

**Description:** The trainer reads out a short conversation that really took place. Then the participants guess which sentence could have rather come from a man and which from a woman. The first sentence is: "I want to accomplish something big, something completely pure." The answer is: "Wash an elephant then!" The participants are asked to give reasons for their decision and if possible reach a consensus on who could have said what.

**Notes:** Basically, there is no right or wrong in this guessing game. The point is to challenge and discuss pre-existing opinions of how women and men allegedly talk on the basis of a funny example.

The historic conversation took place between the poets Gottfried Benn and Else Lasker-Schüler when they first met. The lifetime wish was expressed by the author Gottfried Benn and the suggestion with the elephant came from the poet Else Lasker-Schüler.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; youths and young adults after finishing their education; women in technical professions and skilled trade; Women after a long absence from the labour market

**Duration:** 30 minutes



### 2.2.7 Diagnosis of the Career Choice Situation

**Theoretical Background:** Especially when young people are in the process of choosing a career, it is often difficult to analyse where the problem lies. That means if participants of a career choice seminar or a vocational orientation course are not able to decide on an education or career, this can have different causes. Making an individual diagnosis facilitates the further course of action in the seminar.

**Social Form:** Individual work, whole group work

**Objective:** Determining the current state of the career decision process.

**Source:** <http://www.explorix.de> [January 30, 2008].

**Description:** The participants receive a short questionnaire and have to answer questions concerning their present situation. Their answers are then analysed according to the subjects of "identity", "decision making", "information" and "obstacles". The participants share their results with the whole group.

**Preparation/Material:** Pens, flip chart, handouts

**Notes:**

- Field 1: Subject of "identity" (clarity and stability of the self-image): Exercises from the methods database dealing with the topics of "*Analysis of potential*" and "*Educational and career choices*" can be used.
- Field 2: Subject of "decision making" (general difficulty in making decisions): Exercises from the methods database dealing with the topic of "*Dealing with resistance, conflicts, frustration, and resignation, methods for strengthening self-responsibility of the group and individual participants*" can be used.
- Field 3: Subject of "information" (information needs): Exercises from the methods database dealing with the topic of "*Vocational information, information management, labour market orientation*" can be used.
- Field 4: Subject of "obstacles" (specific limitations): Exercises from the methods database dealing with the topic of "*Orientation, Reframing, Activation and Motivation*" can be used.

**Tip:** The trainer writes the different fields on the flip chart and takes down the results of the participants by making a tally (one tally mark per named field that is problematic according to the individual results of the participants). This visualisation serves to illustrate the major problem areas of the course participants. Based on that, appropriate follow-up exercises can be chosen.

**Target Group:** Job changers, people in the course of vocational reorientation; youths and young adults facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 1 hour

### 2.2.8 Standing Up for Career Interests

**Theoretical Background:** This method is particularly suited to support young people with "atypical" career aspirations. Young people will be able to practice in role play how to stand up for their career aspirations – even in spite of opposition. By dealing with potential disapproval they are put in the position to develop their own lines of argument. In addition, this method encourages participants to deal with prejudices regarding occupational skills of women and men in a playful way and can so lead to a more open approach to gender-atypical occupations.

**Social Form:** Small group work, whole group discussion, role play or simulation game

**Objective:** Developing lines of argument and strategies to oppose (gender-stereotypical) objections to certain career aspirations; encouraging individual initiative

**Source:**

[http://www.gendernow.at/gesebo/go?/into/berufsberatung/einsetzen\\_fr\\_den\\_berufwunsch\\_rollenspiel](http://www.gendernow.at/gesebo/go?/into/berufsberatung/einsetzen_fr_den_berufwunsch_rollenspiel) [January 20, 2012].

**Description:** The situation is as follows: A girl has an unusual career aspiration. At dinner she tells her family about it for the first time. Her family is sceptical about it.

The participants are asked to visualise this situation and to determine together which characters and roles are to be part of the role play. The trainer writes the different roles on a blackboard/flip chart.

Then the roles are distributed and the participants have to decide on a career aspiration. After that, the participants form groups according to their different roles, for example one girl group (including the chosen actor), one father group, one mother group etc.

The groups are asked to collect, formulate and write down pro and con arguments for their role in about 15 minutes. Then the situation is acted out by the chosen "actors" who are supposed to use the arguments collected before. The situation can also be acted out more than once, possibly with other career aspirations.

*Follow-up discussion:* Discuss with the whole group: Which arguments could be used, which could not be used and why? How did the participants feel in their roles? What was pleasant, what was unpleasant? What helps girls to assert themselves in such situations?

**Preparation/Material:** Flip chart/black board, pens/chalk, paper and pens for the participants

**Notes:** The trainer should make sure that the "actors" are not always the same. This method can also be used meaningfully in mixed-sex groups with the role plays being based on occupations "atypical" of girls and boys. Other situations can be acted out as well, as for example a situation among friends. As parents have a big influence on the career choice patterns of their children, it makes sense to not only consider them as a counterpart, but to actively involve them in the vocational orientation process.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; youths and young adults after finishing their education

**Duration:** 1 hour 30 minutes

### 2.2.9 My Near and Distant Future

**Theoretical Background:** Developing realistic goals and consistently pursuing them is an important point in planning one's life and career. Dividing big goals into sub-goals and different steps that are easy to take helps to make those long-term goals more tangible and determines concrete action steps. Thinking in and acting according to sub-steps and therefore sub-goals requires both strategic and patient action. This active life planning enables young people to reach their goals in a self-determined way and on their own initiative.

**Social Form:** Individual work, whole group discussion

**Objective:** Learning how to distinguish short-term goals from long-term goals; learning how to determine short-term goals that are necessary for long-term goals

**Source:** Jugert, Gert/Rehder, Anke/Notz, Peter/Petermann, Franz (2008): Fit for Life – Module und Arbeitsblätter zum Training sozialer Kompetenz für Jugendliche, pp. 156f; adapted by abif.

**Description:** The trainer explains the exercise with a few examples. She/He shows that, in order to achieve a long-term goal, short-term goals have to be reached first. In a next step, the participants are asked to each think of a long-term goal and then to define the corresponding short-term goals. After 10 to 15 minutes the participants all come together again, and the results are collected on a big poster. The trainer makes sure that the participants distinguished correctly between short-term and long-term goals and encourages them to reconsider their goal definitions. At the end each participant presents his/her long-term and short-term goals and answers questions from the group.

**Preparation/Material:** posters, paper, pens

**Notes:** Possible examples to explain the exercise:

Example 1: Long-term goal: Dental technician - What short-term goals can be defined?

- I have to get information about the occupation.
- I have to obtain the required educational qualification.
- I have to find a training place.

Example 2: Long-term goal: to have children - What short-term goals can be defined?

- I need a partner who also wants to have children.
- I will first finish my education in order to be able to provide for my children.
- I have a job to provide for my family.

Possible questions for a concluding discussion: *Was it more difficult to find a long-term goal or to define short-term goals? Did you get new ideas and suggestions in this exercise? What is the advantage of distinguishing between long-term and short-term goals? Can you see yourself using the approach of this exercise when deciding on a goal?*

**Target Group:** All target groups

**Duration:** 2 hours

### 2.2.10 Time Pizza

**Theoretical Background:** Apart from school young people often have a lot of free time. Leisure behaviour, in particular, has a great influence on social behaviour. Conversely, however, social competence also determines what young people expect from their leisure time. When comparing how they plan their leisure time, they can learn from each other about the possibilities that are open to them. It is important for young people to learn that leisure activities can serve to alleviate stress and demands at school and work. In addition, creative and sports activities can contribute to increasing their self-confidence.

**Social Form:** Individual work, whole group discussion

**Objective:** Gaining clarity on how time is spent; reflecting on how to use ones time resources in a reasonable, satisfying way

**Source:** Jugert, Gert/Rehder, Anke/Notz, Peter/Petermann, Franz (2008): Fit for Life – Module und Arbeitsblätter zum Training sozialer Kompetenz für Jugendliche, pp. 144f.

**Description:** After the trainer has explained the objective of the exercise, the participants get two handouts: one containing the time pizza for the week and one containing the time pizza for the weekend. The participants are invited to imagine the time of a day as a pizza. With the aid of the handout, the participants visualise how much time they spend on different areas of life (vocational education, job, school, leisure activities, family, eating, and sleeping). They do the same for a typical weekday and a typical day on the weekend. It is important to remind them not to forget sleep time.

Then the participants cut out the two pizza slices (of the weekday and the weekend) that are dedicated to leisure time and glue them onto a blank sheet of paper. On this sheet, the participants are asked to write down what activities they want to do in their leisure time. The leisure time pizza slices can then be presented compared and discussed in the whole group.

**Preparation/Material:** Copies of the handouts, pens.

**Notes:** Possible questions for the concluding discussion:

- How big is the share of leisure time in the whole time pizza during the week and on the weekend?
- Are you content with your leisure activities? What else would you like to do?
- Are there participants among you who have the same interests? Are you able to give each other advice on how to pursue these interests?

**Tip:** As a possible extension of the exercise, the participants could draw a time pizza that corresponds to what they would want their days to be like. The "real" and the "ideal" time pizzas can then be compared and discussed.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; youths and young adults after finishing their education

**Duration:** 1 hour 30 minutes

### 2.2.11 My Parents' Occupations

**Theoretical Background:** The still existing segregation in the labour market with "female occupations" that are not as highly regarded, but low-paid for with little opportunity for promotion on the one hand and "male occupations" providing the opportunity of high pay and good promotion prospects on the other hand, is one of the fundamental causes of the occupational disadvantage of women. In order to raise awareness, this method uses the different occupations of the participants' mothers and fathers to illustrate labour market segregation. The participants are asked to find reasons for the segregation and use them as a basis for discussing prejudices regarding skills of women and men.

**Social Form:** Individual work, whole group work

**Objective:** Making apparent the segregation in the labour market; challenging prejudices regarding occupational skills of women and men

**Source:** [http://www.gendernow.at/gesebo/go?/into/unterricht/berufe\\_der\\_eltern](http://www.gendernow.at/gesebo/go?/into/unterricht/berufe_der_eltern) [January 20, 2012].

**Description:** In preparation of this exercise it is important that the participants talk to their parents about their careers and education.

At the beginning of the exercise the trainer distributes yellow and green note cards. Each participant writes his/her father's occupation on the yellow card and his/her mother's occupation on the green card. (If the mother is a housewife, they should write down the occupation learnt or the highest completed level of education.)

The trainer collects the cards and groups them on a pin board according to occupational groups (e.g. skilled trade, education and teaching profession, office occupations, civil service occupations etc.). Experience has shown that there will be single-coloured and mixed groups. (Housewives should form a separate group.)

The participants are asked to form groups of 3 to 4 people (if necessary they are asked to count off to form groups). Each group receives a flip chart, paper and pens.

The task is to describe on the flip chart paper what kind of image resulted on the pin board (single-coloured/mixed groups) and to explain why some groups are single-coloured and some are mixed (15–20 minutes of group work).

Then each group presents their poster. This is followed by a concluding discussion on the mentioned reasons for segregation.

**Preparation/Material:** A yellow and a green note card for each participant, pin board, pins, flip chart paper, pens

**Notes:** This method can reveal a whole range of prejudices. For that reason, it would be an advantage for the trainer to consider in advance how to deal with prejudices expressed by the participants in their attempt to explain segregation. The trainer should collect arguments against explanations like:

- Women are not interested in technology.
- Men do not know how to deal with children.

- Women are more interested in fashion.
- Men are not able look after old or sick people.
- Women are too weak to pursue a trade.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; women in technical professions and skilled trade

**Duration:** 1 hour

### 2.2.12 Family Tree of Occupations

**Theoretical Background:** The family tree serves as a basis to relate the career paths of different generations to one's own history. In this way the historical, social and psychological contexts can be revealed.

**Social Form:** Individual work, whole group work

**Objective:** Raising awareness of family heritage; questioning the desired profession; dealing with social and societal conditions

**Source:** Adaption by Itinéraires Formation from the compilation of common approaches.

**Description:** In preparation of this exercise it is important that the participants talk to their parents/grandparents about their education and careers.

Each participant draws a simplified family tree on a large sheet of paper. The first name and occupation of each family member are written down. (If the mother is a housewife, they should write down the occupation learnt or the highest completed level of education.) The family tree can go back as far as their information allows (usually back to the grandparents).

Now the reflection stage begins, which the trainer initiates with various questions, as for example:

(The questions should encourage the participants to reflect on their own position in the family or on their family legacy. Positive and negative aspects come to light as well as prejudices, stories of development, increase and/or loss of knowledge within the family, cultural mixing etc.)

- Are there similarities or differences in the various occupations of family members (across the sexes, over the years etc.)?
- What positions do/did the family members have?
- What working conditions are/were different family members confronted with?
- What other conditions are/were family members confronted with (job opportunities, economic developments, wars etc.)?
- What job-related qualities, attitudes and values do/did the various family members have (precision, high quality and/or performance expectations, punctuality, adaptability, craftsmanship, commercial skills, status etc.)?
- Which of these qualities, attitudes and values did I adopt? Which of them did I not adopt? How do I differ from my ancestors?

- What do/did my parents/relatives expect of me (performance expectations, career aspirations, independence etc.).
- Which of these expectations have I fulfilled and which have I not fulfilled?
- What competencies/qualities have my parents/relatives taught me that I can benefit from now?
- What do I want to do differently from my ancestors?

The questions are answered in the form of an interview with another participant. After the interview, the whole group reflects on the exercise together and the trainer can ask the following questions and write down the answers on a flip chart:

- What are the results of this exercise?
- What insights have been positive surprises?
- Are there aspects that bother me and that I would like to change?
- What can I take home from this?

**Notes:** This exercise requires mutual trust between the participants, which is why some kind of group process should already have taken place before that. If a participant does not want to do this exercise, for whatever reasons, the trainer should not insist on it. The confrontation with family memories can be painful, especially after traumatic experiences (e.g. migration, recent deaths in the family, experience of violence etc.).

This method can also reveal a whole range of prejudices (e.g. gender stereotypes). For that reason, it would be an advantage for the trainer to consider in advance how to deal with these prejudices (collecting arguments against them).

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 2 hours, the duration of the method varies according to the number of participants

### 2.2.13 My Dreams

**Theoretical Background:** Motivation provides an essential impetus to be able to carry out work well and satisfactorily. In vocational orientation, it is necessary to find out what occupations motivate participants intrinsically ("from within"). For that purpose, it is important to discover the participants' sources of motivation and in further consequence interests and skills in an "uncensored" way.

**Social Form:** Small group work, individual work

**Objective:** Finding new sources of inspiration for career choice.

**Source:** Based on the A.D.V.P. model of vocational training (Activation du développement vocationnel et personnel – Activation of Vocational and Personal Development). The model was developed by Denis Pelletier, Charles Bujold and Gilles Noiseux in Quebec in the early 1970ies.

**Description:** The trainer asks the participants to write down two or three experiences they would like to have. They can let their imagination run free and can also name "utopian" ideas; concrete circumstances and possibilities do not have to be taken into consideration at first.

In pairs, the participants work on the following questions taking turns in interviewing each other and writing down the answers.

The following questions can be asked, for example:

- What do you expect from this experience?
- What will you be able to learn from this experience?
- Have you had a similar experience already?
- What is so special about this experience?
- How would you categorise this desired experience (occupation vs. leisure time, material vs. mental, social vs. isolated, visionary vs. traditional, realistic vs. unrealistic etc.)?
- What difficulties could arise?
- What opportunities will it bring?
- How do you feel when you think of this experience?
- Which of your skills could you use in this situation?
- What does this desired experience say about you and your interests or aptitudes?
- What could you do to fulfil your wish?
- etc.

After the interview stage, the participants use their notes to find out similarities and differences in the experiences they dream of. Each participant writes a short summary of what he/she learned about himself/herself (aptitudes, values, interests etc.)

**Preparation/Material:** Paper, pens

**Notes:** This method requires mutual trust between the group members and should therefore only be used after a longer stage of getting to know each other and after group processes have taken place. Optionally, the experiences that the participants dream of or the results of the small group work can be presented to and discussed with the whole group.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 3 hours

### 2.2.14 Learning from Failure

**Theoretical Background:** According to Weiner's attribution theory, failure and success can either be attributed to external factors (circumstances) or internal factors (the individual) as well as to stable or unstable, i.e. basically variable, factors. The combination of these two dimensions results in a 2x2 matrix (see figure in the attachment).

While attributing success to one's own ability leads to an increase in self-esteem, attributing failure to one's own skills reduces self-esteem. If a person blames failure on external causes, he/she is a victim of circumstances. If he/she realises that his/her own effort is the cause, however, she/he can take action and make sure that it works out better next time.

**Social Form:** Individual work, whole group work



**Objective:** The objective of this exercise is twofold: 1. Reflecting on and analysing negative experiences. 2. Transforming negative experiences into positive learning outcomes to prepare oneself for the future.

**Source:** Adaption by Itinéraires Formation from the compilation of common approaches; Krelhaus, Lisa (2004): Wer bin ich – wer will ich sein? Ein Arbeitsbuch zur Selbstanalyse. Frankfurt am Main, p. 204. Weiner, Bernard (1994): Motivationspsychologie (3. Ed.). Weinheim: Beltz.

**Description:** The trainer asks each participant to recall one or more professional failures and to write them down on a sheet of paper.

At first, the participants should each consider what the causes of their failures were, distinguishing between the person and the situation (What could I have done differently and what could I not have changed? For which area of the failure am I responsible and for which part am I not responsible?).

After that, the trainer presents the model of Weiner (see attachment).

Then the participants are asked to fill in the worksheet to reflect on and analyse their experiences of failure, to identify their original explanations for them and to develop alternative explanations and ways of behaving.

Optionally, the results can then be discussed with the whole group.

**Preparation/Material:** Worksheets, pens

**Notes:** The method is designed to help identify causes of failures and to draw conclusions for the next time. The participants should realise that they are able to change some factors, while they will not be able to change others. Failure should not be negated, quite the contrary, there lies the potential for positive development in it.

**Target Group:** All target groups

**Duration:** 2 hours

## 2.2.15 Collage of Occupations

### Theoretical Background:

Version 1: Images represent a mode of expression that is constituted as an open field of relations between boundaries. Pictures can speak. Moods and attitudes can be expressed much more strongly with images than with words. Other than a text, an image is given in its entirety. By focusing on the essential, the structure of meaning that is prevalent in society is communicated.

Version 2: Projective methods take advantage of the mechanism of psychological projection (transference), as analysed in depth psychology, by providing "aids to projection" (e.g. images). In this way, unconscious or denied (e.g. unpleasant) content or issues that are difficult to verbalise should become accessible.

**Social Form:** Small group work, individual work, whole group work

**Objective:** Becoming aware of career expectations; reflecting on one's dream job; dealing with working conditions; checking dreams against the reality of the job

**Source:** Rabenstein, Reinhold/Reichel, René/Thanhoffer, Michael (2001): Das Methoden-Set: 2. Themen bearbeiten. 11th ed. Münster, 2.A 58. Chabert, C./Anzieu, D. (2004): Les Méthodes Projectives. Paris: PUF (Edition QUADRIGE).

**Description:**

Version 1 (small groups, whole group): In small groups (2 to 3 people), the participants look through various magazines for the subject of "dream job/job of the future" and cut out all pictures and statements that strike them as relevant to the subject, and they arrange them according to content. Out of these bunches of pictures the subjects that turned out to be important are used as a basis for on-going work and collages are created (on flip chart paper). Then the participants are invited to assess the content according to criteria like "desirable – rejected" or "ideal images – distorted images – reality".

The collages are put up and presented to the whole group; similarities and differences are addressed. In addition, the collages should be checked against the reality of working life (reflection stage).

Version 2 (individual work, whole group): The participants are asked to look through various magazines and select pictures and statements on the subject of "My ideal working environment". For their collages they use all pictures, words and statements that they consider relevant to depict their internal image of the ideal working environment.

After a break the collages are (anonymously) put up (pin board, wall etc.) and the trainer asks the participants to take a seat in front of someone else's collage and to have a close look at it. After a certain time (depending on the number of collages), the participants are asked to give comments on the collages they looked at and tell what associations they had. If necessary, the trainer can provide support in this stage by asking questions like for example: "What do you think is important to this person?", "What career could you see this person pursuing?", "What do you think is this person interested in?" etc.

The trainer writes down the participants statements about the individual collages, hands these notes to the participants who created the collages and asks them to write a text in which they reflect on their collages and the comments. At this point the trainer can also support them with questions like "What do you want to write down about your collage?", "What does the collage say about you and your aptitudes?", "What has the view of the others contributed to your own perception of yourself?".

Depending on how much time is left, a discussion can be carried out in which similarities and differences are addressed and the collages are checked against the reality of working life.

**Preparation/Material:** Flip chart paper or large sheets of paper, different magazines, scissors, (pin boards). Optional: inviting a labour market expert.

**Notes:** As the pictures in the tabloid press are primarily confined to sensational journalism and advertising, quality magazines should be provided for this exercise.

Version 1: This exercise creates a committed, creative, and lively atmosphere in the group. It is especially suited to get emotionally ready to deal with the subject of "vocational orientation". Images offer participants the opportunity to portray their moods, attitudes and feelings. With images they can express

how they feel and how they see their dream jobs. In the reflection stage involving the whole group, an expert (labour market expert) could be invited to represent "the view from practice".

Version 2: The projective collage is a game method that allows participants to let their imagination run free. Because of its playful character resistance can be reduced, while motivation can be increased. Wishes, fears, experiences etc. that are hidden or hard to verbalise can also be revealed, while at the same time developing new thoughts and ideas is encouraged. This exercise can also be carried out in a personal conversation with the trainer in which the participant is asked to comment on his/her collage orally or in writing.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; adults

**Duration:** 3 hours

### 2.2.16 Photolangage

**Theoretical Background:** "Photolangage" (literally: picture language) is a technique that was developed for encounter groups: The associations with the images give indications as to attitudes and ways of thinking. This method can be used to get to know oneself or each other better.

The purpose of the photo is to play a mediating role; room is created in which thoughts in form of pictures on the one hand and in form of ideas on the other hand are developed. The photo stimulates the participants' imagination, which differs from person to person.

**Social Form:** Small group work

**Objective:** Exchange of ideas on the issue of what working conditions I like and do not like; finding answers by way of pictures

**Source:** Adaption by Itinéraires Formation from the compilation of common approaches.

**Description:** The trainer spreads a set of pictures dealing with the world of work in the room (which he/she either bought or collected). The trainer invites the participants to look at the pictures. Then she/he asks them to choose one or two pictures for each of the following questions:

- What working conditions do I like?
- What working conditions do I not like?

Each participant then shows his/her chosen pictures to the group, describes them and gives reasons for his/her choice. After that, the other participants can ask questions or make comments on their own interpretation of the pictures.

As a result, the participants will become aware of and discuss individual and collective ideas on the topic of work. The purpose of the group exercise is to help the participants to become aware of the subjectivity of their ideas and to notice certain aspects that concern them.

**Preparation/Material:** Set of pictures

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults after finishing their education; adults

**Duration:** 2 hours

### 2.2.17 My Capital of Experience

**Theoretical Background:** Personal and professional careers do not always follow a straight path. Focusing on personal and professional careers reveals what people have achieved and learned in the course of their (professional) lives. Visualising ones career makes it easier to reflect on the actual situation and helps with considering where to direct ones professional development in the future.

**Social Form:** Individual work, whole group work

**Objective:** Becoming aware of one's personal capital of experience.

**Source:** Based on the A.D.V.P. model of vocational training (Activation du développement vocationnel et personnel – Activation of Vocational and Personal Development). The model was developed by Denis Pelletier, Charles Bujold and Gilles Noiseux in Quebec in the early 1970ies.

#### Description:

Stage 1 (My Career): At the beginning, each participant receives the worksheet "My Career" printed on A3-size paper. Each participant completes this worksheet individually: The horizontal arrow in the bottom half of the sheet should contain the events that the participants think are/have been relevant for their professional career (professional background). In the top half, there is room for important events outside of work (personal background). The aim is to consciously deal with one's own career, to reveal professional and personal developments.

The participants are free to choose how to do this: Some will divide their career into years, others into periods of 5 or 10 years, others will start with dates that serve as reference points etc.

Then the participants are asked to go into more detail. The aim is to make connections between formative experiences and their context.

At this point, the whole group can briefly reflect on this method: *How did you feel during the exercise? How did you approach the task? How did the method work? How did you remember things in the past? What did you notice?* etc. The worksheet could also be used again later on in an individual conversation with the trainer.

Stage 2 (My Experiences): In the second stage, each participant receives the worksheet "My Experiences" printed on A3-size paper (additional copies should be available when necessary). The participants are asked to list their experiences corresponding to their careers in a table in chronological order. To help them the trainer can give the following examples:

- The column headed "Education" should encompass the diversity of locations of learning. Not only school and university education can be entered here, but also, for example, self-taught skills, learning in the context of hobbies, vocational training etc.

- The column headed "Non-work activities" can contain, for example, voluntary work, involvement in clubs or unions, activities in the context of hobbies or within the family etc.
- In the column headed "Personal experiences", the participants can take stock of other important experiences (travels, encounters, diseases etc.).

Stage 3 (Crucial stages of my career): The third stage, which is optional, is designed to analyse formative experiences. These include, in particular, transitions like the transition from school to work, change of job, reorientation and the like. The participants write down the respective circumstances and possible reasons for changes (conscious decisions, external constraints, opportunities, chance encounter, life events etc.). Then they find out similarities and differences of relevant experiences. Conclusions should be summarised together with the trainer.

At this point the whole group can briefly reflect on the following questions: *How did you feel during the exercise? How did you approach the task? How did the method work? What did you notice?* etc. The worksheets could also be used again later on in an individual conversation with the trainer.

Stage 4 (Where to go from here?): In the fourth stage, which is also optional, the participants are invited to collect ideas on what should happen in the next 5 to 10 years on a professional and personal level and to write down milestones (Worksheet: "Where to go from here?").

**Preparation/Material:** Worksheets

**Target Group:** People returning to the labour market; rehabilitants; people with work experience

**Duration:** 3 hours (Phase 1: My Career); 3 hours (Phase 2: My Experiences); 2 hours (Phase 3: Crucial stages of my career); 1 hour (Phase 4: Where to go from here?)

### 2.2.18 Female Occupations – Male Occupations

**Theoretical Background:** For the most part, girls and young women have a very clear picture in their mind of what occupations are worthy of consideration and what occupations are out of the question for them. Such distinctions are often based on the social attribution of skills to women and men that are adapted to a great extent without thinking. As the participants collect "typical female and male occupations" in small groups and mark those "male occupations" that could be a possible alternative to their current career aspirations, their attention will be directed to fields of activity that differ/deviate from gender conventions. The lists are then examined and discussed in view of incomplete information about certain occupational profiles and of specific advantages and disadvantages of female and male occupations.

**Social Form:** Small group work, whole group work

**Objective:** Extending the range of occupations; reflecting on occupational preferences; raising awareness of the gender-specific division of labour, its causes and consequences

**Source:** AK Mädchenarbeit im Verbundsystem „Arbeitsmarktintegration Benachteiligter“ der Region Trier (1999): Methoden der Berufsorientierung in der Mädchenarbeit. Trier, pp. 34–35.

**Description:** Two or three small groups of 4 participants at the most are formed. First they brainstorm typical female and male occupations and write them down on two separate sheets of paper. The trainer

can support the collecting of occupations, for example, by asking what occupations family members or friends have or what occupations they see every day. Once they are done with the lists of "female and male occupations", they mark those male occupations with a cross that they consider as alternatives to their current career aspirations.

The subject is further dealt with in the whole group. First of all, questions regarding the content are settled (e.g. Do the participants know all the occupations? What are they about?). If the group does not know the answers, they have to look for information in some career encyclopaedia or on the internet.

Then a group discussion is initiated on the basis of questions like for example: "Why are certain occupations typical female occupations?", "What is the difference between female and male occupations?", "Who knows women with atypical jobs?", "What are the advantages and disadvantages?", "Why is job x a possible alternative?".

**Preparation/Material:** Flip chart paper, felt tip pens in different colours, careers encyclopaedia, Internet access if possible

**Notes:** Practical experience shows that in most cases it is not a lack of information that causes participants to choose typical female occupations in their career planning. Early on, girls develop a sense of which occupations are socially accepted and therefore realistic and acceptable for themselves. They can give good reasons for their decision against typical male occupations, often even better reasons than for their current career aspirations! Ideally, the project of encouraging girls to choose "male occupations" should be started much earlier (already at kindergarten age)!

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 1 hour 30 minutes

### 2.2.19 What to Do without Work Experience? Start Your Own Project!

**Theoretical Background:** Despite all efforts, it is not always possible to find a new job immediately. The time till then, however, can be used to show initiative and develop and realise one's own project. A project of one's own leads to new commitment and new contacts, which might again lead to the "right job". In addition to that, people can acquire important, practical experiences in the occupational field they aim for. The project can be added to the curriculum vitae, and it signals initiative and self-responsibility to potential employers.

**Social Form:** Small group work, individual work, whole group reflection

**Objective:** Acquiring first knowledge and experiences in the chosen occupational field; activation towards self-initiative; acquiring knowledge in project planning

**Source:** Glaubitz, Uta (1999): Der Job, der zu mir passt. Das eigene Berufsziel entdecken und erreichen. Frankfurt/New York, pp. 125f.

**Description:** In small groups of four, the participants brainstorm possible projects and how they could be realised. In the following, a few examples of projects are given that can be carried out even without having a lot of capital:

- *Photographer*: taking pictures for an acquaintance, at best in the field in which you later want to work
- *Web designer*: designing a website for yourself or a friend in order to be able to provide references when applying for a job
- *Event marketing*: organising a school event

The participants start to prepare their projects during the course; the implementation can also be reflected on and supported in the course.

**Notes:** This exercise is especially suited for people who do not have practical experience in the occupational field they aim for and who want to gain first knowledge and experience through their own initiative. Future employers can interpret such actions as a sign of commitment.

If it seems difficult to carry out a project in the chosen occupational field (e.g. archaeology), the participants should try to do voluntary work, internships or a temporary job.

**Target Group:** All target groups; youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; youths and young adults after finishing their education

**Duration:** 2 hours

### 2.2.20 Developing Scenarios

**Theoretical Background:** Questions about work and life that people are concerned with are connected to the past and to the future. Questions concerning the future of one's professional life have to do with certain decisions that have to be made, as for example whether to specialize in a subject or whether to change or expand ones field of work. The past is a part of life that is behind us. We can recall facts, events and experiences and they constitute potential material for examination. The future, however, provides far fewer clues.

People have different ways of dealing with this: Some think they just have to wait for what the future brings, while others assume that the future can be planned, managed and thus controlled. Passive waiting only limits the ability to act; people only react instead of act. The wish to control the future fails because of contingency.

The scenario method lies between planning and waiting and contains a third element. A scenario is a creative graphic description of something which might take place in the future. This image of the future can refer to a situation (scenario) in which one will work and live at a certain point in time or to the path that leads there (step-by-step scenario).

**Social Form:** Small group work, individual work

**Objective:** Practicing flexible thinking and creating the future with the help of a concrete mental image.

**Source:** Brug, Jos van der/Locher, Kees (1997): Unternehmen Lebenslauf. Biographie, Beruf und persönliche Entwicklung. Ein Workshop für alle, die ihr Arbeitsleben bewusst gestalten wollen. Stuttgart, p. 150.

**Description:** The participants are asked to each write down 5 to 10 different possibilities of what their future could be like. Then they choose three that they deem worthy of closer examination. Each of these three possibilities should be developed into an image of the future or a scenario.

**Scenario 1:** The participants have to choose one of the possibilities that they see for themselves and develop it as specifically as possible into an image of their work and life in three years. The following instructions have to be given (questions can be added as the trainer likes):

- Describe a work day and a work week.
- Describe the situation of your personal life (in social and material terms).
- State what subjects concerning your own development you will be preoccupied with.

**Scenario 2:** The participants are asked to "delete" scenario 1 from their minds and choose another possibility for the future. In developing scenario 2 they use the same approach as with scenario 1. For the new scenario, however, as few elements as possible should be taken from scenario 1.

**Scenario 3:** Same procedure as with scenarios 1 and 2.

Afterwards the participants get together in groups of two or three to have a conversation that goes like this: One participant presents, in words, his/her scenarios as graphically as possible. The others listen and may take notes. Then they can ask concrete questions which will contribute to the vividness of the scenario. The listeners can ask the speaker to introduce another aspect that might be important. They individually characterise the presented scenarios: Are there characteristic features in all three scenarios (e.g. the person always works in a team or independently and alone.)? At what point in the narration did they feel power and energy? The most important characterisations are read out and discussed. Then the participants swap roles so that each of them once assumes the role of the narrator.

**Notes:** The method also is an exercise in flexible thinking: One scenario is deleted in order to create a new one. The participants should force themselves to be as concrete as possible, no matter if the scenarios are indeed realisable or not. Besides, the participants should really work on three different scenarios – even if they give excuses like, for example, scenario 1 is the nicest and most realistic. The scenarios are not there to be realised, but serve as means to "feel" the future. In reality the future is always different. By imagining scenarios participants can find out, however, what is valuable and important to them, what could encourage actions. What people gain from the conversation about scenarios, varies from person to person. The conversation can make them recognise more clearly what their likes are or what their general attitude to the "future" is. Not only the person talking, but also the listeners can get something out of the conversation. By getting involved in the life questions of others, they can also get to know themselves better. The exercise "Final scenario" is suited to continue from here.

**Target Group:** Adults

**Duration:** 2 hours



### 2.2.21 Final Scenario

**Theoretical Background:** Questions about work and life that people are concerned with are connected to the past and to the future. Questions concerning the future of one's professional life have to do with certain decisions that have to be made, as for example whether to specialize in a subject or whether to change or expand ones field of work. The past is a part of life that is behind us. We can recall facts, events and experiences and they constitute potential material for examination. The future, however, provides far fewer clues. People have different ways of dealing with this: Some think they just have to wait for what the future brings, while others assume that the future can be planned, managed and thus controlled. Passive waiting only limits the ability to act; people only react instead of act. The wish to control the future fails because of contingency. The scenario method lies between planning and waiting and contains a third element. A scenario is a creative graphic description of something which might take place in the future. This image of the future can refer to a situation (scenario) in which one will work and live at a certain point in time or to the path that leads there (step-by-step scenario).

**Social Form:** Small group work, individual work

**Objective:** Following the exercise "Developing scenarios", the participants identify promising aspects of their scenarios that provide a real possibility of implementation. Based on that they develop a new, definite scenario of their future working lives.

**Source:** Brug, Jos van der/Locher, Kees (1997): Unternehmen Lebenslauf. Biographie, Beruf und persönliche Entwicklung. Ein Workshop für alle, die ihr Arbeitsleben bewusst gestalten wollen. Stuttgart, p. 174.

**Description:** The participants look back at the scenarios they developed in the exercise "Developing scenarios" and make a list of "promising" aspects they have found. Promising areas are parts of the scenarios that convey the feeling: "That appeals to me", "I realised that is important to me." It could be, for example, that something might be discernible in all scenarios that has now become very clear or that is very valuable for the participants themselves. Or the participant talked about a part of his scenario in such a clear and convincing manner that he/she got the following feedback from the others: "That is where your heart and power lie." So all aspects that provide a real possibility of implementation are promising. Based on these promising areas, each participant creates a new, definite scenario and then presents it to the whole group.

**Notes:** This exercise only makes sense in combination with the exercise "Developing scenarios".

**Target Group:** Adults

**Duration:** 1 hour

## 2.3 Dealing with Resistance, Conflicts, Frustration, and Resignation, Methods for Strengthening Self-responsibility of the Group and Individual Participants

### 2.3.1 Obstacles on the Way to a Career

**Theoretical Background:** Many young people encounter problems and obstacles on their way to a career. It is important to address potential fears in advance and at the same to think about solutions and coping strategies. For, on the one hand, obstacles do not have to be taken as given, but rather solutions can be actively worked out. On the other hand, reducing fears and worries can contribute to participants being able to cope with situations confidently without escalation.

**Social Form:** Small group work, role play or simulation game, whole group work

**Objective:** Not accepting obstacles as given, but trying to influence them.

**Source:** Sacher, Kristin (2005): „Lebenswert Beruf“ – Praxishandreichung für die Arbeit mit Schulfrühabgängern, p. 26.

**Description:** In small groups, the participants first of all draw an "unlucky person" on a poster and put it up somewhere in the room. After that, they are asked to brainstorm all possible obstacles on the way to a career, to write them on post-it notes and to stick them next to their unlucky person. In their small groups, the participants then decide which of these manageable obstacles they want to act out in role play. The roles are rehearsed in the small groups and then performed in front of the whole group. The other participants can guess which obstacles are presented. Together the whole group can think of solution strategies.

**Preparation/Material:** Pens, flip chart paper, post-it notes

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; youths and young adults after finishing their education; young migrants facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 1 hour

### 2.3.2 Conflicts in the Training Situation

**Theoretical Background:** Conflicts arise, among others, in situations characterised by unequal power relations. Becoming a victim of bullying in the workplace means being discriminated against over a longer period of time by superiors and colleagues whose aim is the termination of employment of the bullied person and/or who actually bring about that effect. Since such abuse can happen to anyone, this exercise is designed to demonstrate how the participants can react to unfair treatment by superiors or colleagues and what legal bases exist to protect employees who are discriminated against.

**Social Form:** Small group work, whole group discussion, role play or simulation game

**Objective:** Preparing for the rights, obligations, and areas of conflict in education and training by acting out a conciliation process.

**Source:** Schabacker-Bock, Marlis/Marquard, Markus (2005): Von der Schule in den Beruf, Trainingsmaterial zur Berufsvorbereitung von HauptschülerInnen, p. 61; adapted by abif.

**Description:** In this exercise the case of an apprentice who has serious problems with his/her work colleagues will be dealt with. The colleagues complain that the apprentice is neglecting his/her duties. The apprentice is confronted with a bullying situation. In role play, the case is heard by a conciliation board. All participants are divided into small groups and assigned one of the four possible roles/parties: apprentices, colleagues, instructor/master, if necessary parents/head of the company. In these small groups they discuss the situation and prepare the opinion of the respective party. In the following role play, the participants bring forward their opinions in front of a conciliation board that tries to achieve an agreement. For example, requirements can be developed that the different parties have to fulfil (e.g. punctuality of the apprentice or patient instructions by the colleagues). If no agreement can be reached, the conciliation board should make a suggestion for the further course of action.

**Preparation/Material:** Prepared example case (see handout in the attachment)

**Notes:** This exercise also offers a good opportunity to talk about and discuss rights and obligations of apprentices.

**Tip:** As far as the information on rights of apprentices is concerned, it is also recommended to invite experts!

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; young migrants facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 2 hours

### 2.3.3 Contract with Myself

**Theoretical Background:** Vocational orientation courses should give participants ample scope for self-responsibility and making their own decisions. The participants play a significant role in determining their learning progress and are themselves responsible for its realisation. For that reason it is important to establish a sense of obligation regarding its realisation and to increase the participants' self-responsibility.

**Social Form:** Individual work, pair work

**Objective:** Establishing a sense of obligation and encouraging self-responsibility of the individual participants; the participants should give serious thought to what steps they could take in the next weeks

**Source:** Rabenstein, Reinhold/Reichel, René/Thanhoffer, Michael(2001): Das Methoden-Set, 4. Reflektieren, 11. Aufl., Münster, 4.C 14.

**Description:** The participants each receive a sheet of particularly nice paper and are invited to make a contract with themselves. The subject of the contract consists in concrete consequences and behaviour for the next 14 days. These plans have to be described in concrete terms and in as much detail as possible

so that an outsider could also understand them. What is also part of the contract is the consideration, the benefit that is expected from it, maybe the reward, the gesture of satisfaction with the effort put in and with the success achieved. Both the trainer and the participant sign the finished contract.

**Variation:** Another member of the group also signs the contract and receives a copy of it. The two participants set a date to get in touch and talk about the fulfilment of the contract.

**Preparation/Material:** Nice paper

**Notes:** As the trainer is not a party to the contract nor the subject of the contract, the signature of the trainer implies an imbalance in the relationship. In each individual case, the trainer has to find out whether the participants feel they are being controlled and under surveillance or whether they might even feel they are treated like children.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; unemployed adults; youths and young adults after finishing their education

**Duration:** 30 minutes

### 2.3.4 List of Advantages and Disadvantages

**Theoretical Background:** Frustration and conflict situations can throw young people off track. It is especially hard for them to maintain distance in confrontations and to make a considered decision for or against certain behaviour. This exercise is designed to equip young people with self-control mechanisms and to practice socially competent alternative behaviour with them.

**Social Form:** Individual work, pair work, role play or simulation game, whole group work

**Objective:** Keeping ones distance in confrontations and developing self-controlled behaviour.

**Source:** Petermann, Franz/Petermann, Ulrike (2007): Training mit Jugendlichen – Aufbau von Arbeits- und Sozialverhalten, pp. 123ff; adapted by abif.

**Description:** The participants are asked to collect difficult situations from everyday life of young people. These difficult situations can relate to frustration, failures or stress. In order to stimulate discussion, the trainer can give a few examples. Each participant chooses three situations that he/she finds most difficult. In pairs, the participants use the handout to systematically think about the advantages and disadvantages of different kinds of behaviour in those situations. Before that, an example can be discussed in the whole group. After they have worked on a few examples, at least one situation per participant should be acted out in role play.

To prepare for the role play the trainer and the participants can discuss general rules of conduct for coping with the situation, as for example resolving to do something and then sticking to it or remembering a disadvantage of the list of advantages and disadvantages and then using it in their argumentation. Before the role play each participant should formulate some self-instruction that is very important to her/him and that he/she should quietly say to himself/herself three times in order to fix it on his/her mind. These instructions could be: "Keep cool, don't lose heart!", "Being strong means being able

to resist!" etc. In pairs, the participants then act out the situation in alternating roles. Some of the role plays should be acted out in front of the whole group so that they can be discussed.

**Preparation/Material:** Copy of the handout (see attachment), pens

**Notes:** Possible collection of difficult situations:

- resisting drinking alcohol, especially in groups or when going out;
- paying attention in class and taking an active part, especially when others are distracting you;
- quickly flying into a rage;
- fear of exam situations;
- not feeling like working; wanting to skip school;
- receiving negative criticism at work;
- ...

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; youths and young adults after finishing their education; young migrants facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 1 hour

### 2.3.5 Iceberg in Sight

**Theoretical Background:** To be able to deal with conflicts constructively, it is essential to take account of the psychological factors that form the background of the conflict and to express them. For young people it is especially important to recognise their feelings, needs, perceptions, goals and intentions and to communicate them. It is equally important for them to observe those in others, to understand and accept them. Here, the iceberg model can be helpful. This model illustrates that there are feelings, needs, views, goals and intentions concealed in a conflict. Although they are invisible, they can manifest themselves and become visible in actions, words and body language, which can then affect the other person and has an influence on the course of the conversation. Expressing these needs, feelings and goals can defuse the conflict.

**Social Form:** Small group work, role play or simulation game, whole group work

**Objective:** Learning how to deal with conflicts constructively and how to avoid arguments and escalation.

**Source:** Jugert, Gert/Rehder, Anke/Notz, Peter/Petermann, Franz (2008): Fit for Life – Module und Arbeitsblätter zum Training sozialer Kompetenz für Jugendliche, p. 204.

**Description:** At the beginning of the exercise, trainer and participants work on and discuss the so-called iceberg model (see handout "The Iceberg Model"). After that, the participants are asked to act out conflict situations and to articulate their invisible emotions, wishes and needs in these role plays. They can express a feeling: "Now I'm disappointed." Or they can communicate wishes or intentions: "I've come here to talk to you." When doing that they should always talk in the first person (see handout).

The role plays can be carried out by two or three people; they can also be filmed and analysed. The handout can be used as a stimulus for reflection and discussion.

**Preparation/Material:** Copies of the handouts (see attachment)

**Notes:** In order to evaluate the exercise, the following questions can be dealt with in the whole group:

- Did you find it difficult to observe how you felt and to express it? How do you feel when others express their feelings?
- What do you have to bear in mind when you want to perceive your own feelings and needs and to communicate them appropriately to another person?
- What effect does it have on an argument when the partner expresses his/her feelings, needs and goals?
- Do you, in everyday life, view your conflict partner as opponent or rather as training partner in sports?
- Do you sometimes express your feelings in a normal argument?

**Tip:** Possible conflict situations that can be acted out:

- You arrive at your work placement company with a lip piercing. Your boss is appalled and wants you to remove it.
- You happen to hear that your fellow apprentices met for a coffee after work the day before. They didn't let you know, however. You are angry and want to voice your displeasure.
- Since you have been meeting your Austrian-Turkish work colleague quite often, your other friends have started to avoid you. One day an argument breaks out because of that.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; youths and young adults after finishing their education

**Duration:** 2 hours

### 2.3.6 First Aid Kit

**Theoretical Background:** In times of crisis it is often difficult to find ones way out of the predicament. For that reason, it is important for the participants to learn how crises can be avoided in the first place by being aware of which activities are good for them and what they should avoid doing when they already see first signs of a personal crisis.

**Social Form:** Individual work, pair work, whole group discussion

**Objective:** Dealing with crisis in an adequate and competent way.

**Source:** Jugert, Gert/Rehder, Anke/Notz, Peter/Petermann, Franz (2008): Fit for Life – Module und Arbeitsblätter zum Training sozialer Kompetenz für Jugendliche, p. 179.

**Description:** At the beginning of the exercise the term "crisis" is defined in the whole group. For this purpose, visual support can be helpful in those different aspects, ideas and terms, but also early warning signs of a crisis are collected, written on note cards and then put up on the wall.

After that, each participant receives a shoe box that he/she can individually modify to turn it into a "first aid kit". In the whole group, the participants think about what they can put into the first aid kit in order to be able to avert a crisis or to weather it without heavy losses.

After all participants have thought of what they are going to put into their first aid kits, the trainer asks them to bring the filled boxes with them to the next session.

**Preparation/Material:** A shoe box for each participant, paper, pens, poster

**Notes:** Possible contents of the first aid kit:

- list of activities you enjoy
- sports activities
- list of cultural events/activities
- important telephone numbers
- friends who are good listeners
- individual activities (e.g. taking a bath, going for a walk, eating/drinking something good, calling your best friend etc.)
- good luck charm
- photos that bring back good memories
- a CD, a book
- a 5 Euro note

**Tip:** Possible questions for the evaluation of the exercise:

- Did you have fun assembling the first aid kit?
- Does the first aid kit make you feel secure?
- What did you learn about yourselves?
- What was the most important thing that you learnt about (dealing with) crises?
- What advice would you give a friend who is not feeling very well at the moment?
- How will you deal with bad moods or an impending crisis in the future?

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; youths and young adults after finishing their education

**Duration:** 1 hour

### 2.3.7 Value Exchange

**Theoretical Background:** An individual's value system is a structured and hierarchically organised, interconnected system of norms. These norms designate contents (concrete values) and means (ways to implement or enforce these values in society) to assess individual or social realities (i.e. to interpret and evaluate them), to regulate (i.e. to maintain) and to change (i.e. to shape) them. The value system is, among other things, a function of the whole motivational area of a person, but at the same time also a source of motivation. The individual value system is formed as a result of experiences in life and of a person's socialisation. Hence, value systems regulate and govern the behaviour of individuals and groups. Therefore, they do not only contain standards for choosing individual alternatives in a certain social

situation, but also those in the overall system of a certain society. Values have a significant influence on our lifestyle, our career plans and career choice. They are often implicit without ever being directly expressed or reflected on, and still they largely determine our lives.

**Social Form:** Small group work, individual work, whole group work

**Objective:** Making aware of and reflecting on own values as well as making aware of their consequences for choosing a career.

**Source:** Rabenstein, Reinhold/Reichel, René/Thanhoffer, Michael (2001b): Das Methoden-Set, 2. Themen bearbeiten, 11th edition. Münster, 2.C 20.

**Description:** Each participant receives the handout "Value exchange", on which they first rank the five most important values that have a significant influence on the way they choose to live their lives and therefore also on how they plan their careers.

After this stage of working individually, the participants are asked to find a consensus on their common values in pairs and to try to rank them from 1 to 5. In doing so they should bring forward arguments for their ranking in order to convince the other person of this ranking of values.

In small groups of 3 to 5 people, the participants once more try to find or agree on a common ranking, again choosing only five values to rank.

The pairs and small groups then present their rankings to the whole group. The trainer takes down the chosen values by putting dots on a pin board or flip chart. This way everybody can see which values are more important to the whole group and which values have not been mentioned at all. Apart from the group values, the trainer can also address the taboos, which are areas that have not been mentioned, and perhaps discuss why they are of minor importance. In the end, the group can discuss the consequences for choosing a career or job that result from this.

**Preparation/Material:** Handout, pens, A4 size sheets of paper, flip chart and flip chart pens, note cards, dot stickers

**Notes:** The small group work especially makes sense in big groups in order to fit in an intermediate step between pair work and the discussion in the whole group, but it is not absolutely necessary. In the case of values that are strongly standardised by the respective occupational group (e.g. social workers have to be social-minded; geriatric nurses have to be "helpful") it is doubtful whether taboos can be discussed without encountering resistance of the group.

**Tip:** It can be discussed in the whole group which other values that have not been mentioned are also important to the participants.

**Target Group:** People with work experience; older people; people returning to the labour market; unemployed adults

**Duration:** 1 hour



## 2.4 Vocational Information, Information Management, Labour Market Orientation

### 2.4.1 100 (200 or 300) New Jobs and Business Ideas

**Theoretical Background:** Participants of vocational orientation courses often think – due to their own patterns and experiences, but also due to a lack of information – along the same well-worn lines. When looking for alternative job possibilities and business ideas, it can therefore be helpful to develop ideas together with others.

**Social Form:** Small group work

**Objective:** Developing new job possibilities and business ideas beyond "real" possibilities in order to be able to consider the "impossible" again.

**Source:** Kirsten, Rainer/Müller-Schwarz, Joachim (2000): Gruppentraining. Ein Übungsbuch mit 59 Psychospielen. Trainingsaufgaben und Tests. Hamburg, p. 56.

**Description:** At the beginning, the participants divide into two or three smaller groups depending on group size (ideally 6 participants per group). They all receive a sheet of paper and a pen and start to write down three new jobs or business ideas. These sheets are then passed to the other five/four participants so that at the end each participant has held the suggestions of all the others in his/her hand. They should each add three more ideas to the suggestions of the other participants. At the end there will be 18 ideas written on each sheet of paper. That is when the round is finished. Each group (consisting of 6 people) has then come up with 108 new jobs or business ideas.

At the end each group reads aloud the ideas developed. The trainer makes copies for all participants.

**Notes:** This method provides the opportunity to take one's time to think and still get inspiration from the other participants' ideas. The exercise is intended to encourage the groups' creative thinking; and the written method of brainstorming has the advantage that shy participants will rather dare to contribute their ideas. It is essential that this is a creativity exercise and that the participants do not necessarily have to be able to follow these occupations.

**Target Group:** All target groups

**Duration:** 1 hour 30 minutes

### 2.4.2 Researching Careers

**Theoretical Background:** Before making a career choice, it is important to collect as much different information as possible on potential careers, occupational sectors and the labour market. That way ideas and career expectations can be compared to the "real" conditions and can be made more concrete.

**Social Form:** Small group work, individual work

**Objective:** Increasing competence in researching careers and the labour market; expanding knowledge on already considered careers

**Source:** Itinéraires Formation.

**Description:** The trainer briefly describes the purpose of the exercise. Then he/she runs a group brainstorming session on the question: *"If I want more information and knowledge on careers, occupational sectors and the labour market, where could I get it?"*.

The trainer writes the participants ideas on a flip chart or black board and, in the end, adds own ideas that have not been mentioned yet.

It is important that not only virtual places like the internet are mentioned, but also places where the participants can go in person (e.g. centre for career planning, libraries etc.).

If the participants have already made a first career decision, even if it is still vague, they should research information and knowledge on these careers either in small groups or individually.

After the research, the information on the individual careers is collected and presented to the whole group, and the participants exchange experiences with the search processes (what was successful, how did it work for me etc.).

**Preparation/Material:** Flip chart, pens

**Notes:** The trainer should try to encourage especially young participants to go to places where they can get further information on careers and the labour market in person in order to avoid that the internet is the sole source of information. However, the trainer should encourage those participants who have little experience with the Internet to use the possibilities of information search offered by the Internet.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults after finishing their education; youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; adults

**Duration:** 5 hours

### 2.4.3 Activating Exhibition

**Theoretical Background:** Visually appealing, pictorial presentations encourage people to show openness, attention and curiosity. They convey the emotional messages of subjects and attract the eyes of people. Especially with subjects that have negative connotations (word associations) such as "vocational orientation/unemployment/career choice", presentations, pictures and symbols are appropriate means to deal with these subjects in an activating, positive manner and to discover "new possibilities" in a playful way.

**Social Form:** Small group work, whole group work

**Objective:** Labour market orientation; learning about new, so far unknown career and educational options

**Source:** Rabenstein, Reinhold/Reichel, René/Thanhoffer, Michael (2001b): Das Methoden-Set: 2. Themen bearbeiten. 11th edition. Münster, 2.B 31.

**Description:** In groups of 3 to 5, the participants prepare an "activating exhibition on new careers/training" that both presents the chosen occupational/educational sector and encourages visitors to show initiative. The participants are provided with the necessary information and presentation material. It is up to them what occupations they want to present within the given sector and how they want to organise their exhibition stands.

For the presentation, activating "methods" and forms of presentation should be used. If necessary, the trainer can be asked for advice in the preparation phase.

The mixture of contact with others, of moving from one exhibition stand to the other, of informing, of being invited to state ones position and to participate, of gaining insight into the occupational sector, of experiencing with all senses and of being encouraged to act – that is what makes an exhibition activating!

Afterwards the participants reflect on their impressions. What has stuck in their minds? How did they feel during this exercise? The trainer then briefly summarises the most important impressions.

**Preparation/Material:** Information material (brochures, articles, texts etc.), posters, flip charts, writing material etc.

**Notes:** The success of the exhibition largely depends on the interactivity of the exhibition stand and on how well the people in charge of the stands are able to make contact and communicate.

**Target Group:** All target groups

**Duration:** 4 hours (2 hours for preparation, 2 hours for the exhibition)

#### 2.4.4 Alternatives to the Dream Job

**Theoretical Background:** After the young participants have found out more about their dream jobs, this exercise will deal in great detail with their potentials and knowledge. Developing a realistic image of themselves, but also of the requirements of certain jobs, is an important step in personal development, as the foundation for promoting and using their strengths can be laid here. Finding alternatives to preferred job profiles means remaining open to new things – a challenge that employees are faced with for the rest of their professional lives in a labour market that is developing and changing faster and faster.

**Social Form:** Individual work

**Objective:** Developing individual alternatives to the dream job.

**Source:** Braun, Barbara/Hoffmann-Ratzmer, Diana/Lindemann, Nicole/Mauerhof, Johannes (2007): Die Job-Lokomotive. Ein Trainingsprogramm zur Berufsorientierung für Jugendliche. Weinheim und München: Juventa.

**Description:** This exercise should be preceded by an exercise dealing with the participants skills and interests as well as with their expectations of their dream jobs. By using the information on occupations

gathered before and by searching for training places online, the participants learn more about the respective job requirements. These are educational requirements (grades in individual subjects) as well as skills and knowledge (e.g. craftsmanship, PC knowledge, spatial ability).

The participants individual qualifications are compared to the requirements of companies found in job advertisements. If the personal qualifications do not match the requirements and differ significantly, the participants look for alternative careers together. For this purpose, they can use material from other exercises or other career information.

The participants write down alternative occupations. If they lack qualifications required for the vocational training, they should write down more alternatives.

**Preparation/Material:** Computer with Internet access; information material on careers; paper; pens; the participants are asked to bring it to the seminar together with their school certificates and other references

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; young migrants facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 1 hour

## 2.4.5 Qualifications Required in the Labour Market

**Theoretical Background:** Combining personal skills and interests with ways of putting them into practice in the labour market and this way matching ones qualifications with requirement profiles in the field of education and work is of central importance for one's career, but also for one's personal life. Job satisfaction does not only affect performance at work (caused by higher motivation and commitment), but also personal well-being as well as family life, leisure time and social life. If an individual follows an occupation that he/she considers meaningful, health problems (be they mental or physical) are less likely to occur. Thus, job satisfaction is not only of great importance from an individual's point of view, but also from an economic and health economic point of view. "Qualification matching" is designed to reflect on ones skills against the background of qualifications that are in demand.

**Social Form:** Small group work

**Objective:** Taking a closer look at ones "own" market; thinking about existing job requirements in the labour market; carrying out a personal "qualification matching" (To what extent do ones skills match the qualifications required in the labour market?); becoming aware of one's individual soft skills; avoiding being faced with excessive demands

**Source:** Developed by Martina Schubert and Karin Steiner for the measure „Jobcoaching für AkademikerInnen“ of the Public Employment Service Austria in 2000. In: Egger, Andrea/Simbürger, Elisabeth/Steiner, Karin (2003): Berufsorientierung im Fokus aktiver Arbeitsmarktpolitik. In: Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich (ed.): AMS report 37 (16, 51, 53–54, 67–68, 70). Wien, p. 53.

**Description:** The group is asked to divide into three smaller groups. By brainstorming, each group works on three kinds of skills:

1. Professional qualifications
2. Additional qualifications
3. Soft skills (social and personal competences)

The skills are collected on note cards. To support the participants, the trainer can provide them with newspapers containing job advertisements. Then the group members put up the cards on a pin board or magnet board to present and discuss them.

**Preparation/Material:** Note cards, pin boards, magnet boards, newspapers containing job advertisements

**Notes:** The exercise helps participants to think about what qualifications are required in the labour market. It is designed to encourage them to reflect on how their own skills match the qualifications required in the labour market. This will lead to a qualification matching on an individual level, as the participants become aware of the extent to which they meet the requirements. Successful matching can avoid frustration and the feeling that too much is demanded of them. The feeling of being overwhelmed by demands becomes an issue when a certain professional aim is pursued for reasons of prestige and income, but this aim cannot be achieved for lack of skills and aptitudes (consequences: no sense of achievement, frustration).

**Target Group:** All target groups

**Duration:** 1 hour

## 2.4.6 Career Decision Funnel: Preliminary Exercise I – Job Requirements

**Theoretical Background:** Careers require different skills and qualifications. Not every woman and not every man is equally suitable for each career. Career aspirations have to be in accordance with a person's knowledge, skills and strengths. If aspirations that fall outside the personal area of competence are still pursued, it will lead to failure and frustration. For that reason, it is necessary to check as soon as possible whether one's expectations of the "dream job" are realistic.

**Social Form:** Small group work, whole group work

**Objective:** Checking whether ones expectations of the "dream job" are realistic.

**Source:** Frass, Bernhard/Groyer, Hans (1993): Berufsplanung ist Lebensplanung. Eine Anleitung zur Berufsfindung für 10- bis 15jährige in Form eines durchorganisierten, systematisch aufgebauten Berufsfindungsprozesses. Volume 1. Wien, pp. 47/85.

**Description:** In small groups of 4 to 6 people, the participants are asked to write their dream jobs on a flip chart and add necessary skills as well as usual working conditions (e.g. overtime, shift work, pressure to perform).

The flip charts are then presented to the whole group and, if necessary, other participants or the trainer add to them. Afterwards the trainer can ask the participants which of the mentioned working conditions (and occupations) they would take into consideration.

**Preparation/Material:** Copied material (see attachment), flip charts

**Notes:** Careers are often connected to idealistic views and expectations. This idealisation mostly results from holding on to clichés and from a lack of insight into practice. This exercise is intended to help call into question and break stereotypes regarding "dream jobs". That way energy for realistic career aspirations can be released (in accordance with ones skills and aptitudes).

**Tip:** As an alternative the trainer can provide examples of jobs.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 2 hours

### 2.4.7 Career Decision Funnel: Preliminary Exercise II – Interviews with People in the Field

**Theoretical Background:** Determining career goals is one of the central aspects of vocational orientation. Reflecting on what occupation they should aim at and on what they have to do to achieve that aim, is necessary to be able to act in a goal-oriented way. For that reason, knowledge of the qualifications required in the labour market is needed in order to be able to assess to what extent their own potentials and competences match the requirement profiles existing in the labour market. Only a person who knows what qualifications, potentials, skills and interests a desired job requires, will be able to recognise his/her own aptitude for it and to know the way to get there.

**Social Form:** Pair work, interviews, whole group work

**Objective:** Learning about different occupations in practice; checking whether ones expectations of the "dream job" are realistic

**Source:** Frass, Bernhard/Groyer, Hans (1993): Berufsplanung ist Lebensplanung. Eine Anleitung zur Berufsfindung für 10- bis 15jährige in Form eines durchorganisierten, systematisch aufgebauten Berufsfindungsprozesses. Volume 1. Wien, p. 48; Winkler, Norbert (2000): Berufliche Mobilität (4.1, 6f, 13). In: Bundesministerium für Wissenschaft und Kunst (ed.): Materialien zur Berufsorientierung, 4. Wien, p. 62.

**Description:** Working in pairs, the participants are asked to find people (with the help of the trainers) with whom to conduct short interviews on their career choice and practical experience. For this purpose they can use the interview guide that can be found in the attachment.

The main points of the guided interviews are then written on posters based on the notes taken. All participants can read the information from the other participants' interviews and can ask questions. In addition, the participants can develop occupational profiles that cover the following aspects:

1. Description of the occupation
2. Detailed description of tasks to be carried out
3. Physical demands
4. Mental demands
5. Social requirements
6. Working hours

7. Possible income
8. Educational path, opportunities for further training or advancement
9. Employment opportunities – labour market situation

**Preparation/Material:** Posters, copied material (see attachment)

**Notes:** The exercise is intended to provide insight into different occupational fields by having the participants conduct interviews with people in the field. By developing certain occupational and job profiles the participants should become aware of their own skills and career goals. They are encouraged to reflect on what their future job should be like in order to meet their expectations. In addition, they should consider whether they have the necessary potential.

**Tip:** The trainers should make sure that the participants choose people with different occupations for their interviews.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; youths and young adults after finishing their education; adults

**Duration:** 2 hours

### 2.4.8 Ask the Expert

**Theoretical Background:** Communicating questions helps to become aware of one's lack of information. Only after the right questions have been asked, can a person obtain the "right" information.

**Social Form:** Small group work, whole group work

**Objective:** Interviewing experts; getting to know occupations; seeking information more consciously and specifically

**Source:** Rabenstein, Reinhold/Reichel, René/Thanhoffer, Michael (2001b): Das Methoden-Set: 2. Themen bearbeiten. 11th ed. Münster, 2.B 27.

**Description:** For this exercise one or more experts have to be invited according to the needs of the respective target group (e.g. personnel consultants, practitioners).

In a first step, the participants divide into small groups of 4 to 5 people. Each small group works out 5 to 10 questions that they would like to ask the expert(s) (duration: about 30–60 minutes depending on group size and number of experts).

Then the questioning starts as a sequence of questions and answers; the trainer acts as a moderator.

After that, the results of the interview can be discussed or summarised in the whole group.

Alternative: The participants themselves make contact with experts who they invite for an interview (in their circle of acquaintances, professional organisations, HR consulting company etc.). The trainer supports them in establishing contact or preparing for it.

**Preparation/Material:** Invited experts, paper, pens

**Notes:** The participants should already decide in the preparation stage who will ask the experts which questions. That way they can avoid that the flow of the question-answer process is interrupted.

**Target Group:** All target groups

**Duration:** 2 hours

### 2.4.9 A Day in the Life of a Student or Someone Who has my Dream Job

**Theoretical Background:** Individuals are sources of experiences and preferences for actions. These contexts of experiences and actions can be traced back to the area of the lifeworld that provides the totality of possible opportunities for action and realisation (cf. "Business cards with topics"). The interaction of one individual (ego) with another individual (alter ego) provides the interacting individuals with an opportunity to look beyond their own lifeworlds. By adopting each other's perspectives (putting themselves into the position of the "other I") they get the chance to gain insight into the lifeworlds of others, to learn about other experiences and behavioural patterns and to thereby expand their own horizon – without needing a great amount of time. The exercise is designed to open up new perspectives to the individual, as he/she learns about other preferences for action and corresponding requirement profiles that he/she can then adopt.

**Social Form:** Small group work, whole group work

**Objective:** Learning about other experiences by adopting another perspective; learning about different daily routines in the world of work and employment; dealing with the subject of "education and training versus occupation"

**Source:** Rathmanner, Elisabeth/Hodics, Heinz/Moldan, Sabine/Sauer, Helga (2005). In: Bundesministerium für Wissenschaft und Kunst (ed.): Materialien zur Berufsorientierung, 3. Alle Wege stehen offen. Wien, pp. 1f, 6ff, 9.1.

**Description:** In small groups of two or three, the participants are invited to choose a working person or a student and to determine with the aid of a time sheet what a typical day in this persons life looks like. They are supposed to record in detail how time is organised. Based on these notes they work out pressures and benefits of both areas (work and education). It is important that they also refer to required skills and attitudes to work. Among others the following questions can be answered:

- What do I need as a student/a working person to cope "well" with a day? What skills are required?
- When can a day be considered successful for a student or a working person?
- What does an ordinary year look like in this occupational or educational field?
- How much leisure time do I have?
- How am I going to organise my leisure time? Etc.

The participants are asked to present their results to the whole group and to write them on flip charts. That way each participant is able to reconstruct the daily routines of working people and of people in education and training. The aim is to work out the pros and cons of working or further education and training as well as to discuss them with the invited guests.



**Preparation/Material:** The trainer invites representatives "from the field" (students, working people etc.); flip charts

**Notes:** This method is designed to compare the paths of "occupation" and "education" and to reflect on one's personal aptitude for them. By working out the daily routines, participants can learn about the corresponding requirements (e.g. concentration, stamina, being quick on the uptake etc. when studying).

**Tip:** The trainer is advised to invite the representatives "from the field" (students, working people etc.) based on the participants career goals. For that reason, it is necessary that the trainer finds out about the participants career goals in advance (see other methods on "Vocational information, information management, labour market orientation").

**Target Group:** Job changers, people in the course of vocational reorientation; youths and young adults facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 2 hours

## 2.4.10 Being a Career Counsellor for Once

**Theoretical Background:** The individuals attempt to reach higher goals in the long term and to hold a certain social position is called "life planning". The ways in which these goals can be achieved are conceived as "paths through life" and differ in their course and succession depending on preceding events and decisions. This exercise is designed to show participants different routes to their goals. Paths are not always straight. It is often the winding path that leads to the goal.

**Social Form:** Individual work, pair work, role play or simulation game, whole group work

**Objective:** Exploring career options; recognising potential dead ends; working with one's career aspirations; recognising contradictions

**Source:** Bican-Zehetbauer, Margarete/Kender, Hannelore (2001). In: Bundesministerium für Wissenschaft und Kunst (ed.): Materialien zur Berufsorientierung, 5. Lebensläufe haben (K)ein Geschlecht (18.1., 20.1, 39). Wien, 18.1.

### Description:

First Session: In pairs, the participants act out a career counselling situation. First they interview the partner to find out about his/her current career aspiration as well as about personal attitudes and expectations. Each participant receives a questionnaire with the following questions:

- What career do you currently want to pursue?
- What education/training do you need for it? How long does it take?
- What requirements do you have to fulfil?
- Where will you be able to work having with this qualification? Also name the fields in which you would not like to work at the moment.
- How much are you going to earn approximately?
- What related occupations do you know?
- What further training opportunities do you have?

- What promotion prospects are there?
- What are the usual working hours in this occupation?
- Do you want to have a partner one day with whom you live? Do you want to have children? Who will look after the children?
- Imagine you and your partner separate. How are you going to organise child care?
- Do you think that this job will allow you to take care of your children?
- What do you want to do in your leisure time?
- Are your ideas of personal and professional life compatible or will you have to go without something?

Afterwards each participant tries to obtain information material on the current chosen career of his/her partner (Note: This especially concerns the questions to which the partner could not find satisfactory answers.). Apart from written material, the participants are provided with telephone numbers of different career information centres and other local counselling centres where they can ask for information.

Second Session: In the next session, the participants look through the collected material and discuss it together with their partners. Then they are invited to each present their personal career on a poster. They are supposed to draw a path with different stops, crossroads, dead ends, obstacles etc. The posters are put up in the room so that the other participants can look at them. In the end, a discussion can be held dealing with, for example, the following questions (reflection stage):

- For which occupations have many different paths been found, for which only a few?
- Which occupations provide many different job opportunities and which occupations only a few?
- For which occupations do many further training opportunities exist?
- In which occupations do you earn enough to be able to pay for children and leisure time activities?

**Preparation/Material:** Questionnaires, posters, writing material; if necessary photos, brochures, newspaper clippings.

**Notes:** The aim of the exercise is to find many possibilities for the chosen occupation; that means participants should also draw paths on "their posters" that have been rejected by the participants. Instead of working with their personal career aspirations, participants can also work with occupations that are either selected by the trainer or that they draw from a collection of occupations.

**Tip:** The participants can design their pictures as they wish and add different materials (e.g. photos, material from brochures etc.).

**Target Group:** All target groups

**Duration:** 3 hours

### 2.4.11 My Ideal Working Environment

**Theoretical Background:** A job is not only necessary to make a living, but it also has a shaping influence on our lives. This becomes apparent, above all, in terms of time, as working hours take up a significant part of a person's life time in the Western world. Apart from economic needs, work also meets the needs for

establishing a sense of identity, making life meaningful and for contact with others. Satisfaction with the chosen job depends on individual interests and aptitudes, but also on working conditions and job requirements.

**Social Form:** Individual work, whole group work

**Objective:** The participants should think about what the future working conditions under which they would like to work should be like. The participants should listen to their "inner voice" and reflect on what their career or occupation should be like to meet all their wishes. The exercise is based on the idea that clearly formulated goals increase the chance of reaching those goals and thus also improves future job satisfaction.

**Source:** Bican-Zehetbauer, Margarete/Kender, Hannelore (2001). In: Bundesministerium für Wissenschaft und Kunst (ed.): Materialien zur Berufsorientierung, 5. Lebensläufe haben (K)ein Geschlecht. Wien, p. 39; Winkler, Norbert (2000): Berufliche Mobilität. In: Bundesministerium für Wissenschaft und Kunst (ed.): Materialien zur Berufsorientierung, 4. Wien, p. 57.

**Description:** The participants receive handouts with the following questions that they are asked to reflect on individually – regardless of how they assess their personal opportunities in reality:

- Do I want to be employed or self-employed?
- Do I want fixed or flexible working hours?
- Do I want to have a routine job or a job that keeps presenting new challenges?
- Do I want to make my own decisions or do I prefer to work according to detailed instructions?
- Do I want to have a lot of contact with customers, suppliers and partner companies or do I prefer to work in the back office?
- Do I want to communicate, make phone calls, negotiate and sell or do I prefer to work on difficult problems on my own?
- Do I enjoy planning or do I prefer to implement plans (made by others)?
- Do I want to work in a big or in a small company?
- How much money do I need to earn at least to survive?
- How much money do I want to earn to be able to live comfortably?
- Do I want to have a job with good promotion prospects?

The participants are asked to determine their priorities on the basis of these questions and represent them in the form of a pie on a separate sheet of flip chart paper. The top priority gets the biggest slice of the pie, the lowest priority the smallest slice. Unimportant things are not mentioned at all. The participants have 20 minutes to complete this task. After the individual work the flip charts are presented to the group.

**Alternative 1:** Another possibility is to have the participants create a friend pie and an anger pie regarding the topic of work.

**Alternative 2:** As an alternative, an exercise on the personal dream job can be carried out that aims at overstepping the limits of real constraints in order to get a bit closer to ones dreams. This is especially advisable when participants think their occupational opportunities are limited because of their level of education or their age.

In the attachment you will find an example of what the priority pie could look like.

**Preparation/Material:** Handout with questions, flip-chart paper

**Notes:** Very large groups (>12 participants) can be divided in two so that the presentations do not take too much time.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; youths and young adults after finishing their education

**Duration:** 1 hour 30 minutes

### 2.4.12 My Interests

**Theoretical Background:** Deciding on a career is a process in which careers are taken into consideration, examined, weighed, dismissed, then taken into consideration again etc. It is a continuous "reduction process" regarding ones interests and expectations that is continued until a decision for an educational/occupational field is made that most matches the individual interests and expectations. This exercise is designed to identify ones interests in order to then be able to decide which careers can be taken into consideration and which are out of the question.

**Social Form:** Individual work

**Objective:** Shortlisting of jobs; making participants aware of what they like and do not like in the chosen occupations

**Source:** Glaubitz, Uta (1999): Der Job, der zu mir passt. Das eigene Berufsziel entdecken und erreichen. Frankfurt/New York, p. 64f.

**Description:** The participants write occupations they are interested in on a sheet of paper or a poster and make the three columns "occupation", "What I especially like about it", "What I do not like about it". In a first step, they are asked to write down occupations they contemplated when reflecting on their professional career. At the end, the participants select and highlight with a coloured pen the occupations of which they like the most aspects and dislike the least.

The sheets or posters can be put up in the room and looked at by the others. Then the whole group can discuss them.

**Preparation/Material:** Posters, paper, writing material

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; youths and young adults after finishing their education; young migrants facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 4 hours

### 2.4.13 Mr President Is Looking for a Bodyguard

**Theoretical Background:** Many careers present much more challenges and require much more effort than public opinion assumes. Young people are especially at risk of rather uncritically reproducing common images from various media. So public figures, for example, appear worthy of imitation to young people who for the most part are not aware of all the consequences of such a position. Using the example of the bodyguard and the model, participants are asked to challenge requirements, aptitudes and consequences of these occupational images - also with regard to stereotypical images of masculinity and femininity.

**Social Form:** Small group work, whole group work

**Objective:** Dealing with the subject of requirements of and aptitude for a career.

**Source:** Schabacker-Bock, Marlis/Marquard, Markus (2005): Von der Schule in den Beruf, Trainingsmaterial zur Berufsvorbereitung von HauptschülerInnen, p. 27; adapted by abif.

**Description:** This exercise should encourage participants to give thought to the fact that careers require certain qualifications and aptitudes. The two careers of a bodyguard and a model are used to get started with the subject. The participants are asked to think about the qualities a bodyguard or a model need for their jobs. As a first step, four groups are formed. There is a choice of 4 roles:

- President looking for a bodyguard
- Bodyguard looking for a job
- Model agency looking for a model for a cover picture
- Model looking for a good contract

The participants are asked to develop requirement and aptitude profiles using the handouts (see attachment): The task starts with drawing a figure on a poster. The participants then add qualities needed for the job. Afterwards the results are presented to the whole group. It can be discussed to what extent the requirement profile corresponds to the aptitude profile.

**Preparation/Material:** Copies of the handouts (see attachment), pens

**Notes:** This game uses gender stereotypes. The two careers (bodyguard and model) convey clichéd ideas. But as working with these two job profiles is fun for young people, trainers can draw on that method in the important introduction stage. However, the gender stereotypes should be addressed in the group discussion. The game can also be carried out with every other occupation or with reversed roles (male model, female bodyguard).

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; young migrants facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 45 minutes

### 2.4.14 Prejudices against Occupations

**Theoretical Background:** Young people often lack concrete knowledge of the tasks they have to perform in certain occupational sectors. Due to this lack of knowledge, young people's reflections on career choice are based on prejudices and stereotypes. For that reason, they do not include certain occupational fields in their decision-making process and in the end often choose a traditional, mostly overcrowded educational path where apprenticeship places or jobs are scarce. Other occupational fields or careers, however, involve tasks and fields of activity similar to their dream jobs. And career opportunities could be much better.

**Social Form:** Individual work, role play or simulation game

**Objective:** Revealing prejudices and subjective beliefs about popular and unpopular occupational fields.

**Source:** Petermann, Franz/Petermann, Ulrike (2007): Training mit Jugendlichen – Aufbau von Arbeits- und Sozialverhalten, pp. 89f; adapted by abif.

**Description:** The participants are asked to think about what occupations they find especially attractive and what occupations they particularly dislike. For the most popular and least popular occupational group, the participants and the trainer prepare a role play. The role play deals with the first minutes in the work day of an apprentice in which the job assignment for the day is given. In the first role play the trainer plays the boss and in the second round one of the participants takes on that role. The role play should be performed as a real play that is not only verbally, but also nonverbally with getting up, gestures, facial expressions and performing actions.

When one of the participants plays the boss who assigns the tasks, it might turn out that the young person knows rather little about the tasks in that occupational field and responds according to his/her subjective belief. Prejudices could surface. After the role play the group can discuss these prejudices. If there is still enough time, the same role play can be carried out with the participants dream jobs.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; young migrants facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 2 hours

### 2.4.15 Salad of Occupations – Learning about Occupational Fields

**Theoretical Background:** An individual's opportunity for development and future prospects largely depend on his/her creative potentials. Creativity (Latin) means creative power and ability to analyse and shape ones environment in an original way. It constitutes the driving force for independently making ones own decisions and for progress. In the career decision process, creativity is above all understood as the ability to (re)orient oneself under certain conditions. Developing individual solutions – matched to personal skills, preferences and interests – and working out several options for action are a prerequisite for being able to cope with a "problem" on ones own. As people do not always have the means necessary to reach the goals they aim for, flexibility is needed to be able to actively manage their personal journey through life.

**Social Form:** Small group work, individual work, whole group work

**Objective:** Learning about occupational fields; encouraging flexibility in career choice (What careers are right for me?); working on individual career opportunities; reorientation

**Source:** Rathmanner, Elisabeth/Hodics, Heinz/Moldan, Sabine/Sauer, Helga (2001): Berufesalat, Kennenlernen von Berufsfeldern. In Bundesministerium für Wissenschaft und Kunst (ed.): Materialien zur Berufsorientierung, 2. Berufsorientierungsprozess. Wien, 18.2.

**Description:** The trainer projects a prepared transparency/slide onto the wall. (Note: Each participant should also get this transparency in hard copy.) The transparency shows the outline of a bowl that contains a "word salad" of 50 words. The 50 words describe and outline the required qualifications and fields of activity of ten occupations.

The participants are invited to put the word salad in order by first finding the 10 occupations and then the matching terms (four words) and writing them on the worksheet. After that, the participants are asked to think about with which of the listed occupations they identify the most.

In small groups (of 3 to 4 people), they compare their results. They bring forward arguments why they matched which term to which occupation. Then the participants are asked to brainstorm the question: "What occupations, apart from the occupational fields identified (see transparency), have similar requirements?" (5 to 10 minutes). The aim is that based on this brainstorming participants recognise occupational fields that require skills/qualifications similar to the ones required by the mentioned 10 occupations. (Where are differences/overlaps in the requirement profiles?). Then the small groups work out possible career alternatives for each group member.

The spokespersons of the small groups present the occupational fields they worked out and the corresponding requirement profiles to the whole group. They discuss them together with the trainer and the other participants (reflection stage).

**Preparation/Material:** Copies, transparencies

**Notes:** This method is designed to encourage creativity. The ability to find various solutions to problems that are new when considering prior knowledge helps to consider new career possibilities (alternative strategies). The group discussion about possible occupational fields makes it easier for the participants to consciously deal with the problem and to consider various (new) solutions instead of giving way to resignation. Brainstorming in the group provides the opportunity of coming up with many ideas (stream of ideas) and solutions (flexibility) as fast as possible. In addition, the interaction in the group makes participants aware of how they are perceived by others. By working on career possibilities together, the perspective of the alter ego becomes evident (How do others see me?).

**Tip:** It is important that the "salad of occupations" is adapted to the needs of the participants: for example, careers requiring a university degree for university graduates; occupations that require an apprenticeship for soon-to-be apprentices etc. Thus it is advisable that the trainer finds out about the participants educational background or career aspirations in advance.

**Target Group:** Job changers, people in the course of vocational reorientation; long-term unemployed people; youths and young adults after finishing their education

**Duration:** 2 hours

### 2.4.16 Working with Texts

**Theoretical Background:** People in the process of choosing a career try to fill individual information gaps and make up for a lack of orientation. For many people increasing the level of information on possible educational and career paths, on working conditions and job profiles etc. provides the foundation for being able to make an informed career choice. In today's society, people are exposed to a wealth of information. In order to avoid sensory overload, they only selectively receive stimuli. This exercise is designed for participants to learn how to pick out those features and points in the text that are essential for the description of the whole. The method helps to focus on what is essential.

**Social Form:** Individual work, brainstorming in the whole group

**Objective:** Learning how to deal with information material efficiently in order to find ones way in the information jungle.

**Source:** Rabenstein, Reinhold/Reichel, René/Thanhoffer, Michael (2001b): Das Methoden-Set, 2. Themen bearbeiten, 11th ed. Münster, 2.B 13.

**Description:** The participants receive a text that describes an interesting occupation. They read it individually, take notes and make signs next to passages in the text:

*? unclear* (What is unclear to me? Write down the question.)

*! important* (aha experience)

*-> additional comment* (I would like to get further information here and why? I would like to talk about this in greater detail.)

Afterwards the whole group brainstorms using information that "stuck" in their minds. They reflect on why they remembered the mentioned information and did not remember other information. Participants are also invited to ask questions according to their signs in the text in order to clarify things that are unclear.

**Preparation/Material:** Prepared text (with a wide margin for notes), writing material.

**Notes:** This method is designed to teach participants how to work with texts. Summarising, structuring, condensing and understanding information in written form is necessary to handle the wealth of information material on the subject of "vocational orientation". Only by efficiently working with texts are the participants able to get the gist of a text and to relate relevant information to their own person.

**Tip:** The text should describe in prose form the occupation, the tasks, the physical, social and psychological requirements, the working conditions, possible income, further training opportunities, promotion prospects, working hours etc. The text should not be too long in order to not lose the participants attention (reading time: 15 minutes at the maximum).

**Target Group:** All target groups

**Duration:** 1 hour



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## 2.5 Analysis of Potential

### 2.5.1 Career Decision Funnel – Second Floor: Areas of Aptitude – What Are my Skills?

**Theoretical Background:** Careers have certain requirement profiles and require certain skills. The personal areas of aptitude (classification of qualities according to the criteria physical, mental, social and psychological) determine the aptitude for a certain job. This exercise helps participants to identify their own skills in order to then carry out skills matching (To what extent do personal aptitudes match qualifications required in the labour market?). This way, desired careers that require skills a person does not possess can be eliminated.

**Social Form:** Small group work, individual work, pair work

**Objective:** Reflecting on individual skills; identifying areas of aptitude; comparing self-perception and perception by others

**Source:** Frass, Bernhard/Groyer, Hans (1994): Berufsplanung ist Lebensplanung. Vol. 2. Wien, pp. 40f.

**Description:** The participants receive a handout with areas of aptitude (see attachment). On the handout they mark the qualities that apply to them.

After that, the participants get together in their interest groups (see exercise "Career decision funnel – First Floor") and discuss which aptitudes are required for which occupations and, if necessary, ask the trainer for help. Then they examine which of their skills match the already selected occupations/occupational fields.

In pairs, all the occupations that the participants have come up with for themselves in step 1 (cf. "Career decision funnel – First Floor") are examined for the required skills. That way a number of selected occupations are no longer relevant.

**Preparation/Material:** Handout

**Notes:** The exercise is designed as continuation of the exercise "Career decision funnel – First Floor" and as preliminary to the exercise "Career decision funnel – Third Floor". It can also be carried out as an exercise dealing with self-perception and perception by others in order to be better able to recognise blind spots.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 1 hour

### 2.5.2 My Portfolio

**Theoretical Background:** This exercise is based on methods used in competence assessment, and by using a simple form of presentation it provides a good overview of one's profile.

**Social Form:** Individual work

**Objective:** Step-by-step the participants put down in writing insights they gained about themselves in the vocational orientation process so that they have a good overview of their own profile in the end.

**Source:** This exercise is based on the A.D.V.P. model of vocational training (Activation du développement vocationnel et personnel – Activation of Vocational and Personal Development).

**Description:** The trainer distributes the worksheet "My portfolio" that shows a diagram consisting of 6 fields. The fields are called: My values/My personality traits/My preferred working conditions/My skills/My knowledge/My interests. These terms are discussed in the group and a common understanding is generated.

The trainer invites the participants to keep entering results that fit into the 6 fields in the course of the vocational orientation process, for example after an exercise. That way each participant creates a document in the course of the vocational orientation process by adding to it as they go along in order to memorise and at the same time put down in writing everything that he/she becomes aware of in terms of self-knowledge and that strikes them. This document provides an overview of what is important to the participant and what he/she wants to place special emphasis on in his/her professional development.

**Preparation/Material:** Worksheet "My portfolio" (see attachment)

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults after finishing their education; adults

**Duration:** as required

### 2.5.3 I'm Getting the Picture

**Theoretical Background:** Young people often only have a vague idea of what skills and competences are required for their dream jobs. In the past they have also given little thought to in how far their skills match occupational requirements. When it comes to painting a more realistic picture of job requirements, it is important, especially for girls, not to make them feel insecure. Girls already tend to underestimate their own skills and often find it difficult to state their strengths. For that reason, this method is designed to consciously work with the participants strengths and to think about how they can use them in their dream jobs. Only in a second step, strategies will be developed to acquire any professional skills they might be lacking.

**Social Form:** Small group work, individual work

**Objective:** Researching the requirements of ones desired career and comparing them with ones skills (matching); increasing self-confidence

**Source:** Tüchthuisen, Ruth/Böckenhüser, Erich (1996): Elly und Erno. Köln, pp. 35–36.

**Description:** Each participant knows her career aspirations and writes the respective occupation "and I" (e.g. "Electrician and I", "Accountant and I") as a title on a large poster. The participants divide into pairs. One after the other, each participant lies down on her own poster and the partner traces the outline with a thick green felt tip pen (then the other way round). After that, they add faces (eyes, nose, mouth, ears) to the pictures. Then the participants individually work on their posters researching competences and skills necessary for their desired careers in career information materials and on the Internet and formulating what is expected from them in those jobs.

The trainer asks the participants to write the expectations and requirements they have researched around the edge of the drawn outline with a red pen. Each expectation should be written next to the corresponding part of the body, e.g. "dexterous" next to the hands, "communicative" at the level of the mouth, "slim" next to the waist etc. The trainer asks the participants to name a few examples. Then they continue to work on their own.

Next, the participants are asked to reflect on their qualities and skills and to write them inside the outline into the corresponding part of the body using a blue pen. At this point, the trainer should emphasise that the participants often are not aware of their strengths. They are encouraged to consider to what extent they need and use certain skills in their daily life at school or work. Competences that are found that way are also written on the poster.

After that, the completed posters are put up in the room and all participants get the opportunity to calmly look at the pictures. Then all participants present their posters. After the presentations the trainer initiates a discussion about expectations. She/He asks which requirements from the outside correspond to qualities and skills that the participants attribute to themselves. Here it is important that the trainer does not make the participants feel insecure, but that she/he emphasises their strengths and at the same time discusses with them in how far they match the job profile (or what occupational alternatives there are).

In the end, the participants are asked to think about how they can use their strengths in their professional lives and to develop strategies for acquiring skills and qualifications they are lacking. These thoughts are written down on the worksheet. In the application stage the notes on "strengths" can be used as a basis for writing a job application and for the job interview.

**Preparation/Material:** Poster for each participant (0.60 x 1.80 m), thick red, green and blue felt tip pens, adhesive tape, career information materials, worksheets

**Notes:** If participants abandon their original dream job in the course of the exercise, they should look for alternatives and then again compare requirements and their own skills (only on paper this time) as well as develop strategies for acquiring competences and write them down on the worksheet.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 3 hours

## 2.5.4 My Learning Experiences

**Theoretical Background:** The concept of learning experiences is connected with the notion of lifelong learning: Apart from school and initial training that offer an education in the classical sense, there will be a lot of other contexts in the course of life that provide learning opportunities. Learning experiences include all skills, knowledge and/or competencies that an individual has acquired or is able to demonstrate at the end of a formal or non-formal learning process. Formal learning is learning that generally occurs in an education or training institution that is structured (in terms of objectives, time or learning support) and leads to certification. Formal learning is intentional from the learner's point of view. Non-formal learning is learning that does not occur in an educational or vocational training institution and usually does not lead to certification. Nonetheless it is systematic (in terms of objectives, time or resources). Non-formal learning is intentional from the learner's point of view.

**Social Form:** Small group work, individual work, pair work

**Objective:** Listing previous learning experiences and making acquired competencies and knowledge visible and verifiable.

**Source:** The definitions are taken from the glossary "Terminology of European education and training policy" published by Cedefop: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/publications/13125.aspx> [March 20, 2012]. This method is based on initiatives recommended in the context of preparing competence portfolios or education portfolios (an example in French is available for download at: <http://www.passeportformation.eu/>).

**Description:** In the beginning, the participants list all learning experiences they have had in the course of their lives using the worksheet "Taking stock of formal and non-formal learning experiences".

Before this stocktaking it can be helpful to discuss the concepts of education or knowledge and competence acquisition with the participants. For this purpose, the trainer can initiate group brainstorming on the following questions: *"Where and how can you acquire knowledge and competencies? What examples and situations in which you can learn something can you think of?"* The aim is that the participants do not only think of formal, but also of non-formal educational processes.

The trainer writes down the mentioned examples and classifies them into the following categories:

- "Initial education and training": compulsory education and continuing education before starting to work;
- "Continuing education and training": any education received in the context of the present occupation or as preparation of a project for career development (on or off the job);
- "Others": a collection of other forms of training that took more or less time and that led to the acquisition of knowledge and competencies that can be used in daily life, during leisure time or in professional life.

If the mentioned examples are confined to a concept of education that only includes initial education or continuing education and training, the trainer can guide the discussion in such a way that other examples are brought up: drivers licence, first aid course, work experience as group leader in leisure centres, computer course, language course, art courses etc.

After taking stock of formal and non-formal learning experiences, these experiences should be analysed in detail. The participants receive the worksheet "Analysis of learning experiences".

The worksheet supports them in collecting the knowledge and qualifications they acquired during the learning experience in detail as well as in gathering evidence that documents these learning experiences.

It can be helpful if the trainer uses a learning example suggested by a volunteer to demonstrate how the questions on the worksheet are to be used in order to analyse the respective learning experiences. It can also be helpful to first concentrate on three learning experiences. After having filled in the worksheet "Analysis of learning experiences", the participants form pairs and describe their learning experiences to each other as well as the learning outcomes they identified. The person listening takes on the role of the active questioner in order to make it easier for the other person to explain the experience. The person talking should write down aspects that seem important to her/him and that might have been mentioned. Each participant could continue this analysis at a later time and examine other learning experiences, depending on what could be relevant to his/her job search.

The results of this exercise can be the basis of potential occupational profiles or can serve as useful arguments in application processes (in the curriculum vitae, cover letter, job interview etc.). The participants can continue to work with the results as the case may be.

**Preparation/Material:** Worksheet "Taking stock of formal and non-formal learning experiences" and worksheet "Analysis of learning experiences".

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults after finishing their education; adults

**Duration:** 3 hours

### 2.5.5 Analysis of Potential: "What Are my Hidden Talents?"

**Theoretical Background:** A person who pursues a professional career that does not take into account his/her own skills and potentials stifles his/her creativity. But it is not only that: Denying oneself and pretending to be someone else requires strength and energy. This often leads to crises, burnout and fatigue. In contrast, people often are at their best when they use and realise their potentials and skills. The aim of this exercise is for participants to identify their competences and skills in order to be able to set their sights on a suitable career. On top of that, they learn how to convincingly communicate special skills.

**Social Form:** Individual work

**Objective:** Identifying talents and skills that one often is not aware of.

**Source:** Hesse, Jürgen/Schrader, Hans Christian (2006): Was steckt wirklich in mir? Frankfurt am Main, pp. 63ff.

**Description:** The participants underline those words that, according to them, characterise their skills (see attachment). They are asked to add further skills that they think are missing in the list. The participants then choose ten skills with which they feel most comfortable. They should proceed as follows:

- Find and write down other expressions that are similar to the underlined skills.
- Write down five possible fields of application (or already realised applications) per skill (Find at least 50 examples).

From these 50 examples they pick 25 skills to which the following statements apply:

- "I would enjoy using these skills."
- "I have professional or personal experiences with this skill in a certain area."
- "I would like to improve this skill."

If these statements apply, the participants write the respective skills down in a list (see attachment for an example).

**Preparation/Material:** Handout, paper and pens

**Notes:** There are rather simple and more complex skills within the different categories. It is important that participants become aware that their creative scope for action is limited (e.g. by instructions of the employer) if they only claim simple skills. The higher the degree of "skilfulness", the more room a person has for realising his/her ideas. And the higher the transferable skills are rated, the more liberties a person will have in his/her job. The trainer should draw the participants' attention to this.

**Tip:** For this exercise the trainer should be as experienced as possible, that means familiar with the labour market situation and different occupations in order to be able to support participants with advice in their search for a career.

**Target Group:** Job changers; people in the course of vocational reorientation; youths and young adults facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 2 hours

## 2.5.6 Singing One's Own Praises

**Theoretical Background:** Young people – especially girls – find it difficult to talk about themselves, their skills and strengths and to assess them correctly. In the application situation, however, it is important for them to have a clear idea of themselves and their positive qualities in particular. With this method, participants can practice positive self-presentation in a playful manner.

**Social Form:** Individual work, pair work, whole group work

**Objective:** Practicing positive self-presentation and reflecting on gender-specific differences.

**Source:** <http://www.gendernow.at/gesebo> [January 30, 2008].

**Description:** The aim of this exercise is that the participants hold a two-minute "speech in praise of themselves". The trainer explains this aim and also the purpose of this exercise: In most cases, girls are good at talking about their weaknesses, but find it very difficult to talk about their strengths. This often leads to low self-esteem. Even though it is often considered "pretentious", it is essential to have an image

of oneself with both ones weaknesses and ones strengths. In the world of work - e.g. in job interviews - it is very important to be able to describe oneself in such terms.

After the trainers introduction, the participants individually think about (for 10 to 15 minutes) what positive qualities they see in themselves and write down these strengths, competences, skills, and maybe even successes - thus preparing a "cheat sheet" for their speech.

As a next step, the participants hold their laudatory speeches in front of the group. The speeches should not take longer than two minutes.

The trainer observes the speakers and tries to make mental notes of what attracts particular attention (Careful: Taking notes can be perceived as assessment!). Which skills are mentioned by girls and by boys? Which skills are not mentioned although they exist? Are there any differences?

*Follow-up:* In the whole group, the trainer asks the participants how they felt during their speeches. What was pleasant? What was unpleasant? If the trainer has noticed something in particular, he/she addresses it and discusses it with the participants: Are there differences between the skills girls and boys attribute to themselves? If yes, what are these attributions based on? If girls, for example, rather attributed social skills to themselves and boys, for example, craftsmanship, this should be questioned.

*Alternative:* In pairs, the participants could write down positive qualities of their partners. Each participant should then hold the "laudatory speech" that was written about her/him.

**Notes:** The trainer should explain to the participants that the speeches are not assessed. He/She should try to give a playful touch to the whole exercise in order to reduce inhibitions.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 1 hour

### 2.5.7 Weekly Schedule

**Theoretical Background:** If career and family become essential life tasks, the previous daily and weekly routine has to be adapted. This change often requires radical reorganisation. At any rate, the basis for a comprehensive change is the detailed assessment of the status quo.

**Social Form:** Individual work, whole group discussion

**Objective:** Becoming aware of one's time management; developing alternative models of organising time

**Source:** Hopson, Barrie/Mike Scally (2004): Build Your Own Rainbow. A Workbook for Career and Life Management. Management Books 2000 Ltd. Gloucestershire, pp. 25f.

**Description:** The participants fill in a weekly schedule. A precise division of time enables participants to name concrete activities, which should make them aware of their actual use of time. Then the participants think about whether the previous week has been typical of their life or not.

In a next step, the activities are subsumed under certain roles (e.g. cooking, doing the laundry, cleaning = housewife). The different roles that the participants assume are ranked according to the amount of time they take up in their lives. Since some roles overlap (e.g. if a participant goes jogging with her friend on a regular basis, she is both friend and sportsperson during that time), the total amount might exceed 100%.

In a third step, the participants discuss their satisfaction with the respective roles and the time they spend in them. Hopson and Scally (2004, p. 95) use a system of five stars (based on the hotel categories) for the rating.

If necessary this can be followed by a discussion in small groups or in the whole group. Participants can discuss how they could change their weekly schedules according to their personal wishes and possibilities. The issue of compatibility can be addressed: Who takes on tasks (e.g. child care) that can no longer be performed because of the lack of time that results from pursuing a career? Do new priorities have to be set after entering employment? Templates for the schedules and the rating system can be found in the attachment.

**Preparation/Material:** Handouts of the weekly schedule, time analysis and stars for the rating

**Notes:** It is advisable to take the last week as a reference period because memories are still fresh. The trainer can also ask the participants to fill in the weekly schedule as a daily task in the evening so that the division of time can almost be recorded in "real time". So the filling in can also be done as homework.

**Target Group:** People returning to the labour market

**Duration:** 2 hours

## 2.5.8 The Key to Success Lies in Myself

**Theoretical Background:** Each person has special skills and personal strengths. Non-work experiences are also important sources to identify interests and skills. Becoming aware of ones strengths and skills is of central importance in the field of vocational orientation especially for unemployed people and people returning to the labour market, as it increases their self-esteem that might have been badly affected. Our own perception is not objective; it helps us see things as we want to see them. For that reason it is important to compare our image of ourselves with feedback from our environment.

**Social Form:** Individual work, whole group work

**Objective:** Version 1: Reflecting on qualifications and strengths; getting inspiration from other participants to follow different occupations; practice creativity; comparing one's self-image with how one is perceived by others; Version 2: Reflecting on competencies and strengths; becoming aware of or calling to mind ones wealth of experience; comparing ones self-image with how one is perceived by others.

**Source:** Version 1: Winkler, Norbert (2000): Berufliche Mobilität (4.1, 6f, 13). In: Bundesministerium für Wissenschaft und Kunst (ed.): Materialien zur Berufsorientierung, 4. Wien, pp. 50f. Version 2: Based on the A.D.V.P. model of vocational training (Activation du développement vocationnel et personnel – Activation of Vocational and Personal Development). The model was developed by Denis Pelletier, Charles Bujold and Gilles Noiseux in Quebec in the early 1970ies.



**Description:**

Version 1: All participants receive pens and posters to draw a tree with roots. They write formally acquired qualifications (school qualifications, university degree etc.) into the roots. Into the trunk they write their personal, social, intellectual and physical strengths. The tree trunk is left open on the top so that the other participants are able to add branches. Then the posters are put up or spread in the room. All participants walk around with pens in their hands, add branches to the trees and label them with (occupational) activities that could grow from the respective qualifications and strengths. In the end each participant looks at his/her poster again and tells the others with which activities he/she can identify and with which he/she cannot identify. At that point they can also ask each other how these associations came about. It is essential that the feedback rules are observed and that participants do not comment (negatively) on the associations.

Version 2: The trainer asks the participants to recall three to five work or non-work experiences that they consider successful. These experiences are written on a poster using one keyword each. It is advisable to explicitly point out that the participants do not have to confine themselves to certain (e.g. occupational or educational) experiences, but that they can and should also include personal/private successful experiences (sports, voluntary work, hobbies etc.).

Then the participants are asked to reflect on why they consider these experiences a success. They write down their thoughts on the posters. If necessary the trainer can offer help.

For each experience the participants should then find out what personal competencies were crucial for success (personal strengths and qualities, knowledge/know-how, other experiences etc.).

In a next step, the whole group reflects on and adds to the results. For this purpose, the trainer asks a first volunteer to describe a personal success. The participant explains why he/she considers this experience successful and what competencies were crucial for it. The other participants listen without interrupting. Only after he/she has finished, the other participants are allowed to ask questions and make comments to support the person in explaining his/her experience and competencies.

Depending on group size, the participants can continue to work in the whole group or in small groups (2 to 3 people). When working in small groups, it has to be ensured that each person gets enough time to present and analyse their chosen successes. It is essential that the feedback rules are observed and that comments are not judgemental.

**Preparation/Material:** Pens, posters, (pin boards)

**Notes:** Version 1: In this exercise, activities could be mentioned that the creators of the trees of strengths do not like. For that reason it is important to ask the participants after the brainstorming which activities they can and cannot "accept". The participants can also give reasons for that. As becoming aware of their own strengths is an essential part of this exercise, the participants should have enough time for that.

**Target Group:** Older people; people returning to the labour market; unemployed adults; youths and young adults after finishing their education

**Duration:** 3 hours

### 2.5.9 My Activities and Their Evaluation

**Theoretical Background:** This method is based on methods that are used in the assessment of skills and in the preparation of competence portfolios.

**Social Form:** Individual work

**Objective:** Analysing and assessing one's own competencies and motivating factors.

**Source:** Developed by Itinéraires Formation

**Description:** The trainer asks the participants to analyse in depth their previous work experience. He/She explains that this analysis can deal with previous work activities, but also with (present or previous) non-work activities that are relevant because of the competencies the participants acquired in them.

Each participant receives a table with 7 columns entitled "My activities and their evaluation" (see attachment) and the trainer explains how to fill it in.

- The first column (Duration) contains the duration of this activity. It is not essential to state the exact dates, but the participants should write down how long this activity took.
- In the second column (Function) the participants write down what the function was called and briefly describe it.
- In the third column (Company) the participants should describe the company for which they worked: name of the company, size, sector, type of company (private, public, association ...) or further information that seems relevant to them.
- In the fourth column (Performed tasks) the participants should describe in detail what tasks or activities they performed.
- Fifth and sixth column: When the participants have finished their descriptions, they should list their experiences with this job in terms of motivation (What motivated me or did not motivate me in this activity or what were motivating or demotivating factors in this job?). Motivating factors are marked with a "+" and demotivating factors with a "-".
- The participants should decide for themselves as objectively as possible whether they feel that they performed the activities successfully or not and then mark them with a + (successful) or a - (not successful) in the seventh column.
- In the eighth column the participants should then find an explanation or reasons for their success or failure. These indicators will help them to be more convincing in a job interview and to focus above all on their successes and competencies.

**Preparation/Material:** Table "My activities and their evaluation" (see attachment)

**Notes:** To take these considerations further, the trainer can suggest that the participants add columns for knowledge and skills that were necessary for this activity. Another suggestion could be to highlight those aspects that the participants should develop further in order to be able to perform a task more successfully.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults after finishing their education; adults

**Duration:** 3 hours

### 2.5.10 Analysing Previous Work Experience

**Theoretical Background:** This exercise is based on methods for the preparation of competence portfolios. It offers participants the opportunity to analyse their previous work experience and to recognise their personal competencies in the course of the reflection process.

**Social Form:** Individual work

**Objective:** The purpose of this method is to recall ones experiences, competencies and qualities. The result will be used as a basis for writing ones curriculum vitae and cover letter or for preparing for the job interview.

**Source:** Developed by Itinéraires Formation

**Description:** The trainer asks the participants to list their work experiences and describe them in detail using the handout "Analysing previous work experience". For that purpose, the trainer first explains what the individual columns mean and gives illustrative examples.

- The first column contains the duration of the work activity. Ideally, the participants write down from when until when they carried out that job.
- In the second column (Function) the participants write down what the function was called and briefly describe it.
- In the third column (Company) the participants should describe the company for which they worked: name of the company, size, sector, type of company (private, public, association ...) or further information that seems relevant to them.
- In the fourth column (Performed tasks) the participants should describe in detail what tasks or activities they performed.
- In the fifth column the participants list the knowledge and skills used for the activities and tasks.
- In the sixth column the participants list personal qualities, like for example personal strengths, which were necessary for this professional activity.
- In the seventh and last column, the participants add competencies that they acquired in the course of the job or because of the job.

Experience has shown that it is helpful to list the work experience in chronological order (like in curriculum vitae). The list can serve as a basis for writing the curriculum vitae, the cover letter and for preparing for the job interview. It can also be used as an intermediate step in the further process of vocational orientation, for example for developing alternative occupational profiles based on the competencies, knowledge and skills that have been revealed.

**Preparation/Material:** Handout "Analysing previous work experience"

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults after finishing their education; adults

**Duration:** 2 hours

## 2.6 Educational and Career Choices

### 2.6.1 Career Decision Funnel – Third Floor: Working Conditions – When, Where and with What Do I Want to Work?

**Theoretical Background:** Depending on the position and the occupational sector, there is a great difference in when, where and with what people work. Careers are associated with certain working conditions. Not everyone can equally cope with all conditions. This method supports participants in figuring out under what working conditions they want to pursue their desired career. They will determine under what general conditions they prefer to work in order to then be able to work out what occupations are relevant to them.

**Social Form:** Small group work

**Objective:** Finding out under what working conditions the participants want to work and which jobs or occupations are tied to which working conditions.

**Source:** Frass, Bernhard/Groyer, Hans (1994): Berufsplanung ist Lebensplanung. Vol. 2. Wien, pp. 40f.

**Description:** In small groups (of 3 to 4 people), the participants are asked to work out under what working conditions they want to work. The list (see attachment) can either be created by the small groups themselves or it can be distributed as handout and they can add to it when necessary.

Then (still in the small groups) the participants reflect together on when, where and with what each of them would like to work. With the help of the trainer they should discuss which of the still relevant occupational fields correspond to the respective working conditions.

**Preparation/Material:** Handout

**Notes:** As preparatory exercise, the following questions can be answered by brainstorming in the whole group, taking the occupation of a nurse as an example:

- What particular activities do you have to perform?
- To which field of interest do you think they belong?
- What particular challenges does the career present to you?
- Which skills from the fields of aptitude correspond to these requirements?
- When, where and with what do you work?

**Tip:** If this exercise is preceded by the exercises "Career decision funnel – First Floor" and "Career decision funnel – Second Floor", it is advisable to write down the selected interests, aptitudes and working conditions again in the end and to select the corresponding occupations to complete the overall picture.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 1 hour 30 minutes

## 2.6.2 The Book of Success – A Contract with Myself

**Theoretical Background:** At the beginning of vocational orientation courses, especially young people often have vague and diverse aspirations. Expressing them in a written form helps them to structure their thoughts, formulate concrete wishes and deal with them. In addition, the written form contributes to a sense of obligation.

**Social Form:** Individual work

**Objective:** Making plans for the future.

**Source:** Rathmanner, Elisabeth/Hodics, Heinz/Moldan, Sabine/Sauer, Helga (2005). In: Bundesministerium für Wissenschaft und Kunst (ed.): Materialien zur Berufsorientierung, 3. Alle Wege stehen offen (pp. 1f, 6ff, 9.1). Wien, p. 10.

**Description:** The participants start a nice notebook in which they write down step by step their plans and ideas of how to shape their future. This should be formulated in concrete terms so that they can always go back to it. In the course of time, the many individual wishes are supposed to become more and more precise and binding, and in the end the participants should write down a "contract with themselves" that contains and clearly structures the many steps still to be taken. The contract consists of different parts:

- goal: What do I want to be or do?
- steps to be taken: How can I reach my goal?
- term: By when do I have to have taken the individual steps?
- success monitoring: At what point can I consider it a success?
- reward: What do I offer myself as a reward for reaching my goal?

**Preparation/Material:** Notebooks for the participants

**Notes:** The participants can be encouraged to continue writing into this notebook at home.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; youths and young adults after finishing their education

**Duration:** 15 minutes at a time over a longer period

## 2.6.3 Road Map to a Career

**Theoretical Background:** At the end of a course it is especially important to think about concrete steps to implement what has been learnt during the course. In the different sessions, vocational orientation and career choice have been addressed in many different ways. An action plan should be developed so that the participants can use those experiences on their own and develop further perspectives for their future. This individual road map to a career should help participants to develop perspectives for their future so that they do not already assume in advance that they do not have any opportunities or perspectives.

**Social Form:** Individual work

**Objective:** Developing concrete measures for entering employment.

**Source:** Sacher, Kristin (2005): „Lebenswert Beruf“ – Praxishandreichung für die Arbeit mit Schulfrühabgängern, p. 29.

**Description:** The aim of this exercise is to develop an individual "road map" for each young person. This will be done in a conversation between the trainer and the participant. In this counselling interview, each participant has to think about how to get from the starting point (school) to the destination (career) and about what paths and detours he/she has to take. Here it is important to identify concrete contact persons and to talk about the motivation to actively start looking for a job (or apprenticeship place).

**Preparation/Material:** Copies of the worksheet (see attachment), pens

**Notes:** The duration of the exercise varies according to group size. For a group of 12 participants about 5 hours will be necessary. As these individual conversations will take a lot of time, there has to be an alternative programme for the rest of the group. One possibility would be to have them practice application situations.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; young migrants facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 5 hours (The duration of the exercise varies according to group size.)

## 2.6.4 Pros and Cons

**Theoretical Background:** The young participants are supposed to learn how to make decisions independently and how to actively shape their lives. Making decisions that have a strong impact on life is not easy at any age. If decisions are postponed, however, crucial opportunities can be missed. As the consequences of decisions often cannot be easily foreseen, conscious reflecting on disadvantages, advantages and direct as well as long-term consequences can facilitate the decision-making process.

**Social Form:** Pair work, role play or simulation game, whole group work, presentation

**Objective:** Learning a rational approach to decision-making.

**Source:** Jugert, Gert/Rehder, Anke/Notz, Peter/Petermann, Franz (2008): Fit for Life – Module und Arbeitsblätter zum Training sozialer Kompetenz für Jugendliche, p. 157.

**Description:** First of all, the whole group discusses possible decision situations that directly concern the participants. The trainer could also suggest a few example situations. In pairs, the participants then use the handout to work with a situation they have chosen. The trainer should make sure that there are real alternatives for all selected decision situations.

One participant adopts the position in favour of something (e.g. I will continue looking for an apprenticeship place), the other participant the position that is against it (e.g. I will not continue looking for an apprenticeship place). The participants then work on advantages, disadvantages and consequences of their respective position. Before that, the trainer can also illustrate this with a practical example in the whole group.

After the team work, the participants present their positions to the whole group in the form of a dialogue.

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**Preparation/Material:** Copies of the handouts (see attachment), pens

**Notes:** Possible decision situations:

- Should I continue looking for an apprenticeship place – or not?
- Should I still try to get a school-leaving certificate – or not?
- Should I take a job in another city – or not?
- Should I search for a flat for myself – or not?
- etc.

**Tip:** As an addition to the exercise, the decision situation can be put to a secret vote before participants start to work on it. This vote should be repeated after talking about the pros and cons. A change in the results can show that positions can change because of an exchange of arguments.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; youths and young adults after finishing their education; young migrants facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 2 hours

### 2.6.5 Gender-specific Priorities?

**Theoretical Background:** Half of the girls who decide to go into skilled trade still choose one of the traditional female occupations: retail salesperson, office administrator, hairdresser. By comparison the concentration of boys in certain occupations is far lower with 10 different occupations. In the choice of secondary schools there are also large gender-specific differences that perpetuate the segregation in the labour market. This results in different consequences for the labour market: On the one hand, the proportion of women in construction jobs is very low. On the other hand, there are very few men who work in nurseries. The pay gap between men and women is still large (based on full-time equivalents). On top of that, it is still women who do the bigger part of unpaid work, and the percentage of men taking paternity leave is much lower than the percentage of women. These facts show how important it is to make young people aware of the consequences of their career choice.

**Social Form:** Small group work, individual work, whole group work

**Objective:** The participants learn about what people expect of a job. Views that differ according to gender are discussed. In addition, the young participants will be able to check whether their own ideas of working life in the occupational fields they are aiming for are realistic.

**Source:** <http://www.gendernow.at/gesebo> [January 30, 2008].

**Description:** The trainer distributes the worksheets. To begin with, each participant individually ranks the statements on the worksheet according to their importance in the future job. The aspect that will be most important in their future job receives a 1, the second-most important a 2 and so forth. The ranking is written down in the column. After all participants have filled in their sheets, they divide into a group of girls and a group of boys. In those groups they have to agree on a common ranking. Each group creates a poster presenting the group ranking. The posters of the two groups are contrasted, compared and the differences are discussed. In the discussion the trainer should also try to question how realistic the priorities of the participants are against the background of their career aspirations.

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**Preparation/Material:** Worksheet for each participant (see attachment)

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; young migrants facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 1 hour

### 2.6.6 Dog or Wolf?

**Theoretical Background:** Balancing autonomy and dependence can again and again be a challenge to the individual. Self-employment and employment both have advantages and disadvantages that have to be assessed at one's own discretion. Being employed or self-employed requires a corresponding professional identity. Often one first has to grow into one's identity as an entrepreneur.

**Social Form:** Small group work

**Objective:** Determining personal preferences for self-employment or employment.

**Source:** Scheidt, Brigitte (2005): Neue Wege im Berufsleben. Ein Ratgeber-, Kurs-, und Arbeitsbuch zur beruflichen Neuorientierung. Bielefeld, pp. 155f.

**Description:** The participants divide into groups (of about 5 people). The trainer hands out posters to the groups on which either the word "dog" or "wolf" is written. The participants are asked to think of associations with the respective animal. What tasks does the animal have? What is required from it?

Possible considerations would be: The dog is tamed and belongs to an owner who expects it to be loyal and to do certain things. In return, the dog is well looked after, gets food and is stroked. Its tasks, like for example working a herd, protecting property, guiding blind people, replacing people are to a great extent assigned to the dog. It lives alone or together with others, sometimes it is treated like a family member, sometimes like a working animal.

The wolf has to see to its food and survival itself. It can, however, join other wolves to form a pack. Its life is largely determined by the conditions of the environment and by the wolf's skill to make use of them. No other being tells the wolf what to do. Nobody provides for the wolf, it takes care of this itself. Sometimes the winter is cold; the wolf is hungry and does not know whether this will change the next day.

The results are presented to the whole group. Then, working in small groups, the participants are asked to transfer the image of the dog to employment and the image of the wolf to self-employment. Afterwards the results are again presented to the whole group. The participants are asked to decide whether they see themselves as belonging to the dogs or to the wolves.

**Preparation/Material:** Posters

**Notes:** Both forms of employment have advantages and disadvantages. The step into self-employment requires thorough preparation and should not be taken half-heartedly.

**Tip:** Instead of having the participants think about the nature of dogs and wolves themselves, the trainer can describe the two animals, and the participants can decide which animal they would identify with.



**Target Group:** People returning to the labour market; youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; youths and young adults after finishing their education

**Duration:** 1 hour 30 minutes

### 2.6.7 My Professional Identity

**Theoretical Background:** Our work/career is central to our lives. Not only because we spend a lot of time in our jobs and earn money, but also because it gives meaning to our lives and gives us a sense of identity. So apart from its various functions a career has an additional value. The point is to find a job that strengthens or encourages our identity or identity development.

According to Hilarion G. Petzold our identity is based on five pillars:

1. body / physical state
2. social network / social relations
3. work and performance
4. material security and
5. values

In the course of life, identity is developing and changing (identity development, identity crisis). Identity therefore is a concept that, on the one hand, endures over time, but that, on the other hand, is always developing and changing throughout life.

The model of the five pillars of identity was developed by Hilarion G. Petzold as a model of diagnosis

**Social Form:** Individual work, whole group work

**Objective:** Reflecting on career interests.

**Source:** Petzold, Hilarion G. (1993): Integrative Therapie, Vol. 1-3. Paderborn: Junfermann; also based on the A.D.V.P. model of vocational training (Activation du développement vocationnel et personnel – Activation of Vocational and Personal Development). The model was developed by Denis Pelletier, Charles Bujold and Gilles Noiseux in Quebec in the early 1970ies.

**Description:** A prerequisite for this exercise is that the participants have already received some vocational guidance. At first, each participant thinks of 5 to 10 occupations that he/she finds interesting, regardless of whether he/she considers them realistic or not, and writes them on note cards.

Then the trainer presents Petzold's model of the five pillars of identity that was adapted for this exercise (see attachment). After that, the participants are invited to create posters on which they assign their dream jobs to these categories of identity (see PDF attachment for an example and a template). In this stage, the trainer supports the participants in creating their posters.

After all participants have completed their posters, they are put up like paintings in a gallery. Each participant will be able to see at that point which pillars of identity are especially pronounced on his/her poster and which are not. The whole group then reflects on this together, and, under the guidance of the trainer, makes comparisons and discusses similarities and differences. One result could also be, for example, that an occupation can be classified as belonging to more than one pillar of identity.

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**Preparation/Material:** Note cards, flip chart paper, different pens, pin boards

**Notes:** As identity is continuously developing and changing throughout life (e.g. crises) and as the "five pillars" can differ in their carrying capacity, this aspect can be particularly interesting for job changers, people returning to the labour market and rehabilitants. When working with these target groups, the following additional questions can be addressed: "What was important to me when entering employment?" – "What is important to me today?" etc.

**Target Group:** People returning to the labour market; rehabilitants; youths and young adults facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 3 hours

### 2.6.8 Job Search as a Project

**Theoretical Background:** This method offers participants the opportunity to reinforce, confirm or reject their decisions at the end of the vocational orientation process by critically analysing the respective undertaking(s) regarding necessary information that could be gathered and the actual state of the labour market and by planning first implementation steps.

**Social Form:** Individual work

**Objective:** Critical questioning of the job search and planning the implementation.

**Source:** The exercise is based on the A.D.V.P. model of vocational training (Activation du développement vocationnel et personnel – Activation of Vocational and Personal Development). It is a psychoeducational method that is used in a collective setting.

**Description:** The trainer presents the method of job search as a project. He/She explains what is meant by a project (a complex undertaking of limited duration). Then he/she distributes the worksheet "Job search as a project", explains how to use it and gives a few examples.

It is also important to plan the implementation of the project, which means that in the end a project or work plan including steps to be carried out should be formulated.

**Preparation/Material:** Worksheet "Job search as a project"

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults after finishing their education

**Duration:** 2 hours

## 2.7 Developing Social Skills

### 2.7.1 Vernissage

**Theoretical Background:** A longer absence from the labour market does not only have financial, but also social consequences. Daily communication with other people is no longer a given. Social skills are especially ascribed to women, which is why they are often responsible for the internal social interaction at the workplace (and also in other areas). Occasionally this social ability to communicate is reduced due to a period of unemployment, their communicativeness has decreased or their verbal expressiveness has suffered. This exercise is designed to refresh these communication skills. It takes advantage of the fact that human communication is substantially influenced by visual aspects and uses pictures to encourage communication.

**Social Form:** Whole group work, presentation

**Objective:** Strengthening communication skills (e.g. speaking to larger groups, staying within the time limit for speaking, ...), reflecting on and expressing one's opinion in front of a small group, improving presentation techniques in front of a small group, increasing self-confidence.

**Source:** [http://www.learn-line.nrw.de/angebote/koedukation/fortbildung/for\\_methoden/wahr11.htm](http://www.learn-line.nrw.de/angebote/koedukation/fortbildung/for_methoden/wahr11.htm) [January 30, 2008].

**Description:** In the seminar room, a great number of pictures are spread on a large enough surface (e.g. table, windowsill, floor). The participants have 10 minutes to choose the picture that most appeals to them. Their choice should refer to the given topic "What does the world of work look like for women over 45?" To make sure the participants really make a personal choice, they should not talk to each other during those 10 minutes and should not be distracted otherwise (e.g. close the windows to avoid loud noise from the street). After each participant has chosen a picture, the pictures are attached to a flip chart with adhesive tape. The trainer says a few words of introduction to prepare the situation: "We are experiencing the opening of an exhibition. As successful and well-known artists you are invited to present your works on the topic of what does the world of work look like for women over 45? to this expert audience. The participants then take on the role of the artists who created the "work" and have about 5 minutes to present their pictures. The "work" receives a name from the artist, which is written on the flip chart. The artist is supposed to convincingly communicate why she created this picture on the given topic. The following questions should be addressed: "Why did I paint/take that picture? What did I want to express with the picture? Why is the topic important to me?" A dialogue between the "artist" and the "audience" is welcome, questions are permitted.

**Preparation/Material:** Pictures from magazines with very different, unrelated subjects, flip chart (or easel/blackboard/white board), adhesive tape, pens (or chalk/white board pens)

**Notes:** In order to collect a great variety of pictures, the trainer has to allow for a longer preparation time. The pictures should not be too small so that potential bad eyesight won't become a problem (A4 size would be ideal). The more different the content and style of the pictures are (e.g. coloured, black and white; real photos and/or drawings, paintings, computer graphics, illustrations of people, animals, landscapes, architecture, objects etc.), the more varied the discussion will be and the better the

participants differences in character are taken into account. It is not advisable to use advertising material. This method is suited as introductory exercise, since no prior knowledge is necessary.

The group size should not exceed 20 people, as attention and interest of the audience wane with the number of "works" and as time goes by.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; youths and young adults after finishing their education; women after a long absence from the labour market

**Duration:** 1 hour 30 minutes (The duration depends on the size of the group: 10 minutes for the selection stage plus 5 to 10 minutes per participant.)

### 2.7.2 Good Listening

**Theoretical Background:** Communicating with each other means that a message is sent to somebody, and then received and decoded based on a socio-cultural scheme. The message that the other person receives does not only consist of words, that is language, but in large part of nonverbal elements such as facial expressions, gestures and appearance. As this process of sending and receiving information is very complex, misunderstandings can easily occur. For that reason, young people should, on the one hand, learn and practice on the level of content to give the gist of what they heard, and on the other hand it is important that they learn the rules of good listening. Good listening means looking attentively at the person that is speaking, encouraging him/her by nodding and the like, and asking questions.

**Social Form:** Pair work, role play or simulation game, whole group work

**Objective:** Understanding the content of information and giving the gist of it as well as learning about aspects of "good" and "poor" listening.

**Source:** Jugert, Gert/ Rehder, Anke/ Notz, Peter/Petermann, Franz (2008): Fit for Life. Module und Arbeitsblätter zum Training sozialer Kompetenz für Jugendliche. Weinheim und München: Juventa Verlag.

**Description:** The aim of this exercise is for participants to improve their communication skills by learning and practicing the rules of good and poor listening. To demonstrate good listening, the trainer asks a participant to tell him/her something on a topic from the list of conversation topics. The trainer summarises what he/she has just heard and hence shows that he/she is able to comprehend the content and the feelings of the speaker. After that, the participants form pairs and take turns in telling each other something about themselves and their lives based on the list of topics. Without announcing it in advance, the listener decides whether he/she will be a good or a poor listener in the following conversation (see attachment for characteristics of good and poor listening). After both have experienced what it is like to be confronted with a good or a poor listener, the whole group discusses what feelings the different ways of listening evoked. So it is also brought up for discussion what changes in the conversation the different listening styles can cause and what consequences they have for the behaviour of the communication partners.

**Preparation/Material:** Copies of a list of conversation topics and characteristics of good and poor listening (handout see attachment)

**Notes:** The concluding discussion in the whole group should also address everyday experiences. This way, it will not only be discussed what the young participants thought and felt in the course of the exercise, but they will also be asked to give examples of good and poor listeners in their daily lives or to remember a good conversation they had with friends or family members and what its characteristics were.

**Tip:** It can be emphasised how important learning to be a good listener is for avoiding and solving conflicts.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; youths and young adults after finishing their education; young migrants facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 1 hour

### 2.7.3 Three-Minute Expert Talk

**Theoretical Background:** In the course of a job interview, applicants often have to talk about their expertise in certain fields – depending on their level of qualification –, in order to communicate the competencies and experiences they gained in the course of their education, training and previous jobs (e.g. the contents of their thesis). This requires the job applicants to already consider before the interview how to present which areas of their expertise. It is, like so many things, a matter of practice. Practicing presentations in front of a "critical" practice audience helps to improve the presentation of one's expertise. The art of the expert talk consists in simplifying technical terms and presenting specific contents in an understandable way so that people who have not dealt with this field in detail before can also follow the talk. Thus, the primary aim of the speaker should be to be "understood" and not to sound "clever".

**Social Form:** Individual work, pair work, whole group work, presentation

**Objective:** Development of presentation skills; reflecting and communicating own strengths

**Source:** Developed by Martina Schubert and Karin Steiner for the measure „Jobcoaching für AkademikerInnen“ of the Public Employment Service Austria in 2000. In: Egger, Andrea/Simbürger, Elisabeth/Steiner, Karin (2003): Berufsorientierung im Fokus aktiver Arbeitsmarktpolitik. In: Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich (ed.): AMS report 37. Wien, p. 68.

**Description:** At the beginning of the exercise, all participants determine a subject area in which they are experts. If any participants cannot think of such a subject, the trainers can lead them to a subject by hinting at hobbies or leisure activities (e.g. football, reading). It is essential, however, that they choose the subject themselves.

After that, all participants are asked to prepare a three-minute talk on the chosen subject and to practice the talk together with another participant in role play. Another option is that the participants prepare their talks (on their own) at home. They are allowed to use note cards during the talk to keep them on track. If the exercise is repeated, the participants should learn, however, to present the content without notes.

After rehearsing the talk in pairs, each participant repeats his/her expert talk in front of the whole group. It is important that they stay within the established time limit of three minutes. The trainer or another participant can give the speakers a hand signal after, for example, 2 minutes and 45 seconds.

The expert talks can also be filmed. Feedback can be given immediately after the short talk or after showing the video. It is important that the participants are familiar with the feedback rules or that the trainer goes over the feedback rules before the first talk.

**Preparation/Material:** Video equipment if necessary

**Notes:** It is essential that the feedback from the group and from the trainers is positive in order to strengthen the participants confidence in their rhetorical skills and that the trainer only gives them a few tips on how to improve.

**Target Group:** All target groups; people returning to the labour market; new entrants to the labour market

**Duration:** 2 hours 30 minutes (The duration is an approximate value, as the exercise can take more or less time depending on group size.)

#### 2.7.4 Assessment Exercises

**Theoretical Background:** Cultural differences do make a difference. In the transition from education to employment, people who were not born in the country they live in now and whose mother tongue is not the local language have fewer opportunities than people without this immigrant background. Especially people who did not complete their education in that country usually find it difficult to find a job, as their education often is only partly recognized. In addition to language barriers, cultural differences also play a role in job search and application behaviour. They can be an obstacle to successfully establishing oneself in the labour market. The aim of this exercise is to reflect on cultural differences. Becoming aware of how they are influenced by culture themselves can help participants to improve their empathy (ability to put oneself in somebody elses place) and thereby also intercultural interaction. In addition, the exercise helps to train articulateness in intercultural stress situations (e.g. job interviews, conflicts at the workplace).

**Social Form:** Role play or simulation game

**Objective:** Learning how to express and present oneself and how to react to different conflict situations.

**Source:** <http://www.madicu.at/migrantinnen/migrantinnenhome.htm> [February 2, 2008]; adapted by abif.

**Description:** The participants receive a handout containing instructions for a role and observation criteria. They read the instructions. The group is divided into one role-player and many observers. The role-player assumes the role of the active performer.

**Preparation/Material:** Copies of the handout (see attachment)

**Notes:** The participants have 20 minutes to prepare the role play.

**Target Group:** Young migrants facing career and educational choices; adult migrants without work experience; adult migrants without educational qualification; adult migrants without a recognised qualification; adult migrants with recognised qualifications; migrants returning to the labour market

**Duration:** 2 hours 30 minutes

### 2.7.5 Arguing over an Orange

**Theoretical Background:** Coming to realise that efficient communication helps to not only settle, but also to prevent conflicts is central to this exercise. Conflicts arise, for example, when different interests collide or when, as in this case, two people claim ownership of the same object. It becomes clear that the outcome of the conflict can be a disaster, but with a willingness to discuss it, it can also be constructive.

**Social Form:** Role play or simulation game, whole group work

**Objective:** Introducing the subject of conflicts; developing different ways of resolving conflicts.

**Source:** Schabacker-Bock, Marlis/Marquard, Markus: Von der Schule in den Beruf, Trainingsmaterial zur Berufsvorbereitung von HauptschülerInnen, p. 60.

**Description:** The starting situation of this role play exercise is that two people claim the same orange for themselves. As neither of them gives in, a conflict arises. The two parties involved try to resolve the conflict. In the end, they realise that they need the orange for different purposes. One person wants to eat the fruit flesh; the other person needs the zest for baking a cake. So the orange can be divided according to those needs.

At first, the role play is carried out by two people. It does not have to be clear from the beginning that the situation is only acted out. If possible, the trainer briefs two participants in advance. Based on this example, two different ways of solving conflicts can be acted out.

**Preparation/Material:** An orange

**Notes:** Possible solutions:

- Solution 1: defeat – defeat: Both people involved lose; the orange is destroyed and rendered useless in the struggle.
- Solution 2: victory – defeat: The stronger person wins and takes the orange from the other person.
- Solution 3: compromise: Both people have a partial victory, the orange is divided in half.
- Solution 4: constructive conflict resolution: As the two people talk about what they need the orange for, it turns out that they each need a different part of it. Each person gets 100% of the part that he/she needs.

**Target Group:** All target groups; youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; youths and young adults after finishing their education; young migrants facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 30 minutes

## 2.7.6 Being the Centre of Attention

**Theoretical Background:** In a report of the European Commission in 2004, social exclusion is defined as "a process whereby certain individuals are pushed to the edge of society and prevented from participating fully by virtue of their poverty, or lack of basic competencies and lifelong learning opportunities, or as a result of discrimination". This definition makes it clear that every member of society can potentially be affected by social exclusion. For various reasons a person may, for example, become unemployed, and then is not only at risk of having to suffer financial losses, but also of losing prestige in social life and therefore becoming excluded one way or another. Many young people have already experienced discrimination on the grounds of gender, age, colour, ethnic or social backgrounds and even based on their appearance and clothes. The aim of this exercise is to consciously reflect on experiences of exclusion from both points of view and to discuss them.

**Social Form:** Whole group discussion, whole group work

**Objective:** Raising awareness for experiences of exclusion.

**Source:** Diaz, M./Tiemann, R. (2006): Methoden zur Förderung sozialer Kompetenzen und zur Berufs- und Lebensplanung von Jungs. Ein Reader für die soziale Gruppenarbeit mit Jungen erstellt vom Bremer JungenBüro und dem Projekt Neue Wege für Jungs. Kompetenzzentrum Technik- Diversity- Chancengleichheit e.V., pp. 42f.

**Description:** All participants move around the room until the trainer calls one participant by his/her name. At that point they all stop in their tracks and look at that person. After a few seconds they are asked to continue to walk until the next participant is called. To intensify the situation, the participants should then point a finger at the person as soon as they have stopped. In the next round, all the participants who are more than three steps away from the person whose name was called take a step towards him/her. After these three rounds the participants whose names were called talk about how they felt in that situation. After that, the whole group discusses how and for what reasons people are excluded and whether the participants themselves already experienced such exclusion in their everyday life and what it was like for them.

In the end, the exercise is repeated, but this time the three participants whose names are called are applauded.

**Preparation/Material:** Apart from making enough room (moving chairs and tables etc.) no other preparations are necessary.

**Notes:** An extensive discussion round is important in which there should be enough time to exchange personal, maybe even traumatic experiences.

**Tip:** If it is known that participants have been victimised, their names should not be called or only in the first round!

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; youths and young adults after finishing their education; young migrants facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 1 hour



## 2.8 Practical Training

### 2.8.1 Company Visits

**Theoretical Background:** The attempt to teach young people something on a purely theoretical level is often met with little enthusiasm or motivation to actively participate. Distancing themselves from or even showing hostility towards authority figures (parents, teachers etc.) is a reaction resulting from their striving for independence and autonomy during that stage of life. For that reason, young people should have the opportunity to get a first-hand impression of the world of work that is discussed in seminars and workshops. This way they can talk to people who work in their dream jobs themselves and learn about the practical side, the actual daily routine of a career.

**Social Form:** Small group work

**Objective:** Gaining an insight into company practice; learning about occupation-specific workflows and establishing new contacts

**Source:** Braun, Barbara/Hoffmann-Ratzmer, Diana/Lindemann, Nicole/Mauerhof, Johannes (2007): Die Job-Lokomotive. Ein Trainingsprogramm zur Berufsorientierung für Jugendliche. Weinheim und München: Juventa Verlag, p. 166; Sacher, Kristin (2005): Lebenswert Beruf?! Praxishandreichung, p. 27; adapted by abif.

**Description:** In small groups, the participants prepare questions they can ask during the company visit. The trainer can contribute additional questions (e.g. on the probationary period of a training, course of the training, costs, future prospects, leave arrangements, ...).

The group visits a company together, but before that, the trainer distributes and discusses the rules of conduct for the visit. An employee or possibly the apprentice trainer himself/herself gives an overview of the company. The participants can ask their questions. Then they get a tour of the company. If possible, they should gain practical experience (e.g. working on a workpiece, packing something). The practical part of the visit has to be arranged with the employees in advance.

It is important to choose the company according to the career interests of the young people. It would be ideal to visit several companies.

**Preparation/Material:** Contact to the companies has to be established; copies of the handouts (see attachment).

**Notes:** One way to go over the experience of the company visit again is to present the received information in a collage.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; young migrants facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 4 hours

### 2.8.2 Preparation and Follow-up of the Work Placement

**Theoretical Background:** This exercise is designed to accompany company visits as well as one-day work placements. Thorough preparation for getting to know the everyday work in different occupational fields makes it easier to focus on essential aspects and on questions that the participants developed before. After visiting the companies, going over what they experienced and allowing for exchange of experience is also important.

**Social Form:** Whole group work

**Objective:** Preparing for the requirements of the work placement in order to avoid disappointment or dropout.

**Source:** Braun, Barbara/Hoffmann-Ratzmer, Diana/Lindemann, Nicole/Mauerhof, Johannes (2007): Die Job-Lokomotive. Ein Trainingsprogramm zur Berufsorientierung für Jugendliche. Weinheim und München: Juventa Verlag, p. 167.

**Description:** By filling in the worksheet "Exploration – Work placement", the young participants should both deal with the company and with their future field of activity. Questions that cannot be answered in the group can either be discussed with the supervisor in advance or resolved during the work placement by talking to employees. At this point, rules of conduct can be discussed as well. Concepts like "punctuality", "orderliness", "politeness" in the context of the work placement can be addressed in the group discussion.

In order to reflect on the work placement, participants could create collages on the experiences they had and on their activities in the company. The completed works can be presented to the group in the form of an exhibition.

**Preparation/Material:** Worksheets (see attachment), different materials (paper, wool, metals, plastics, paints etc.) for the creative work

**Notes:** Duration of the exercise: 1 hour + 4 hours (exhibition).

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; young migrants facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 5 hours (1 hour work + 4 hours exhibition)

### 2.8.3 One-day Work Placement

**Theoretical Background:** Getting a taste of work in an interesting career for a day meaning taking things a step further after visiting companies. Working in a company themselves gives young people the feeling that they act autonomously and have chosen a certain company or career themselves. Experiencing occupations in practice and performing activities that they have only talked about in theory shows young people what following an occupation entails. Not only specialist knowledge is of importance, but also the social functioning of a company, that is working with others and under the guidance of others. These formal and informal aspects of professional life are uncharted territory for young people, which can be explored by working in a company for a day.

**Social Form:** Individual work, whole group work

**Objective:** Extending the range of career choices; gathering experience in different occupations; establishing new contacts

**Source:** Schabacker-Bock, Marlis/Marquard, Markus (2005): Von der Schule in den Beruf, p. 23.

**Description:** One-day work placements are designed to give young people the opportunity to get to know different occupations, especially occupations that they do not know much about and have not even taken into consideration before. If several one-day work placements are organised, the young people can try out different occupations. After the work placements, the participants should write short reports on their experiences. It can be an advantage to provide them with a structure for the report. Later their experiences can be presented and exchanged within the whole group. The young participants should get a certificate of attendance after their work placements. This certificate gives the companies the opportunity to add individual remarks on their first impression of the young person.

**Preparation/Material:** One-day work placements have to be organised.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; youths and young adults after finishing their education; young migrants facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** more than 9 hours

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## 2.9 Job Finding

### 2.9.1 Simulating an Application Situation

**Theoretical Background:** Getting an idea of a career that is as precise as possible and therefore realistic is an important step in choosing a suitable career. Vague expression of interest in a field of activity is not enough, however. Especially in view of a potential job interview it is necessary to have considered and articulated both positive and negative aspects of a career. Not only the specific content of an occupation is at issue here, but also questions of advancement or career prospects or of compatibility of family and career. The simulation of an application situation and the following feedback from the trainer and the participants are a valuable experience and an important preparation for the actual job interview.

**Social Form:** Individual work, pair work, whole group discussion, role play or simulation game, whole group reflection

**Objective:** Dealing with advantages and disadvantages of different careers; making aware of the importance of preparing the content of job interviews well

**Description:** At the beginning of the exercise the participants are asked to think about advantages and disadvantages of their desired careers, but also about questions an interviewer could ask them and then to write them down. In pairs the participants prepare the role plays. Together they think about how a job interview could go from beginning to end. The trainer takes on the role of the interviewer.

The role plays will give the participants the opportunity to use the information they collected before and thus to also experience how important thorough preparation for a job interview is.

The role play is followed by feedback from the trainer and the whole group observing the feedback rules. If possible all participants should get the opportunity to simulate a job interview in role play.

**Preparation/Material:** Maybe a video camera

**Notes:** The participants have to be well-informed about their desired careers. That is methods on vocational information should have been used already. The feedback rules have to be clear before the beginning of the exercise. The role plays can also be filmed. Following this exercise, it is recommended to carry out the exercise "Typical job interview questions".

**Tip:** Possible questions for the evaluation of the exercise:

- Did you enjoy this exercise?
- How did you feel in the role of the job applicant?
- Did you learn anything new or important about certain careers?
- How are you going to prepare for your next job interview?

**Target Group:** All target groups

**Duration:** 4 hours

### 2.9.2 The Cover Letter

**Theoretical Background:** As a rule, the written application is the starting point of the application process. An appealing and comprehensive application is a prerequisite for being able to take part in the application process. The primary aim therefore is to create the necessary conditions to be noticed and then further considered as suitable candidate for a position in an organisation. An application is self-marketing. One part of the written application is the letter of application or cover letter.

**Social Form:** Small group work, individual work

**Objective:** The participants learn about the purpose of a cover letter, how to write it, and they will know what they have to pay attention to.

**Source:** [http://www.job-arbeit-beruf.at/schriftliche\\_bewerbung/aida.html](http://www.job-arbeit-beruf.at/schriftliche_bewerbung/aida.html) [March 20, 2012].

**Description:** At the beginning, the trainer talks about the purpose of the cover letter. He/She invites the participants to put themselves in the position of the personnel manager who has to choose from the numerous applications he/she received after advertising the position. He/She will want to know who the candidate is and why he/she is interested in the position. A successful cover letter shows that the candidate has understood what the company requires what her /his strengths are and that he/she is interested in working for this company.

The trainer then presents the AIDA formula as principle for developing and writing a cover letter.

*A = attention (draw attention to your application)*

*I = interest (get them interested in you)*

*D = desire (create desire to get to know you)*

*A = action (invite them to act)*

After that, the trainer presents the typical structure and content of a cover letter or distributes a handout.

In the first paragraph, the applicant can express his/her interest in the position or the company. It is recommended to state here where the applicant found the job advertisement.

In the second paragraph, competencies required by the potential employer should be summarised, while the applicant shows that his/her skills match those requirements.

In the third paragraph, the candidate should state the advantages of working together and mention the possibility of a job interview.

In the end, the participants should write a cover letter.

**Preparation/Material:** Handout "Cover letter"

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults after finishing their education; adults

**Duration:** 1 hour 30 minutes

### 2.9.3 Analysing No-Nos in the Application Process

**Theoretical Background:** Many people applying for a job have the formal qualifications required for the job, but do not follow the formal rules that are to be observed in the application process. Observing these (often unwritten) rules, however, would far more frequently lead to success.

**Social Form:** Small group work, individual work, whole group work

**Objective:** Improving application strategies; distinguishing between good and bad application strategies

**Source:** Karin Steiner (abif).

**Description:** The participants receive the handout on possible application mistakes. First they individually reflect on their own application strategies, compare them with the mistakes described and add to them. As they won't get the potential employers feedback on an "application mistake", it is important that they learn to recognise and correct their own mistakes. The comparison with given mistakes serves to identify own mistakes made in the past. In the next step, the participants discuss in small groups what strategies to apply instead or what strategies could be successful. Afterwards the results are presented to the whole group.

**Preparation/Material:** Worksheet (see attachment)

**Tip:** The participants do not have to present their own mistakes to the whole group. The point is that they derive rules of correct behaviour in the application process from possible mistakes.

**Target Group:** All target groups

**Duration:** 1 hour

### 2.9.4 Application Rejected – This is What You Can Do!

**Theoretical Background:** From a sociological point of view, failure is a process that, among others, shapes social actions. The societal context limits intentions to act and thereby forces to choose alternative ways of behaving that work out. Nevertheless, an elaborated concept of failure does not exist in sociological theories, but the term is - if anything - used for the negative outcome of actions. Failure means that – for different reasons – ones actions do not lead to success in a given situation. Finding oneself in such a situation is part of everyday life, which is why it is all the more important not to be discouraged and not to retreat while feeling ashamed. If the causes of these unsuccessful actions are reflected on and also articulated in front of others, these insights lead to a constructive potential that can be used as a chance for other, this time successful actions.

**Social Form:** Small group work, individual work, whole group work

**Objective:** Learning how to deal with "defeat"; reflecting on causes of failure and finding out where to get support (including online search)

**Source:** Arbeitsgemeinschaft Jugend und Bildung e.V. – das Portal für politische, soziale und ökonomische Bildung (2007): Berufsorientierung. Unterrichtsbaustein: Bewerbungstraining; adapted by abif.

**Description:** In the first part of the exercise that examines the causes, the participants receive a handout with reasons for rejection - either before or after the job interview. In small groups, the participants are asked to collect ideas of how they could react to the named reasons for rejection. Possible reactions are then compared and discussed in the whole group. In a next step, the participants go back to their small groups, exchange their own experiences with rejection and try to find reasons for them. In the concluding group discussion, the participants think about who could help them after an unsuccessful job application. As an additional task, the participants can practice online research and search for contact addresses of various counselling centres.

**Preparation/Material:** Worksheets (see attachment)

**Notes:** The table (see attachment) with possible reasons for rejection as well as possible reactions is a suggestion and the trainer can add examples from his/her own experience.

**Tip:** What is interesting for the trainer is the participants' behaviour while describing their "defeat".

**Target Group:** All target groups; youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; youths and young adults after finishing their education; young migrants facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 2 hours 30 minutes

### 2.9.5 The Hidden Labour Market: Your Personal Contacts

**Theoretical Background:** Only about a third of all vacancies are publicly advertised, that is in newspapers or on the internet. The other vacancies are mostly filled through contacts, as on the one hand, many companies want to avoid the high cost and enormous organisational effort of publishing a vacancy, and on the other hand, the search for a suitable person through personal contacts of the company already starts before the position is advertised. For that reason, it is worth cultivating existing personal contacts and establishing new ones.

**Social Form:** Individual work

**Objective:** Participants often believe they have no or only a few personal contacts that could be of use professionally. This exercise is designed to prove otherwise and to help them along. At the end of the exercise, most participants are usually surprised at how many contacts they have.

**Source:** Developed by Julia Zdrahal-Urbaneck for a series of seminars on how to successfully apply for a job („Erfolgreich bewerben“) in 2003, Verband Wiener Volksbildung.

**Description:** The participants are asked to individually make a list of 30 people who could help them in one way or another with regard to career change or who could provide them with further contacts (e.g. with companies). To help them, the trainer writes the following groups of people on the blackboard that the participants should think of when brainstorming: family members, former class mates and fellow students, (former) work colleagues, neighbours, friends of friends, people the participants know from associations, initiatives or other leisure activities (etc.). The participants should take about 10 minutes to brainstorm. Afterwards the individual participants tell how successful they were in listing their contacts. The trainer supports participants who have not been that successful in listing further contacts (e.g. by

pointing them to hobbies/leisure activities: e.g. "Do you play tennis?", "Have you met anybody on the tennis court?", "What other leisure activities do you do?").

*Alternative:* After the exercise described above, the participants write down next to each listed contact (during the course or at home) whether and how they will contact that person. For that purpose, they can use the list developed for this exercise, which can at the same time be used as a to-do list on which individual tasks (e.g. contacting a particular person) are ticked off.

**Preparation/Material:** Flip chart, copies of the contact list (see attachment)

**Notes:** The whole exercise can also be given as homework and only be discussed afterwards with the whole group.

**Target Group:** All target groups

**Duration:** 30 minutes

## 2.9.6 Writing a CV Using the Europass Curriculum Vitae

**Theoretical Background:** Usually the curriculum vitae is not only the first thing that potential employers get to see of the applicants, but it is also the deciding factor in whether an applicant is invited to a personal interview. For that reason, it should be designed to attract the attention of the personnel manager and to make it easy for him/her to find content that is interesting or important to her/him right away. To facilitate both, the template of the international Europass Curriculum Vitae was created that is available in all EU languages and is already rather commonly used throughout the EU.

**Social Form:** Individual work

**Objective:** Work out a structured curriculum vitae (Europass CV).

**Source:** <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/home> [January 24, 2012].

**Description:** Ideally, the exercise is carried out in a room where a computer is available for each participant so that they are able to complete their Europass CVs online. The template and the instructions can be found on the Europass website cited above. The participants open the CV template and fill in one section after the other under the guidance of the trainer who explains what to write into each field and what the terms mean that have to be used (e.g. when describing language skills certain categories have to be used that are explained in detail in the instructions).

**Preparation/Material:** PC and printer, template of the Europass Curriculum Vitae (see Europass Website)

**Notes:** The templates of the Europass Curriculum Vitae in English, German and all other EU languages can be downloaded from: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/documents/curriculum-vitae> [January 24, 2012].

**Target Group:** All target groups

**Duration:** 1 hour 30 minutes



### 2.9.7 Gathering Information on the Employer

**Theoretical Background:** Extensive research on the fields of activity of the potential employer is an essential part of the application procedure. Only a person who informs himself/herself about the fields of activity and tasks of a company can derive specific requirements resulting from this. Only on this basis, can he/she work out to what extent his/her own competencies match the requirements stated in a certain job advertisement or in the job description of a job offer. Another important aspect that makes seeking information advisable is the following: Today employers/personnel managers expect job applicants to be well-informed already before the interview about what activities they could expect in a potential job. Applicants who go into the interview with this information and who also demonstrate what they know definitely have an advantage over other applicants who do not have this knowledge, as the former are showing interest and commitment. However, it is not only an advantage to be able to impress a personnel manager in the interview. In fact, having detailed information is also necessary for applicants to find out whether they can see themselves doing a certain job.

**Social Form:** Small group work, individual work

**Objective:** Learning how to efficiently search for company information and what information is relevant.

**Source:** Developed by Julia Zdrahal-Urbanek for a series of seminars on how to successfully apply for a job („Erfolgreich bewerben“) in 2003, Verband Wiener Volksbildung.

**Description:** The participants form small groups (of 3 to 4 people). Before starting the exercise, the participants should already know what companies they want to apply to. Based on that, they brainstorm together what information they want to gather on these companies or what information is relevant to them and which media they want to use in their search (e.g. the Internet). After a short discussion of how to distribute the work (who searches for what), they do research on their own and afterwards discuss the results in their small groups. At the end of the exercise, the whole group is asked to reflect on how or where information could be found most efficiently and what problems they encountered. Together the participants should try to find solutions for possible problems.

**Preparation/Material:** Computers with internet access, telephone (if companies do not have websites)

**Notes:** Participants should already know before starting the exercise what companies they want to seek information on.

**Target Group:** All target groups

**Duration:** 1 hour

### 2.9.8 Job Search Methods 1: In What Kind of Organisations Do You Find Certain Activities?

**Theoretical Background:** Nowadays extensive knowledge on the fields of activity of potential employers is an essential part of vocational orientation and reorientation and of each job search. Only a person who informs himself/herself about the fields of activity and tasks of a company can derive specific requirements resulting from this. Only on this basis can she/he work out to what extent his/her own competencies match the requirements stated in a certain job advertisement or job description.

Another important aspect that makes having detailed information about fields of activity advisable is the following: Today employers mostly expect job applicants to be well-informed already before the interview about what activities they could expect in a potential job. Applicants who go into the interview with this information and also demonstrate what they know definitely have an advantage over other applicants who do not have this knowledge. However, it is not only an advantage to be able to impress the interviewer in the job interview. In fact, knowledge on the fields of activity is also necessary for applicants to find out whether they can see themselves doing certain activities for the whole duration of employment.

**Social Form:** Small group work, whole group work

**Objective:** By sharing their knowledge the participants learn in what kind of organisations the occupations chosen in the exercise "My interests" are in demand/can be found. That way the know-how of each participant is effectively utilized for the benefit of all, and the participants are made aware of the fact that not only the trainers, but also the members of the group have information to share.

**Source:** Glaubitz, Uta (1999): Der Job, der zu mir passt. Das eigene Berufsziel entdecken und erreichen, Frankfurt/New York, pp. 64ff.

**Description:** The participants form groups of 4 to 6 people and tell each other what occupations they found in the exercise "My interests". They write each occupation on a poster. In their small groups, the participants brainstorm in what places each occupation is needed (Note: A midwife, for example, can work in a hospital, in a birth centre, but also on a freelance basis). The places are collected on each poster (without censorship!). At the end, the participants mark the places in which they would prefer to work.

In a next step, the participants' research which types of employers is associated with the selected places of work. For that purpose, the participants go through different media (Internet, publications, print media etc.). In addition, they can question people who work in that or a similar area.

After collecting types of organisations, the participants look through different media (print media, Internet etc.) to search for the names of organisations for which they could work to realise their career aspirations. Each participant makes a personal list of potential employers. This list should also contain addresses and telephone numbers of specific contact persons. Afterwards the participants are asked to search for more information on each of the listed potential employers. They can do this in two ways: First, the participants can research the Internet, as nowadays company websites mostly provide comprehensive information. Second, if there are no websites or if they contain insufficient information, the participants could call the companies or institutions to get more information on the size, products, services etc. Profound knowledge on the sector or professional practice is not only an indispensable basis for later job interviews, but is also essential for preparing application documents (cover letter and curriculum vitae). The participants can keep the information in a personal file and use it for later job applications (speculative applications or applications for jobs advertised online, in newspapers etc.).

**Preparation/Material:** Flip chart paper, permanent markers

**Notes:** This exercise is a continuation of the exercise "My interests". The participants should have computers and Internet access to be able to research company information.

**Target Group:** Job changers, people in the course of vocational reorientation; new entrants to the labour market

**Duration:** 2 hours

### 2.9.9 Job Search Methods 2: How do You Find Jobs?

**Theoretical Background:** Knowing how and where to search for a suitable job is an essential precondition for a successful application. Many applicants know only a few media in which jobs and contracts are advertised. Nowadays, however, there are many different ways of searching for jobs and the participants still have to become aware of that. Since, for the most part, individual participants each know different methods or media, synergy can be used here.

**Social Form:** Small group work

**Objective:** The participants should find out which media and methods they can use for their job search. The trainers can get an overview of which job search options the participants know already or which methods they already actively use.

**Source:** Developed by Martina Schubert and Karin Steiner for the measure „Jobcoaching für AkademikerInnen“ of the Public Employment Service Austria in 2000. In: Egger, Andrea/Simbürger, Elisabeth/Steiner, Karin (2003): Berufsorientierung im Fokus aktiver Arbeitsmarktpolitik. In: Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich (ed.): AMS report 37. Wien, p. 67.

**Description:** The participants form small groups of 3 to 4 people and brainstorm together where and how (e.g. media, personal contacts) job vacancies or contracts are advertised. They are asked to write their results down on note cards that are attached to a pin board/magnet board after about 20 minutes. Then the trainers summarise and arrange all gathered information according to type of media or methods.

Afterwards the participants discuss which of these options and methods they use and to what extent they use them (especially personal contacts).

**Preparation/Material:** Note cards, pin board or magnet board, pens

**Notes:** Above all, different methods of finding a job (application for jobs advertised online or in newspapers, speculative application, recruitment agency, informal job information) should be discussed.

**Target Group:** New entrants to the labour market

**Duration:** 1 hour

### 2.9.10 Applying for the Fun of It

**Theoretical Background:** Practicing the application situation is good preparation for the real job interview. Especially for young people who have little experience in this area, a funny role play is a good basis for reducing fears and for finding a relaxed approach to that subject. The advantage of this exercise is that it introduces the participants to the topic of job interviews in a playful way and in a funny setting while still teaching them the "rules" of that special communication situation.

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**Social Form:** Small group work, individual work, role play or simulation game

**Objective:** Making participants aware that it is necessary to prepare for job interviews; reducing nervousness about the real situation through role play

**Description:** The participants form small groups whose task it is to set up companies and write job advertisements for vacancies to be filled in these companies. The jobs that the other participants then apply for do not really exist – they are rather made-up fun jobs like, for example, banana evaluator or handbag carrier.

In the following, the participants apply for these jobs and therefore have to think about the qualities they need to get the jobs. One participant of the small group that invented the occupation plays the role of the personnel manager. After the role play the other participants give feedback. In this exercise, the trainer should rather stay in the background.

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices; youths and young adults after finishing their education

**Duration:** 2 hours

### 2.9.11 Job Search

**Theoretical Background:** For certain occupational fields the traditional job advertisements in print media are not the only starting point for the job search. When searching online, however, one quickly loses track due to the large number of job boards. Thus, it is all the more important to know established employment websites and to work with other sources of information (job postings on company websites, in the print media, on apprenticeship websites etc.). This lays the foundation for an independent, autonomous job search.

**Social Form:** Small group work, individual work, whole group work

**Objective:** Developing strategies for a thorough job search making use of all existing resources.

**Source:** Braun, Barbara/Hoffmann-Ratzmer, Diana/Lindemann, Nicole/Mauerhof, Johannes (2007): Die Job-Lokomotive. Ein Trainingsprogramm zur Berufsorientierung für Jugendliche. Weinheim und München: Juventa Verlag, p. 188.

**Description:** By presenting an overview of job advertisements prepared in advance, the trainer informs the participants about the most important sources of information. After that, the participants select a job advertisement and fill in the most important facts on the worksheet. The results are then presented and discussed in the whole group.

The worksheets and transparencies/slides on information sources for the job search (job advertisements in newspapers, employment agencies, online boards etc.) have to be prepared in advance. They should also include examples of job advertisements that are close to the career aspirations of the young participants.

**Preparation/Material:** Copies of the worksheet "Job advertisement – Check list" (see attachment) for all participants

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults facing career and educational choices

**Duration:** 1 hour

### 2.9.12 Team Application

**Theoretical Background:** Many applicants dread the application situation because they had bad experiences in the past or because the situation is completely new to them. This is a natural process, as people often dread new challenges and do not think they are capable of success or they avoid situations in which they had bad experiences. In order to prepare such applicants adequately for the job interview and to help them get out of their avoidance strategy and their fear of the situation, they have to be brought closer to the real job interview with exercises that are similar to the interview and that they complete successfully. This corresponds to a simplified form of the strategy of "Systematic desensitization" used in behavioural therapy.

**Social Form:** Role play or simulation game, whole group work

**Objective:** Apply as a team, as a company; learning to negotiate; learning to present oneself

**Source:** Developed by Johanna Sommer and Karin Steiner.

**Description:** At the beginning, the participants are asked to form small groups of 3 to 4 people resulting in three teams: a client company, a tendering company and an observation team. The trainers can set different tasks as for example: *"An advertising agency bids for an exclusive advertising contract with a firm of architects. The advertising company is supposed to prepare a presentation of their company and then discuss and negotiate the type of contract."* While one or more tendering companies (the "advertising company") prepare their presentations, the participants of the client company prepare questions they want to ask the advertising company in the following negotiation.

After the presentations and the subsequent negotiation – both can be filmed – the two companies (teams) remain in their roles for a while longer in order to report how they experienced the situation from their point of view (cf. feedback rules!). The trainers make sure that the participants observe the feedback rules and that the observers let those who are reflecting on the situation finish. The feedback should be discussed in detail. After that, the observers report what points they noticed during the presentation and the following discussion. Then the trainers give their final feedback. In the end, the participants can discuss what experiences they gained for future job interviews (without having to justify their previous behaviour!).

**Preparation/Material:** Maybe video equipment; overhead transparencies and an overhead projector if preferred for the presentation

**Notes:** In the course of the reflection following the exercise, the trainers should point out the similarities between the content of the exercise and the job interview. The participants should understand that the interview also includes presentations by the employer and the applicant and that it can therefore also be understood as negotiation situation. The target group are, above all, applicants to whom the application

situation is completely new or who have had bad experiences in the course of former interviews (e.g. in the form of submissive or aggressive behaviour).

**Target Group:** All target groups; youths and young adults after finishing their education; new entrants to the labour market

**Duration:** 1 hour

### 2.9.13 Staying out of It – Butting in

**Theoretical Background:** Contributing to a situation at work in the right moment and keeping ones distance in the right situation is a skill that has to be learned. Occasionally it can be an advantage not to interfere in certain situations while one would have good suggestions in other situations. Women who often find themselves in a subordinate position at work are silenced more easily in a conversation than men, and it is harder for them to make themselves heard. With advancing age, this "strategy of silence" can have increasingly manifested itself in professional life, and a change of this strategy is all the more necessary.

**Social Form:** Small group work, whole group discussion, role play or simulation game

**Objective:** Increasing self-confidence; developing communication strategies

**Source:** El Hachimi, Mohammed/Stephan, Liane (2000): SpielArt, Konzepte systemischer Supervision und Organisationsberatung, Instrumente für TR und Berater, Mappe 3, Kreative Kommunikation, Göttingen: Vanderhoeck & Ruprecht. (Exercise 27 and 28).

**Description:** The participants form groups of three. Two members of the group start an intense conversation (e.g. on the topic of "Living situation of women over 45"). In the first round, they talk incessantly without letting the third group member who tries to make herself/himself heard take part in the conversation. After five minutes they change roles. After all have played the role of the "unsuccessful participant", they talk about their experiences with this method. In their small groups they discuss: "Which strategies have been successful?" and "Which strategies lead nowhere?"

In the next round, they are asked to practice the exact opposite. The third group member tries by all means to stay out of the intense conversation of the other two participants while they really want to involve her/him in the conversation. After each participant has tried to keep out of the discussion for five minutes, the small groups discuss (un)successful strategies.

**Target Group:** All target groups

**Duration:** 1 hour

### 2.9.14 Networking: Using Personal Contacts

**Theoretical Background:** Many people are reluctant to use contacts for professional matters or believe that they do not have contacts that are professionally relevant. As this exercise is based on the exercise "The hidden labour market: Your personal contacts", it requires that the participants already found out

what contacts they have and how they want to use them. A complete list of all personal contacts is not enough. In addition, the participants should also develop the competence to use their connections for their purposes that is to "cultivate" them, and to present themselves. As self-presentation and conducting conversations in the professional context are a matter of practice, it is helpful to simulate such situations in the course.

**Social Form:** Pair work, role play or simulation game

**Objective:** By simulating a real situation in role play participants learn how to have a conversation with people who could help them professionally in one way or another. It is important for the participants to realise that they do not only get information and support from the other person, but that they could be "helpful" as well by offering relevant information themselves.

**Source:** Ibelgaufits, Renate (2004): Neuer Start mit 50. Frankfurt/Main, pp. 119ff.

**Description:** The participants form pairs and are given the following task:

*In the exercise "The hidden labour market: Your personal contacts" you have already found out what contacts you have for professional purposes and how you can/could use them. In pairs you should practice conversations with such contacts (each participant should play each role). Work out how you could start such a conversation or what you would like to know from the other person. For example:*

- Suggestions concerning career opportunities
- Information on changes in the organisation of certain companies, on people and products – information that, for example, has not been made public yet
- Developments in the industry: What organisations or economic sectors are growing at the moment and with what products or services?
- Comments, suggestions and criticism on your curriculum vitae, your appearance and your way of arguing
- References to other people you might want to talk to and other possible sources of information

This task should take about 10 minutes. Then the conversations should be held in role play (Duration: 20 minutes). A typical course of such a conversation could be as follows:

- After having thanked the other person for the opportunity to talk to him/her, you try to initiate the conversation by alluding to common experiences in the past and/or by referring to common acquaintances. Show the other person that, apart from your personal matter, you are interested in him/her and listen to him/her without immediately urging him/her to answer your questions.
- Introduce yourself and your professional background in five sentences at most.
- Explain why you have asked for this appointment and express your wishes.
- Emphasise that you do not expect that person to find you a job.
- Try to arouse understanding in the sense of interest in your situation without lamenting your fate or speaking ill of your former employer.

In the end, all participants are asked to talk about how they experienced the conversation and what they learned from it.



**Preparation/Material:** Maybe video equipment for filming the conversation if desired and if there is time to watch it.

**Notes:** This exercise should build on the exercise "The hidden labour market: Your personal contacts", since the contacts that the participants already worked on can be used. The trainer should also make the participants aware that they should already have completed their application documents at the time of "activating" their contacts (that is, for example, approaching somebody about job opportunities) so that they are able to hand them to that person if need be.

**Target Group:** All target groups

**Duration:** 1 hour

### 2.9.15 Getting Ready for the Job Interview

**Theoretical Background:** In the beginning, especially young applicants and people returning to the labour market often feel they are unable to cope with job interviews, as they are confronted with an unfamiliar situation and therefore tend to get nervous easily. Assurance and a self-confident manner can be practiced, however. Apart from simulating the interview, it is also very important to prepare the participants for possible interview questions asked by personnel managers.

**Social Form:** Small group work, whole group discussion

**Objective:** The participants are specifically prepared for job interviews. They can both come to terms with past experiences and consciously use the experiences of others as resources for future interviews.

**Source:** Version 1: Developed by M. Schubert/K. Steiner „Jobcoaching für AkademikerInnen“ of the Public Employment Service Austria in 2000. In: Egger, Andrea et al. (2003): Berufsorientierung im Fokus aktiver Arbeitsmarktpolitik. In: AMS Österreich (ed.): AMS Report 37. Wien, p. 70; "Erfolgreich bewerben" (2004), Verband Wiener Volksbildung; Version 2: Developed by Itinéraires Formation.

#### Description:

Version 1: In small groups (of 2 to 4 people) the participants are asked to come up with typical job interview questions and write them down on note cards. After about 15 minutes they put all cards on a pin or magnet board so that all participants can have a look at the questions of the other groups. They are then asked to divide the questions into questions that are "easy" to answer and questions that are "difficult" to answer ("difficult" questions are for example: "When do you plan to have a child?" or "Did you also have a proper job at one point?" etc.).

"Brainstorming" (see PDF attachment) is carried out in the whole group in order to find and discuss possible answers and behaviour. The trainer also addresses the issue of whether every question has to be answered or how participants could deal with possible humiliation experienced in the application situation.

Version 2: The participants receive a list of questions that personnel managers often ask in job interviews. In small groups (2 to 4 participants; the questions can be divided among the groups), the participants first discuss what exactly personnel managers want to find out about the applicants by asking the individual



questions. For that purpose, the participants should put themselves in the interviewers place. After that, they work out possible answers to these questions. Each group presents their results on a flip chart.

The whole group then discusses the individual questions and answers and adds to them. It can also be addressed whether every question has to be answered or how participants could react to unfair questions.

**Preparation/Material:** Version 1: Note cards, pin board. Version 2: List of typical job interview questions, flip chart paper, pens, pin boards.

**Notes:** See attachment for a list of typical job interview questions, which can be modified and added to depending on the target group.

**Target Group:** All target groups; youths and young adults after finishing their education; new entrants to the labour market; people returning to the labour market

**Duration:** 2 hours (The duration of the exercise varies according to group size.)

### 2.9.16 My Application is Unique

**Theoretical Background:** The personnel manager of a company is confronted with applications on a daily basis. For that reason, a targeted application is necessary to attract attention. A tailored cover letter implies that a person thoroughly researches the selected company and then presents himself/herself as a suitable employee. Textual, formal and creative aspects have to be taken into consideration.

**Social Form:** Individual work, whole group work

**Objective:** Learning how to write a tailored cover letter.

**Source:** Schabacker-Bock, Marlis/Marquard, Markus (2005): Von der Schule in den Beruf. Trainingsmaterial zur Berufsvorbereitung von HauptschülerInnen. Neu-Ulm: AG Spak, p. 34.

**Description:** For this exercise it is necessary that the participants already know in which occupational sector they want to apply for a job. The participants work on their own, but the trainer should support each of them and give them individual advice. In a first step, the participants work out the most important requirements that are tied to the chosen career. For this they can use information material provided by the trainer. These requirements are then compared to the individual strengths and experiences (see attachment for a worksheet to support this process). The participants formulate the individual part of the application (see worksheet) and integrate it into a formally correct letter of application.

**Preparation/Material:** Copies of the worksheets (see attachment), pens, paper

**Notes:** In this exercise individual support from adults is important. Ideally one adult should work with no more than 3 young people.

**Target Group:** All target groups; people with work experience; older people; people returning to the labour market; unemployed adults

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**Duration:** 1 hour

### 2.9.17 My Network

**Theoretical Background:** People live in social networks and are therefore part of these networks. Networks represent an important resource for them.

**Social Form:** Small group work, individual work

**Objective:** Becoming aware of one's network and contacts in order to make use of them in the job search process.

**Source:** Sociology of work

**Description:** Together with the participants the trainer collects different places where they can get in contact with other people.

These could include the following:

- The professional environment including work colleagues and former colleagues who they are still in contact with, former employers, clients, suppliers, business partners;
- School and university: professors, alumni networks, students they met at university or people they met at further training courses;
- Family, including more distant relatives;
- Friends and friends of friends;
- Acquaintances they met during non-work activities in the broadest sense of the word (on vacation, in associations etc.);
- Neighbours, including the janitor.

The trainer then asks the participants to work individually and list their contacts, which are people who they met at different points in their personal or professional careers. Each participant makes a list of all people in his/her circle of friends and acquaintances, putting those people on top of the list to whom they are closest and with whom they also have the closest contact.

After the participants have collected and listed their contacts, they should think about how they could use their individual contacts for their job search. Ideally, they should put that down in writing.

The trainer points out that it can make sense to expand their networks. They could do this by using social networks or by participating in events, fairs, conferences etc. As potential employers and personnel consultants also use networks to find potential employees, the participants (online) presence in networks should be designed accordingly.

The exercise could also be a preliminary to a further exercise that deals with ones personal presence in social networks.

**Preparation/Material:** Paper, pens

**Target Group:** Youths and young adults after finishing their education; adults

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**Duration:** 1 hour 30 minutes

### 2.9.18 Understanding the Language of Job Advertisements, Developing a Profile

**Theoretical Background:** Many personnel managers criticise that they put a great deal of effort into job advertisements to express what or who is wanted, but that they still often get applications that do not respond to their advertisements in detail or applications by applicants whose profile does not match the communicated requirements. And that is the case, although job advertisements mostly offer sufficient information and requirements are stated in detail. Interpreting the individual messages of a job advertisement correctly and comparing them with ones competencies indeed requires some practice.

**Social Form:** Small group work, individual work

**Objective:** The participants should learn how to interpret the meaning of different content of job advertisements in order to be able to best find out if their competency profiles match the requirements and if it therefore makes sense to apply for a certain advertised job. At the same time this exercise offers participants a tool to prepare their cover letters.

**Source:** *Version 1 (short version):* Itinéraires Formation; *Version 2 (long version):* Ibelgaufits, Renate (2004): Neuer Start mit 50. Frankfurt/Main, pp. 172ff.

**Description:**

Version 1 (short version): Analysis of a job advertisement:

For this exercise it is necessary that each participant looks for at least one advertisement for his/her dream job in advance and brings it to class. As an alternative the trainer can prepare several advertisements.

First the trainer explains the important components of job advertisements:

- Company information (e.g. size, activities etc.)
- Job description (e.g. tasks, degree of responsibility, working environment etc.)
- Profile of the candidate they are looking for (e.g. qualifications, competencies, soft skills, work experience etc.)

After that, the participants individually analyse their chosen job advertisements and reflect on their personal profile as well as on what they expect from the occupation. They should consider the following aspects (also see PDF attachment):

- the most important features of the company and the job
- my personal profile and assets for this job
- my expectations and my motivation for this job

While the participants are working, the trainer is available to answer questions.

Version 2 (long version): Analysis of different job advertisements:

For this exercise it is necessary that either the trainer collects job advertisements in newspapers or on the internet or that the participants are asked to do that for a week.

The participants form small groups of 3 to 4 people. Each group receives a few (ideally at least 10) job advertisements or uses advertisements they have collected themselves. The participants receive the following instructions:

In order to check whether your interests and competencies match the requirements described in the job advertisements, arrange and analyse the advertisements according to the following aspects (also see PDF attachment):

- Presentation and form of address
- Messages between the lines as essential additional information
- Differentiation between essential and desirable requirements

After the participants have worked on their job advertisements, they put them on a pin board. Each small group presents the results of their work to the whole group and discusses how they interpreted the meaning of the content. The other participants and the trainer can then add other ideas for interpretation.

**Preparation/Material:** Version 1 (short version): Working material (see attachment); Version 2 (long version): Job advertisements, pens, pin board, working material (see attachment)

**Notes:** This exercise is helpful when writing a cover letter and can serve as preliminary exercise to other corresponding exercises (e.g. “The cover letter”).

**Target Group:** All target groups

**Duration:**

Version 1 (short version): 1 hour 30 minutes

Version 2 (long version): more than 9 hours (The duration of the exercise depends on the number of participants and of job advertisements used.)

## 2.9.19 Practicing Job Interviews

**Theoretical Background:** Many applicants dread job interviews because they have had bad experiences in the past or because the situation is completely new to them. However, practice and dealing with constructive feedback make perfect. Simulating a real application situation can be delicate, since the participants are confronted with their own weaknesses (not only in theory, but also in practice). Behaviour of applicants that needs to be optimised (e.g. not considering their own interests, belittling their accomplishments, aggressive behaviour when humiliated by the personnel manager), however, can be clearly identified in role play. In addition, feedback from the trainer can be used to achieve the optimum effect in real interview situations.

**Social Form:** Role play or simulation game, whole group work

**Objective:** In a laboratory situation, the participants prepare for and practice interviewing for a job and receive – unlike in practice – honest and productive/constructive feedback that they can use for real application situations.

**Source:** Version 1: Following Jack Levy Morenos psychodrama and "Méthodes de gestion de carrière" (Vocational guidance methods) by Daniel Porot. Version 2: Petzold, Hilarion (ed.) (1993): Angewandtes Psychodrama, Paderborn.,

**Description:**

Version 1: This exercise requires that the participants bring along their CVs and interesting job advertisements.

The exercise consists of three stages:

1. In the preparation stage that lasts for about one hour the participants receive a list of typical job interview questions that the trainer created or modified (see also exercise "Getting ready for the job interview"). The participants now have the opportunity to address questions that seem difficult to answer and to discuss them with the trainer and the other participants. In this stage, there will be room for general questions, dos and don'ts and particularly difficult topics in the job interview (e.g. salary expectations, clothes, conventions, verbal and nonverbal aspects etc.).
2. After a break, one participant takes on the role of the personnel manager and conducts job interviews of about 10 minutes (based on a chosen job advertisement and the curriculum vitae of the participant) with a few volunteers (the number depends on the time available). The circumstances of the job interview should be simulated as realistically as possible: Two chairs are set around a table. The applicant leaves the room. All participants who do not directly participate in the role play form a circle of chairs around the application scene. Finally the applicant enters the room and the simulation starts. The other participants are asked to assume the role of active observers in order to be able to give feedback after the role play.
3. The simulated job interview is followed by a feedback stage in which first the "applicant" describes his/her impressions and then the other participants give feedback. As appropriate, the trainer adds comments and recommendations.

Version 2: see attachment

**Preparation/Material:**

Version 1: List of typical job interview questions, job advertisements, CVs

Version 2: If possible magazines or Internet access so that participants can look for job advertisements; cardboard in different colours to prepare interview questions and possible answers; maybe video equipment

**Notes:** When other participants offer feedback, the trainer should make sure that the feedback rules are observed. In principle, each group member can give feedback. In larger groups, however, it is advisable to choose two or three people who provide feedback. This method requires a certain degree of mutual trust

in the group and thus should only be used after a longer stage of group processes and of getting to know each other.

**Target Group:** All target groups; new entrants to the labour market; people returning to the labour market; youths and young adults after finishing their education

**Duration:** 3-9 hours (The duration depends on the group.)

## 2.10 End of the Course

### 2.10.1 Letter to Myself

**Theoretical Background:** Moods depend on context. If the context changes impressions and moods often fade very quickly. As vocational orientation courses are designed to have a long-term effect that lasts beyond the course end (sustainability) by facilitating the transfer of what has been learnt in the course to daily life, it is important that the participants recall their impressions, ideas and thoughts at the end of the course and write the most important results down for themselves. This exercise provides methodological support for the participants to take ideas and thoughts that occurred to them during the course home with them. The letter can transport the participants back to the time of the course at all times and irrespective of the context.

**Social Form:** Individual work

**Objective:** Reflecting on and wrapping up the course.

**Source:** Rabenstein, Reinhold/Reichel, René/Thanhoffer, Michael (2001): Das Methoden-Set, 4. Reflektieren, 11th edition. Münster, 4.C 14.

**Description:** The participants are invited to write letters to themselves in a relaxed atmosphere. Thoughts on the completed vocational orientation course should be written down that each participant wants to tell the "recipient".

The trainer provides questions to help participants structure the content of the letter, but emphasises that they do not have to follow that structure:

- What was the seminar like? How did I experience that time?
- What was bad? What was good?
- Did I get something out of it?
- What will I do after the seminar?

(Note: It is important that the questions are as open as possible in order not to stem the flow of thoughts.) Then the participants write their addresses on the letters and seal them. As agreed with the participants, the letters are either posted right after the course end or a few days later.

**Preparation/Material:** Stationary, stamps, music (stereo equipment)

**Notes:** The closed sealed envelope will be posted by the training provider at the agreed time. The trainer provides the stamps.

**Tip:** Soft, pleasant music in the background creates a relaxed atmosphere (e.g. early symphonies of Mozart). As letters are very personal, it is advisable not to strictly determine in advance how the content should be structured.

**Target Group:** All target groups

**Duration:** 30 minutes

### 2.10.2 Fish and Fishing Net

**Theoretical Background:** Feedback is a form of conversation in which participants can tell trainers how they see them or learn how others see them. This exchange can happen at the end of a working session, a presentation or after group work so that trainers, for example, are able to learn from concrete experiences and improve their moderation techniques/behaviour. Giving feedback is associated with different goals: As a feedback situation is often sensitive, it is beneficial if the feedback "givers" and feedback "receivers" observe certain feedback rules. It is important to make sure that the feedback contains something new. Only then should the trainer reflect on its meaning, on the resulting change of perspective and on possibilities of further development that the feedback could entail for the trainer.

Reflection aims for a coherent consideration of how things are connected. Questions whether the participants are satisfied can be answered and suggestions for improvement can be provided. This concluding reflection on the course should lead to an improvement of future courses and to greater participant satisfaction (including implied participation in designing the course). This way, the outcome of a course is noticed and recorded.

**Social Form:** Whole group work

**Objective:** Reflecting on and wrapping up the course (feedback game); giving the trainer feedback in a playful way

**Source:** Seifert, Josef W./Göbel, Heinz-Peter (2001): Games – Spiele für Moderatoren und Gruppenleiter: kurz – knackig – frech. Offenbach, pp. 34f.

**Description:** A fishing net is depicted on a pin board (or a real fishing net is put up or a bucket for fish is used as an alternative). On the floor a pond is outlined with adhesive tape. The trainer hands out note cards (2 to 3 per participant) and markers. The trainer explains the task and invites the participants to write on the "fish" (that is note cards) what they want to take home from the course (what they have "fished out") and – on other note cards – what they would rather leave behind (that is "leave swimming in the pond"). The trainer waits till the participants are done (about 5 minutes). Then one participant after the other goes to the front and throws those fish back into the pond that he/she does not want to take home and puts those into the net that he/she has caught and wants to take home.

In the following break (or after finishing the course) the trainer can take his/her time looking at the "fish" and take his/her feedback home.

**Preparation/Material:** Fishing net/Bucket to hang up (on the pin board or flip chart), note cards (could be shaped like fish – the participants themselves could cut them out), scissors, (coloured) adhesive tape or string/cord (symbolising the pond), markers

**Notes:** The participants are welcome to (but do not have to!) say something about the groups "good" and "bad" fish. This concluding game should not be carried out until the end of a course. Afterwards the participants should either be able to go home or have a break (has to be announced beforehand).

**Tip:** Soft, pleasant music in the background creates a relaxed atmosphere (e.g. electronic chill-out music, "esoteric" music).



**Target Group:** All target groups

**Duration:** 15 minutes

### 2.10.3 Goals and Resolutions

**Theoretical Background:** Groups are sources of creativity. Specific exercises can make this source bubble. When working together in a group, group members get the chance to learn about possible new solutions and guiding principles. By discussing, choosing and pondering ideas together, a reflection process is initiated.

The aim of this exercise is that the participants collect different goals and resolutions for the future and check whether they are realistic. For this purpose the creative potential of the group is used.

**Social Form:** Small group work, individual work

**Objective:** Formulating resolutions and goals for the future; wrapping up the course

**Source:** Rabenstein, Reinhold/Reichel, René/Thanhoffer, Michael (2001): Das Methoden-Set, 3. Gruppen erleben, 11th edition. Münster, 3.B 19.

**Description:** Each participant receives the worksheet "Goals and Resolutions" (see PDF attachment) and is invited to answer the questions. They have 30 minutes to think about their personal goals and resolutions for the future. Then they form small groups of 4 people. First each participant reads his/her answers to question 1 "Personal Goals" to the group. The small groups discuss the individual statements. The aim is to create a list of tasks (that have to be performed to reach the goals) that all participants agree with.

In a next step, each participant explains his/her resolutions (question 2) and considers whether they are in line with the list of tasks worked out together.

If it turns out that participants will not be able to keep some of the resolutions, the session is adjourned in order to provide the group members with the opportunity to go over and revise their resolutions. After a short while (Note: The whole group determines this time together.), the small group comes together to go over the resolutions again. The session will be repeated until the participants come to an agreement.

**Preparation/Material:** Copy of the handout "Goals and Resolutions" (see attachment), writing material, flip chart, felt tip pens and adhesive tape

**Notes:** This method is suitable for groups working together for a longer period of time. The aim of the exercise is to explore possibilities as well as to formulate goals and resolutions for the future together.

**Tip:** It is advisable to continue these sessions until a satisfactory result is reached. Ideally there won't be more than two to three sessions.

**Target Group:** All target groups

**Duration:** 2 hours

### 3 Glossary

#### **Alter Ego**

In phenomenological social philosophy an alter ego (Latin “the other I”) describes a subject in the subject that acts “out of itself”.

#### **Aptitude**

Aptitude is a term that subsumes different individual skills of a person (e.g. concentration, memory skills etc.) that predict success in certain activities.

#### **Brainstorming**

Brainstorming is a creativity technique. By expressing ideas spontaneously without adverse criticism a great number of ideas on a given problem are generated and documented. When brainstorming in a group (about 5 to 9 participants), the participants can encourage each other with their contributions to combine different ideas so that synergy effects can be used. The rules are:

1. Criticism is forbidden.
2. Every idea is welcome. The more imaginative, the better.
3. Each participant should develop as many ideas as possible.
4. Every participant is allowed to take up ideas of others and develop them further.

#### **Career choice**

Refers to the process in which an individual chooses an occupational field, qualifies for the corresponding positions and applies for one of these positions, often several times in a working life. The career choice depends on individual preference and aptitude.

#### **Competence**

Competence encompasses the sum of skills and abilities that are often related to certain requirements (e.g. leadership competence, professional competence etc.).

#### **Curriculum**

A curriculum contains teaching content and teaching objectives as well as statements on the general conditions of learning.

#### **Differentiation**

Social changes that occur over a longer period of time and lead to the division or creation of lifestyles and conditions of life are referred to as differentiation.

#### **Dimension**

Different perspectives, facets of a topic/issue etc.

#### **Discrimination**

Discrimination generally refers to the unequal treatment or unequal classification of objects. In the sociological sense, it is understood as unequal treatment of individuals and groups that cannot be objectively justified

### **Diversity**

The state of being diverse; difference; variety. In Diversity Management this term refers to the inclusion of different types of people in companies/organisations etc.

### **Doing Gender**

The concept of “Doing Gender” describes how gender and associated roles are being constructed over and over again, how people put their dichotomous attributions of maleness and femaleness into practice every day in communication and action. By continuously “doing gender” gender-specific differences (mother and father roles, interests, preferences) become quasi natural – they seem to be given by nature and unchangeable.

### **Empathy (empathetic)**

Means “compassion” and “understanding”, but has to be distinguished from the idea of “suffering with others”. Being empathetic means putting oneself in the position of other people or being able to understand their feelings.

### **Expectations**

Expectations are assumptions based on experience that a certain person A will behave in a predictable way in a certain situation X. They help individuals to orient themselves in the complexity of this world (variety of possible ways of behaving and experiencing). It would ask too much of an individual if she/he always had to respond to each new stimulus and new experience anew by choosing from the complexity of possibilities the one that seems most adequate at the present moment. Thus the individual successively works out behavioural assumptions that have allowed him/her to cope with the complexity in a positive way (i.e. a behavioural option with little risk of experiencing disappointment). The individual then always can resort to these behavioural assumptions for orientation. They support him/her in making decisions and serve as a basis for subsequent actions.

### **Expertise**

This term both refers to expert knowledge on a certain topic and to the written opinion of an expert.

### **Feedback**

Feedback is used in order to make the difference between self-perception and perception by others visible and tangible, which reduces “blind spots” regarding oneself.

### **Feedback rules**

1. Listening instead of “justifying and arguing”.
2. Fairness (honesty) in giving feedback instead of “putting somebody down” or showing solidarity.
3. Subjectivity instead of generalising, judgmental comments.
4. Descriptions instead of psychological interpretations.

### **Further training**

Continuous learning after entering employment beyond in-service training also with regard to expanding general knowledge.

**Gender**

As opposed to the term “sex” that refers to the biological classification, “gender” refers to social characteristics, that is the social status that is not innate, but constructed through social, cultural and psychological meanings.

**Group discussion**

Group discussion is a method leading to a shift of opinion and change in behaviour in small groups. According to Kurt Lewin, group discussions that include making a group decision together at the end are suited to bring about changes in the participants’ attitudes.

**Guiding principle**

A guiding principle refers to a desirable way of life. It is a guideline developed by a person formulating the ideal that he/she wants to achieve. It supports the individual in making decisions as it guides his/her actions. Following the guiding principle is voluntary and based on the conviction of the agents.

**Identity**

Refers to the inner state of being oneself, the continuity of an individual experiencing himself/herself that is created by permanently assuming certain social roles and group membership as well as through social recognition as someone who has these roles.

**Image of others/Perception by others**

The image of others contains a set of ascribed characteristics, behaviour and attitude patterns. It conveys the image of external assessment that indicates how an individual is perceived by another individual. In practice, images of others are often linked to stereotypes, that is inflexible and fixed ideas of people who are different (often foreign) that often do not have anything in common with their “real” character traits.

**Interests**

Term for a person’s intentions and goals. It means directing one’s attention and intentions towards an occupational field to which subjective value (prestige) is attributed.

**Internalised Values**

Internalised values are socio-cultural values that have entered the personality structure of the individual in the course of the internalisation process (as part of the personality of the individual). This internalisation process is an important subprocess of socialisation at the end of which the individual perceives the respective values as a matter of course.

**Interview**

Method in social science in which an interviewer establishes contact with a person and asks him/her questions in order to obtain information.

**Life planning**

Visions of the future and aspirations especially depend on previous experiences and internalised values as well as on the current living situation. They can differ a lot from one person to another, but they show certain gender-, culture- and age-specific etc. similarities. As far as gender-specific life planning is concerned, the attempt to balance professional and family aspirations (often at the cost of the former) can be above all observed in women.

**Lifeworld**

Refers to an individual's realm of experience consisting of people, objects and experiences he/she encountered in the course of his/her daily life.

**Norm**

Norms are determined rules that are binding in a society, a social group or a certain area of social life.

**Pattern of action**

Patterns of action describe a certain way of acting that is shaped by society (in contrast to ways of behaving that are developed individually). A pattern of action has a certain purpose or is related to a certain need that arises in the social context.

**Projection**

Projection refers to the process in which a person's own negative trait, especially one pertaining to a wish that cannot be fulfilled, is perceived as a trait or wish of other people or groups.

**Qualification matching**

Qualification matching means examining whether the existing qualification requirements in the labour market match the individual's qualifications. It means to reflect on how one's own skills match the qualifications required in the labour market.

**Reflection**

Reflection refers to the critical examination of one's own ideas and theoretical approaches as well as to relating them back to one's own social interests. The aim is to find out the meaning of these thoughts and approaches.

**Reframing**

An NLP term that refers to the positive reinterpretation of experiences that have been considered negative. (e.g. Unemployment can be seen as a life crisis, but also as a chance to start something new.) Reframing is regarded as an essential condition for the ability to act and for successfully working with goals.

**Resources**

Resources (skills, strengths, abilities, knowledge etc.) are goods and means that help shape power and personal relations. They are individual capital that is used to reach a desired goal or obtain a sought-after good in a certain way.

**Role play**

Role play originates from the practice of psychodrama in psychotherapy and is used, among other things, to make certain behaviour visible through the feedback process or to change it through role play. The focus is on the behaviour of a person in a clearly determined social role. The players can experience themselves in a role, receive feedback afterwards and learn from the difference between this perception by others and their self-perception.

### **Segregation**

In the social context, segregation means that different population groups (often of different ethnic/national backgrounds) live in separate areas.

### **Self-image/Self-perception**

The self-image contains all of a person's ideas, attitudes, assessments and judgments regarding his/her own ways of behaving, personality traits and skills.

### **Sex**

Refers to the biological dimensions of being a woman or a man.

### **Simulation game**

A simulation game attempts to simulate organisational processes. The focus is on solving a more or less complex task and on the possible ways of making decisions. In contrast to role play, role assignments are more open and less personality-centred.

### **Socialisation**

Socialisation refers to the process by which an individual is integrated into a social group as he/she learns and incorporates the norms applied in that group, the skills necessary to conform to these norms as well as the values that belong to the culture of the group. If the appropriation process goes so far that the individual considers the respective values, attitudes and behaviour patterns as a matter of course, they have been internalised (internalised values).

### **Soft Skills**

Soft Skills (also "social competencies") refer to all the personal skills and attitudes that enable a person to orient his/her actions and communication "productively" towards his/her fellow human beings or social groups (e.g. in the working environment). A connection is made between personal goals and goals, views and values of the group.

### **Value system**

The value system is the set of values of a person, a group or a society that is structured and hierarchically organised (hierarchy of values) with its elements being interconnected. The individual value system is formed as a result of experiences in life and of a person's socialisation. Value systems regulate and govern the behaviour of individuals and groups.

### **Vocational orientation**

Vocational orientation is the process in which career alternatives are weighed taking into account own possibilities, skills and preferences and in which a career is chosen in the context of the opportunities offered by society. Vocational orientation is not a one-time event, but a process of considering different careers that continues for years.

## 4 Working Materials

### 4.1 Working Material for 2.1 Expectations, Getting to Know Each Other

#### 4.1.1 Working Material: Developing Group Rules

**Example:**

***Rules that groups often come up with:***

1. Don't have private conversations with your neighbours.
2. Say "I" instead of "we".
3. Try to take part in the discussion.
4. Give others a chance to speak.
5. Take your time with answering.
6. Speak clearly and distinctly.
7. Stick to the point.
8. Ask if you do not understand something.
9. Be honest and open.
10. Look at your listeners.

**Example:**

***Rules that groups of young people often come up with:***

1. No racist or sexist remarks.
2. Turn off your mobile phones.
3. Treat each other with respect.
4. No insults.
5. Do not interrupt others.
6. Listen and participate.

### 4.1.2 Working Material: Priority Game

Goals of the vocational orientation course:	
	Support in preparing application documents
	Dealing with one's strengths/weaknesses and interests
	Discussing individual problems together
	Exchange of ideas and information with others
	Counselling and support in adapting individual career and educational choices to the labour market
	Receiving important factual information
	Practicing job interviews
	Pleasant group atmosphere
	Personal feedback
	Support in the personal decision-making process when choosing a career
<p><i>Please rank the statements according to your personal preference from 1 (most important) to 7 (least important).</i></p>	



### 4.1.3 Working Material: Training Contract

Model of a training contract:

Training Agreement		
between _____		
and _____		
During the period from _____ up to and including _____.		
The training is carried out by _____.		
It takes place in _____.		
In the training you can learn to better observe others. You can also learn how to better cope with criticism and failure. The exercises and material will show you how to act in a job interview and how to come into contact with others. In the training you can also set your own goals, as for example:		
_____		
_____		
_____		
In total there will be ____ individual meetings (of 50 minutes each) and ____ group meetings (of 100 minutes each). The group meetings will be attended by four to five young people.		
At the end of the training all participants will do something together with the trainer (e.g. go out for a meal, go to the cinema). The group will discuss and determine what they will do. Anyone who arrives on time, attends the training regularly and takes an active part is allowed to participate. Participants are not to miss individual or group trainings more than once through their fault (e.g. having forgotten, not feeling like it) and not more than twice for excusable reasons (e.g. illness).		
_____		
Place, Date	Participant	Trainer

Source: Petermann, Franz/Petermann, Ulrike (2007): Training mit Jugendlichen. Aufbau von Arbeits- und Sozialverhalten. Göttingen: Hogrefe Verlag, p. 84 (translated by Johanna Haydn).

## 4.2 Working Material for 2.2 Orientation, Reframing, Activation, and Motivation

### 4.2.1 Working Material: Career Decision Funnel – First Floor: Fields of Interest – What Are my Preferences?

#### Fields of interest (Activities)

1	2	3	4	5
serve	inform	prescribe	safeguard	sow
advise	entertain	buy	check	farm
look after	instruct	sell	supervise	garden
nurse	explain	budget	provide assistance	dig
support	educate	save	recognise dangers	harvest
heal	train	manage		breed
look after	convince	trade		shepherd
stand by sb	guide	economize		cook
console	teach	administrate		bake
cheer up	demonstrate	organise		
6	7	8	9	10
do handicrafts	adjust	plan	research	design
mould	monitor	draft	investigate	form
drill	maintain (a machine)	construct	discover	embellish
saw	repair	assemble	experiment	decorate
hammer	operate machinery	mount	measure	make music
grind	reproduce	complete	examine	listen to music
lathe		install	calculate	entertain
mill			observe	read
paint			invent	paint/draw
				take photographs
				do theatre
				film
				write stories

**Fields of interest (Job titles)**

1	2	3	4	5
Waiter/Waitress	Teacher	Retail salesperson	Police officer	Farmer
Nurse	Kindergarten teacher	Insurance salesman/-woman	Firefighter	Horticultural engineer
Social worker	Travel agency assistant	Tax advisor	Officer	Landscaper
Masseur	Assistant in the hospitality industry	Industrial clerk	Cemetery attendant	Skilled worker in the forestry sector
Midwife	Social pedagogue	Real estate agent	Parking management staff	Zoo keeper
Physician	Sports teacher	Bank clerk	Museum attendant	Animal breeder
Probation officer	Management consultant	Draper	Porter Prison officer (Body)guard	Flower arranger
Life and social coach	Tour guide	Office administrator Project manager		Cook
Auxiliary nurse	Personnel consultant			Baker
6	7	8	9	10
Joiner	Chemical Laboratory Technician	Dental technician	Environmental engineer	Make-up artist
Building fitter	Automotive technician	Optician	Printer	Ceramicist
Carpenter	Plant engineer	Bookbinder	Surveying technician	Plasterer
Bricklayer	Waste disposal and Recycling expert	Upholsterer and Decorator	Event engineer	Photographer
Roofer	Sun protection technician	Interior designer	Biochemist	Cartographer
Tinsmith	Pharmaceutical engineer	Architect	Statistician Accountant	Cabinetmaker
(House) Painter	Materials engineer	Electrical engineer		Confectioner
Insulation installer	Machine builder	Stove fitter	Draftsperson	Hairdresser

### 4.2.2 Working Material: Mary and Jack

#### Cloze text

Mary and Jack met at school. Both do their training at a bank. After completing the training they move in together.

Both are working full-time. \_\_\_\_\_ goes grocery shopping on the way home, \_\_\_\_\_ cooks dinner. \_\_\_\_\_ washes the dishes, \_\_\_\_\_ does the laundry, irons it and puts it into the wardrobe. \_\_\_\_\_ wipes the furniture, cleans the floor and does the vacuuming. The company offers \_\_\_\_\_ further training, \_\_\_\_\_ is supposed to go to a college. This leads to a loss of income, as \_\_\_\_\_ will only be able to work 50% of the time during these three years. \_\_\_\_\_ is okay with it. At the same time, \_\_\_\_\_ is promoted and works longer hours. \_\_\_\_\_ does the housework. Mary is pregnant. After the maternity leave, \_\_\_\_\_ stays at home. After a few months \_\_\_\_\_ feels cooped up. \_\_\_\_\_ wants to work again. Mary and Jack discuss the problem. \_\_\_\_\_ wants \_\_\_\_\_ to stay at home. \_\_\_\_\_ wants that child care is fairly divided between them. \_\_\_\_\_ suggests that \_\_\_\_\_ works part-time. \_\_\_\_\_ works full-time, \_\_\_\_\_ works part-time. In the morning, Jonas is taken care of in a day nursery. In the morning \_\_\_\_\_ takes Jonas to the nursery. On the way home \_\_\_\_\_ picks up Jonas. \_\_\_\_\_ does the shopping. At home \_\_\_\_\_ plays with Jonas, \_\_\_\_\_ cooks dinner. \_\_\_\_\_ washes the dishes. \_\_\_\_\_ does the laundry, irons it and puts it into the wardrobe. \_\_\_\_\_ wipes the furniture. \_\_\_\_\_ does the vacuuming and cleans the floor. \_\_\_\_\_ puts Jonas to bed.

**Template for the flipchart list:**

Tasks/Activities	Mary (number of mentions)	Jack (number of mentions)
<b>Housework without child</b>		
(Grocery) Shopping		
Cooking		
Washing the dishes		
Doing the laundry		
Washing the floor & vacuuming		
<b>Professional career without child</b>		
Further training (same name mentioned 3 times counts as 1)		
Consent		
Promotion		
Housework		
<b>Child/at home</b>		
Parental leave		
"Feeling cooped up"		
Wish to work again		
Wish that he/she stays at home		
Fair distribution of child care		
Suggestion to work part-time from whom?		
Suggestion to work part-time for whom?		

<b>Children/working again</b>		
Working full-time		
Working part-time		
Taking the child to the nursery		
Picking up the child		
(Grocery) Shopping		
Playing with the child		
Cooking		
Washing the dishes		
Doing the laundry		
Washing the floor		
Vaccuming		
Putting the child to bed		

### 4.2.3 Working Material: My Most Important Values

#### Working Material 1: list of values

**1 ACHIEVEMENT**

Producing efficient results. Performing actions that I or others consider important. Gaining personal satisfaction from the achievement.

**2 RISING ABOVE YOURSELF**

Setting yourself ambitious goals. Keep striving for more. Considering your work as personal challenge. Wanting to take on more and more responsibility.

**3 LOVE OF ADVENTURE**

Having a stimulating and exciting job that also entails risks.

**4 AESTHETICS**

Getting enthusiastic about an activity that I experience as beautiful, sensual, artistic or aesthetic.

**5 BELONGING**

Feeling like a member of an organisation or a group, having the feeling of belonging and being recognised by it, experiencing interpersonal relations.

**6 ARTISTIC CREATION**

Creating objects or paintings or all other possible forms of artistic creation.

**7 ENVIRONMENT**

Working in an attractive and pleasant environment in which I feel comfortable.

**8 PROBLEM SOLVING**

Being in situations that stimulate my ability to find solutions.

**9 VARIETY**

Having a varied job in which tasks, job sites, work rhythm etc. are often changing.

**10 CLOSE TO POWER**

Being in direct and regular contact with influential and powerful people. Participating in decision-making.

**11 SOLIDARITY**

Standing up for issues that concern the community I belong to.

**12 COMPETITION**

Having a job in which I can compete with others.

**13 CONTROL and SECURITY**

Holding a position in which I can be in control of my day-to-day work.

**14 CREATIVE EXPRESSION**

Creating new concepts, products, institutions, structures, systems etc. that do not follow existing guidelines, procedures and models.

**15 ETHICAL PRINCIPLES**

Working in a sector that corresponds to my moral principles, that does not contradict my personal convictions.

**16 RECOGNITION OF COMPETENCIES**

Proving that I'm doing a good job, that I master my scope of tasks and that I'm considered a competent professional.

**17 STRUCTURE DETERMINED BY OTHERS**

Working in an environment that provides structure and clear guidelines to which I can adhere.

**18 SELF-PRESENTATION**

Having the opportunity to be the centre of attention and to draw attention to yourself.

**19 REPUTATION / RECOGNITION**

Getting recognition and respect from others.

**20 TIME PRESSURE**

Working in a context in which I have to produce results within a short period of time and with close deadlines.

**21 APTITUDE / ENTHUSIASM**

Having a job that matches my interests and aptitudes.



**22 SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES**

Having a job that has far-reaching social effects.

**23 INCOME**

Having an income that allows me to do everything I want without having to think about money.

**24 AUTONOMY**

Being able to work without being ordered around, without having to justify each work step.

**25 INFLUENCE**

Holding a position of power and influence (also over other people).

**26 INTELLECT**

Being regarded as a person with special intellectual skills. Being considered an expert.

**27 CALMNESS**

Working in a context without stress and pressure.

**28 LEARNING**

Expanding my knowledge, my professional know-how, my specialist field.

**29 LEADER**

Being the person on whom others can rely to find their way, who determines the goals to be pursued.

**30 LEISURE TIME**

Finding a job that leaves me with enough leisure time to be able to continue my non-work activities.

**31 ACCESSIBILITY**

Living in a place where I can enjoy my personal life and from which I can quickly reach my place of work.

**32 DECISION**

Being a decision-maker so that I can influence the quality and success of my results.

**33 IN THE SERVICE OF OTHERS**

Being able to offer all kinds of assistance: care, rescue service, education etc.

**34 ORDER**

Working in a well-organised environment. Following detailed plans and strict rules.

**35 PHYSICAL CHALLENGE**

Having a job in which strength and physical gestures are most important.

**36 GAME**

Acting “for the sheer pleasure”. Taking part in games, sports and other playful activities.

Retaining a certain “innocence”. Not taking yourself seriously.

**37 POWER / AUTHORITY**

Holding a position from which I can plan and control the work of others.

**38 THOROUGHNESS**

Performing tasks for which a lot of patience is needed and in which hardly any mistakes are allowed.

**39 PROFIT**

Acting in a way that the results of my effort have a direct influence on the revenue.

**40 CONTACT**

Having contact with other people.

**41 SECURITY**

Knowing that I will always have a job and a respective wage.

**42 STABILITY**

Preferring to stay in the same sector where hardly any changes occur.

**43 STATUS**

Having a job that is respected in the eyes of family, relatives, friends and the circle of acquaintances.

**44 COOPERATION**

Working with an employer who you can tell your views, give advice and offer your help.

**45 BIORHYTHM**

Being able to do my job according to my rhythm, my time management.

**46 INDIVIDUALISM**

Working on your own, without having to be in contact with or to work with the outside world.

**47 KNOWLEDGE**

Exploring new areas of knowledge.

**48 UNDER PRESSURE**

Enjoying situations in which absolute concentration is required over a longer period of time, in which it is not allowed to make mistakes.

**49 TEAM**

Pursuing common goals together with others in a cooperative context with a right of co-determination.

### Working Material 2: My most/least important values

List of my most important values

**List of my least important values**

#### 4.2.4 Working Material: Daily Soap Operas

##### Questions:

1) Describe the plot of the episode/s in your own words:

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2) Briefly introduce the main characters (especially the young characters) considering the following aspects:

Name:				
Age:				
Family status:				
Housing situation and way of living:				
Occupation:				
Clothes:				
Appearance:				
Special characteristics & ways of behaving:				
Role/Function in the series or episode:				

Name:				
Age:				
Family status:				
Housing situation and way of living:				
Occupation:				
Clothes:				
Appearance:				
Special characteristics & ways of behaving:				
Role/Function in the series or episode:				

3) Are the characters realistically portrayed?

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4) Do you know people who live like this or have corresponding visions of life?

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5) What do you think of the way the individual characters live?

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6) Could you see yourselves living like this? What would it be like in your case?

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7) Are there differences in the behaviour of women and men?

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8) What kind of lifestyles do the women choose, what kind of lifestyles do the men choose?

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---

9) Are stereotypical roles depicted?

---

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## 4.2.5 Working Material: Diagnosis of the Career Choice Situation

To what extent do the following statements apply to your present situation?

Please check one box in each row. Decide on yes or no as often as possible:	Yes, applies	Partly applies	No, does not apply
1. I still have to find out which career path to follow.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. If I had to decide on a career right now, I would be afraid to make the wrong choice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I'm not sure yet what career I could pursue <i>successfully</i> .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I'm not sure whether my present choice (education/occupation/professional goal) is really right for me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I do not know exactly what goals I want to achieve in life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I'm not sure what kind of occupation I would enjoy for a long time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I'm uncertain about my strengths and weaknesses, interests and skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I cannot understand how some people can be so sure about what they want to do for a living.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Making important decisions has always been difficult for me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. I feel insecure in many areas of life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. It is difficult to get enough information on careers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. I do not know exactly what everyday working life is like in my dream job.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. The education necessary for my dream job is too expensive or the place of education is too far away.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. It is difficult to find a training place or a job in my desired occupation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. My dream job requires too much talent (e.g. intellectual, artistic talent).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. People who are important to me (e.g. parents, partner, friends) think that my dream job is not suitable for me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. I feel limited by family commitments (as e.g. motherhood, fatherhood, maintenance obligation).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. There are other problems and burdens in my life that make my situation more difficult.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Results:

*Count one point for each question you answered with "Yes, applies" or "Partly applies":*

Field 1: Questions 1 to 7	→	_____	point/s (subject of "identity")
Field 2: Questions 8 to 10	→	_____	point/s (subject of "decision making")
Field 3: Questions 11 to 12	→	_____	point/s (subject of "information")
Field 4: Questions 13 to 18	→	_____	point/s (subject of "obstacles")

In the fields in which you scored more than 1 point you have "a problem":

### **Field 1: Subject of "identity" (clarity and stability of the self-image)**

Ask yourself, "What are my true strengths and weaknesses, what are my true likes and dislikes?" Try to formulate those personal characteristics for yourself as honestly as possible and more clearly than before. Talk about it with a person you trust and who knows you well or observe yourself in concrete everyday situations.

### **Field 2: Subject of "decision making" (general difficulty in making decisions)**

Do you often find it difficult to make decisions even if it concerns less important matters? Do you often postpone decisions? Do you often answer questions with "I don't know"? Psychologically speaking, these difficulties are related to a lack of courage to make up one's mind. There can be various reasons for this (it could also be a consequence of difficult experiences in life that make professional help necessary in order to be able deal with them). To make decisions it is necessary to have courage and a certain optimism ("it will work out all right!") as well as the willingness to compromise ("each way has its advantages and disadvantages"). You can learn to adopt this attitude. Read self-help literature, look for counselling, let yourself be encouraged by people close to you and encourage yourself.

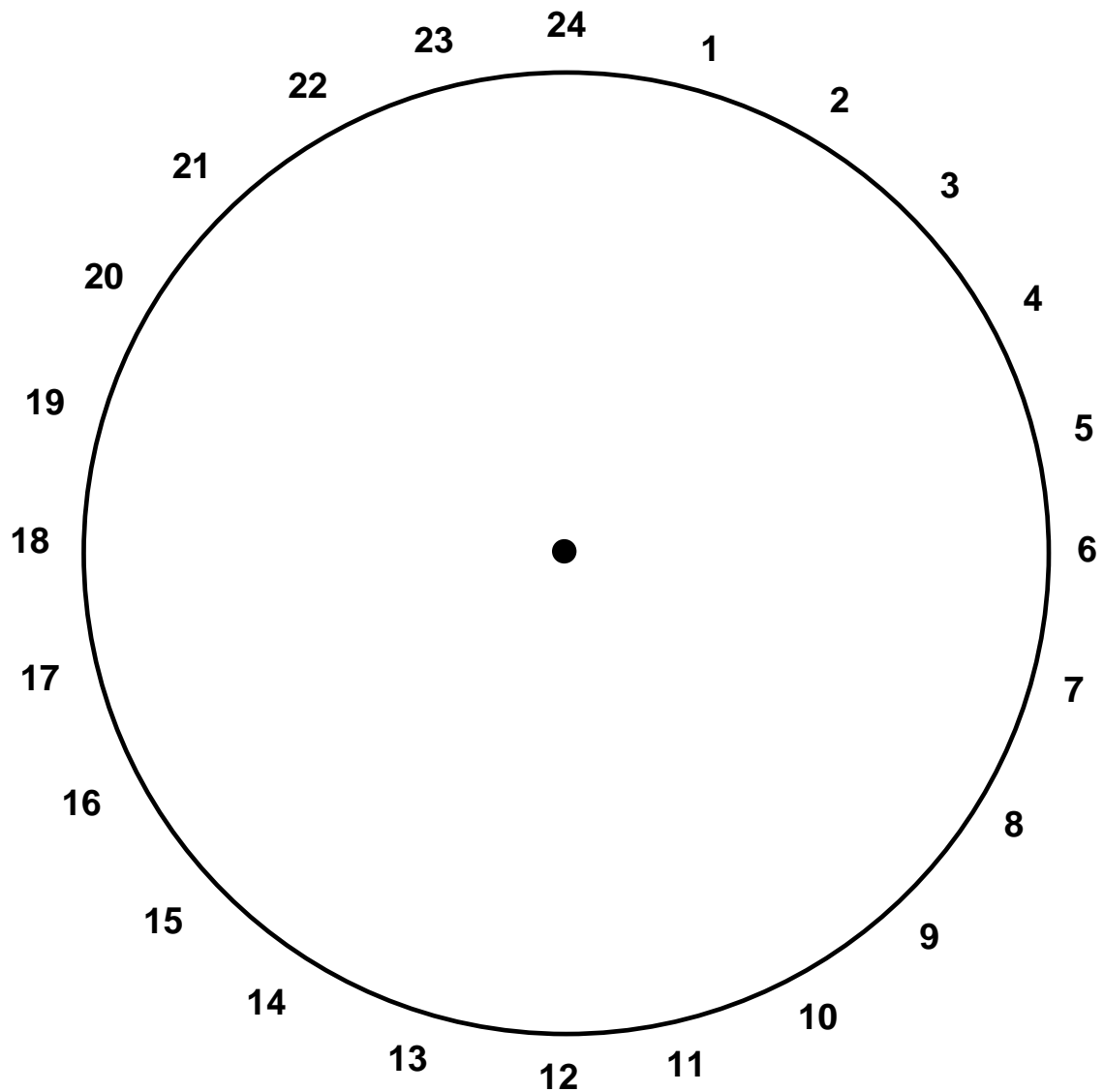
### **Field 3: Subject of "information" (information needs)**

It takes time and effort to gather the information necessary for making career choices: information about the world of work, about certain careers and their educational pathways – Not only interviews with working people, books, magazines, CD-ROMs, the Internet, Vocational information centres and career counselling can help, it is also important and helpful to collect one's own experiences in everyday working life (e.g. taster days).

### **Field 4: Subject of "Obstacles" (specific limitations)**

This subject refers to limitations in different areas: limited financial and other resources, limited personal capacity to work (less developed special skills, mental or physical disabilities), limitations due to obligations like motherhood, fatherhood, maintenance obligations, but also due to the situation of the economy and the labour market. – There won't be simple solutions for everything, but it is worth not giving up too quickly. Look for different solutions and acceptable compromises in dealing with obstacles, perhaps with the aid of a specialised counselling centre or your trainer.

#### 4.2.6 Working Material: Time Pizza



#### 4.2.7 Working Material: Learning from Failure

##### Weiner's Model of Causal Attribution (1971):

According to Weiner, people attribute successes and failures to four possible causes that can be described based on the dimensions of location (internal or external) and stability (stable or unstable):

		locus (location)	
		internal (person)	external (situation)
stability (time)	stable (always)	<i>ability</i>	<i>difficulty</i>
	unstable (this time)	<i>effort</i>	<i>luck</i>

This model shows that the attribution of causes alone can positively or negatively influence expectations of success in future situations as well as self-assessment. In addition, two types of people are identified who usually use different explanatory models:

##### People motivated by failure ...

- ... attribute their own success to fortunate circumstances or task ease (external).
- ... attribute failure to their own lack of ability (stable, internal).

They cannot gain much self-esteem from successful situations, and in the case of failure there is little hope of future success.

##### People motivated by success ...

- ... attribute their success to their own ability (stable, internal).
- ... attribute failures to unstable, external factors (e.g. lack of effort, bad luck).

As a result, they can gain self-esteem from their successes, and in the case of failure there is still hope of success in the future.

Example: Mr R. gives a talk in which he presents a new marketing concept to be implemented in his company in the future. The talk, however, does not go as well as expected. There are no questions from the audience, no discussion takes place and his boss leaves early. Mr R. considers this talk a failure. But what is the cause of this failure and what consequences can Mr R. draw from this?

#### Analysis of causes:

Example: Talk	I am responsible	I am not responsible
Today	The talk has not been planned down to the last detail. (=volition, effort)	Before the talk, the listeners participated in salary negotiations. The bad financial situation is troubling them. (=luck/bad luck, coincidence)
Always	Mr R. considers himself to be an eloquent speaker. He does not prepare questions for the audience, however, because he tries to avoid confrontation. (=ability, talent).	The room has a bad ventilation system. So it is very stuffy, which is why he loses the attention of the audience. (=difficulty of a task, problem)

#### Consequences:

Example: Talk	I am responsible	I am not responsible
Today	Mr R.'s talk was not as structured as usual. He was more nervous and insecure.	The listeners are not concentrating on the talk, but on the effect the salary negotiations will have on them.
Always	The listeners do not feel involved; Mr R. never asks their opinion. The talk ends after the presentation.	Listeners will always find it difficult to pay attention in this room because of the bad ventilation system.

What will I do differently?

Mr R. will seek the opinion of his boss and ask for a second opportunity to give a talk that will primarily be dedicated to discussion. That time the listeners should not attend another talk before that. The talk should be held in another room or the room should be aired as much as possible (maybe leaving a window open overnight).

What will I do differently the next time I find myself in a similar situation?

Mr R. will prepare the talk as well as possible, meaning he will plan the talk early enough and will prepare for a discussion session if requested. From now on, he will always plan to ask the audience questions in between. He will find the best possible room for his talk.

Task: Think of a time in the past when you experienced failure. Fill in the factors that applied that day and can be attributed to yourself or to circumstances as well as factors that have already applied in various situations and that can be attributed to yourself or to circumstances.

**Analysis of causes:**

Example:	I am responsible	I am not responsible
Today		
Always		

**Consequences:**

Example:	I am responsible	I am not responsible
Today		
Always		

What will I do differently?

What will I do differently the next time I find myself in a similar situation?

Source: Krelhaus, Lisa (2004): Wer bin ich – wer will ich sein? Ein Arbeitsbuch zur Selbstanalyse. Frankfurt am Main, p. 204 (translated by J. Haydn).

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#### 4.2.8 Working Material: My Capital of Experience

##### My Career

##### Personal Background



##### Professional Background





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## My Experiences

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Education</b> (school education, university and/or vocational education, further education, work placements, self-taught skills etc.)	<b>Work activities</b> (position, company, sector etc.)	<b>Non-work activities</b> (voluntary work, hobbies, work in a club etc.)	<b>Personal experiences</b> (travels, encounters, important events etc.)

### Crucial stages of my career

Dates	Stage	Circumstances, reasons ...

---

## Where to go from here?

**Personal future**



**Professional future**



## 4.3 Working Material for 2.3 Dealing with Resistance, Conflicts, Frustration, and Resignation, Methods for Strengthening Self-responsibility of the Group and Individual Participants

### 4.3.1 Working Material: Conflicts in the Training Situation

#### Situation

The type of company in which this situation takes place can be determined in advance (production, sales, services ...). The problems can be described in more detail when necessary.

In a medium-sized company there are problems between an apprentice (Matt Smith/Ann Brown) and several other employees. The apprentice feels that he/she is repeatedly bossed around and bullied by two colleagues. He/She thinks that they keep speaking badly of him/her to their boss. As the situation has become more and more unbearable for him/her, he/she decided to make a complaint to a conciliation board. The different opinions are presented to the conciliation board:

#### Opinion of the apprentice

Matt/Ann says that he/she mainly has problems with the two employees in whose department he/she is working at the moment. When he/she makes the smallest mistake, he/she is immediately rebuked or they have a go at her/him with sentences like: "How can anybody make a mistake here". It is not the content of the sentence that disturbs him/her, but the way it is said.

Because of these "slaps on the wrist" he/she is constantly afraid to make mistakes. In his/her opinion, this pressure leads to more mistakes, even in processes that are very easy to handle. The two colleagues usually pass such mistakes on to the boss who has shouted at him/her a couple of times already. He/She thinks that the two want to make him/her leave; that is the feeling he/she has.

The mother of the apprentice also gets a chance to speak: Her son/daughter has often come home from work in a completely distressed state, something which is very unusual for him/her. Usually he/she is a very lively and cheerful young person. The reason for this has to be found at work somewhere.

- Try to put yourself in the place of Matt Smith/Ann Brown! Collect arguments that you want to present to the conciliation board.
- Can you imagine that you have also added to this conflict? Maybe your mind has not always been completely focused on work.
- What do you want to achieve at the conciliation board? What possible solutions are there from your point of view?

### **Opinion of the colleagues**

The employees admit that they might have over-reacted a couple of times. It could very well be that one or two stupid sentences have been said. However, this only happened because, in their view, Mr Smith/Ms Brown is too absent-minded, which is why mistakes keep occurring. They can explain the simplest issues to him/her five or more times, but he/she would still not get his/her tasks right. He/She keeps making mistakes that they have to eliminate then. Apart from that, he/she has been late several times, which slows down the workflow.

- Try to put yourself in the place of the colleagues of Matt Smith/Ann Brown! Collect arguments that you want to present to the conciliation board.
- What can colleagues and employees contribute to make things work better?
- What do you want to achieve at the conciliation board?
- What possibilities for solving the conflict do you see?

Source: Schabacker-Bock/Marquard 2005, pp. 150/151 (translated by J. Haydn).

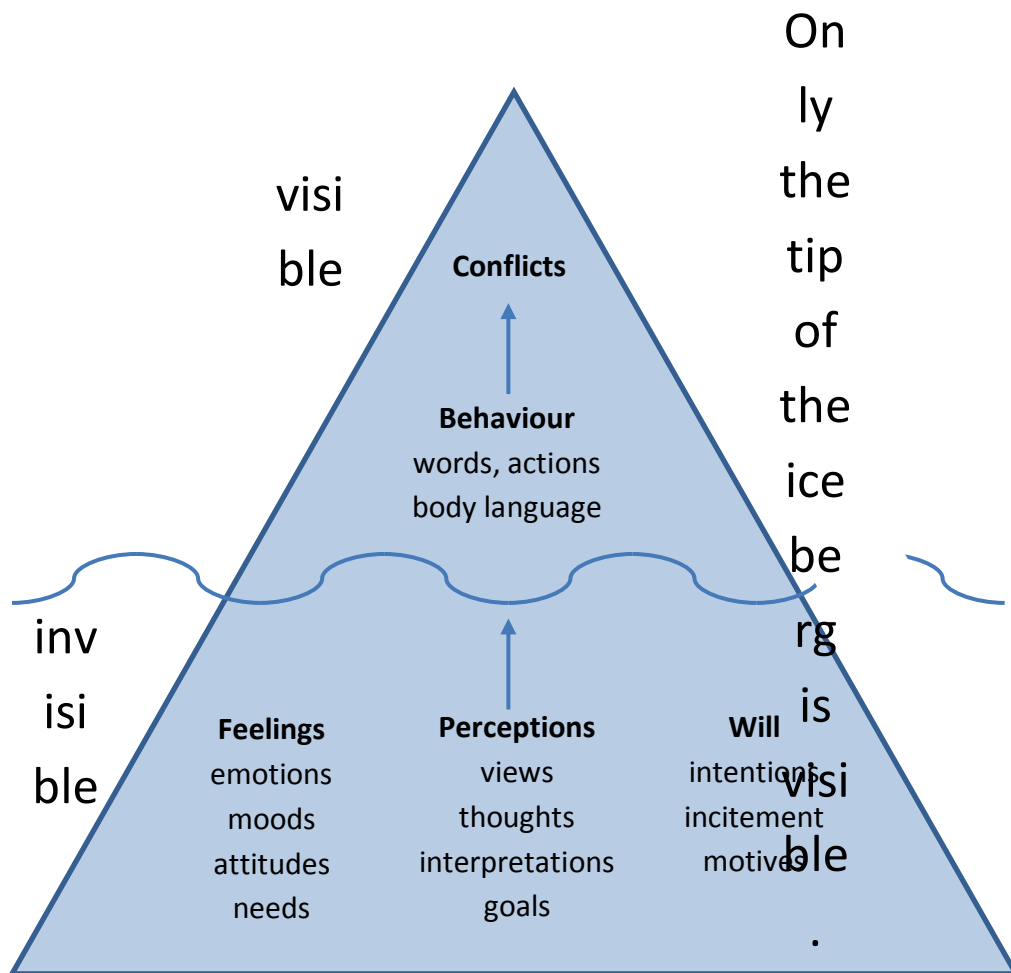
### 4.3.2 Working Material: List of Advantages and Disadvantages

Selected examples		
Difficult situation/Behaviour	Advantage	Disadvantage
fooling around in class and not taking an active part	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You have something to laugh about.</li> <li>- Diversion</li> <li>- Fooling around helps alleviate boredom.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You don't learn anything.</li> <li>- You get bad grades.</li> <li>- The teacher gets mad at you.</li> </ul>
Committing a burglary or participating in it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You don't remain in the background (in the group of young people).</li> <li>- You don't feel excluded.</li> <li>- Others consider you trustworthy and therefore you are allowed to participate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Getting caught</li> <li>- Being reported to the police</li> <li>- A trial follows.</li> <li>- As a consequence you might have to go to jail or do community service.</li> <li>- Risk of re-offending, especially if the act was "successful"</li> <li>- Long-term consequences, e.g. when looking for a job</li> </ul>
Flying into a rage quickly and not being able to control yourself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You feel better after having let off steam.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You lay hands on others who have nothing to do with it.</li> <li>- The other also flies into a rage, especially when hurt, takes revenge or strikes back.</li> <li>- You do something that you regret later and that you maybe can't put right.</li> </ul>

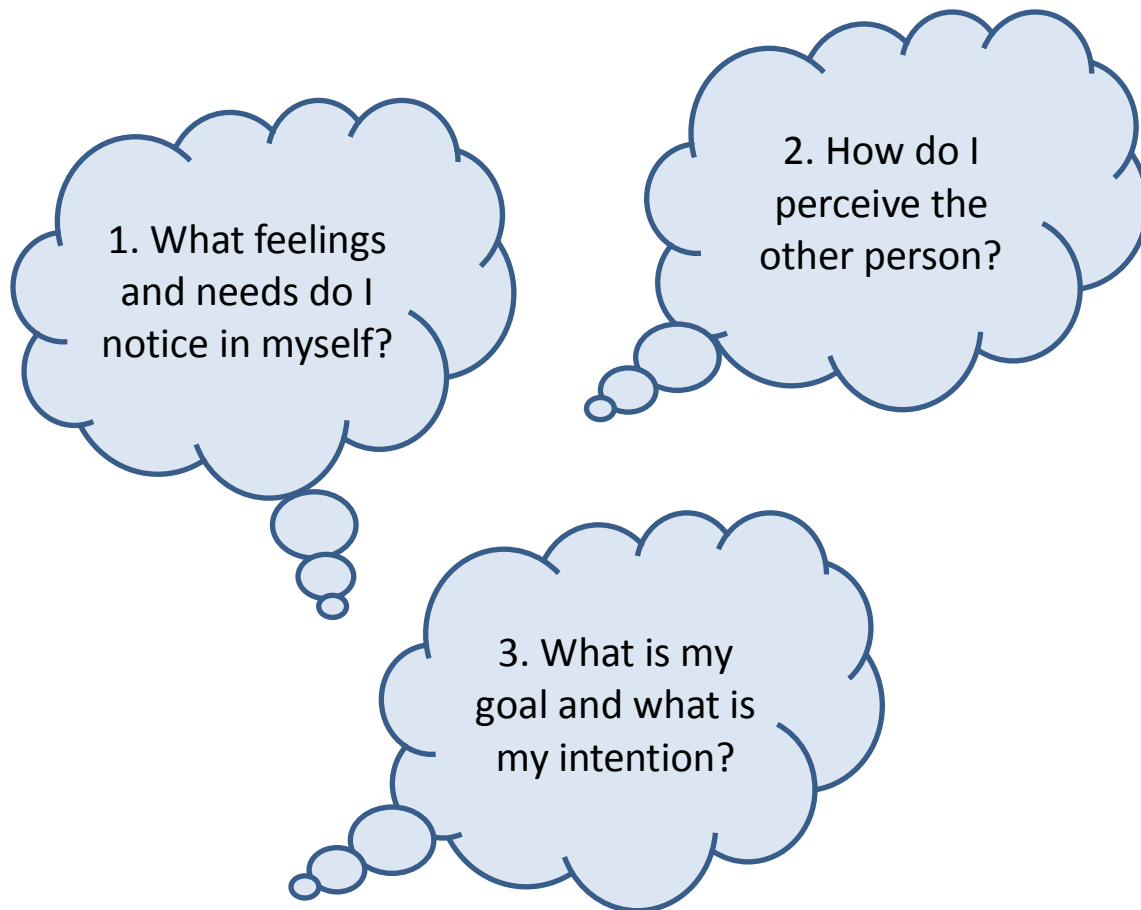
Source: Petermann/Petermann 2007, p. 125, table 14 (translated by J. Haydn).

### 4.3.3 Working Material: Iceberg in Sight

#### The Iceberg Model



Source: Jugert et al. 2008, p. 211 (translated by J.H.).



Source: Jugert et al. 2008, p. 213 (translated by J.H.)



#### 4.3.4 Working Material: Value Exchange

	My ranking	Pair ranking	Small group ranking	Whole group ranking
Personal independence, autonomy				
High income				
Interesting occupation				
Responsible position				
Good working atmosphere				
A lot of time for family or partner				
Job security				
A lot of leisure time				
Flexible working hours				
...				
...				

## 4.4 Working Material for 2.4 Vocational Information, Information Management, Labour Market Orientation

### 4.4.1 Working Material: Career Decision Funnel: Preliminary Exercise I – Job Requirements

Example grid

Occupations	Skills	When	Where	With what
Landscape gardener				
Primary school teacher				
Nurse				
Computer Scientist				
TV host				

#### 4.4.2 Working Material: Career Decision Funnel: Preliminary Exercise II – Interviews with People in the Field

Occupation:	.....
How did you start to pursue this career?	.....
Where do you work (outside, in the office)?	.....
What are your main tasks?	.....
What are the advantages of your occupation?	.....
What are the disadvantages of your occupation?	.....
How satisfied are you with your job?	.....
Do you feel that you are paid adequately?	.....
Would you take up this occupation again?	.....
Did you have a dream job? If yes, please specify.	.....
Do you have anything to add?	.....
I would also like to be ... because	.....
I would not like to be ... because	.....

#### 4.4.3 Working Material: Mr President Is Looking for a Bodyguard

##### Tasks

##### Group 1

*Mr President is looking for a bodyguard. The very best are invited to apply!*

Draw your ideal bodyguard (male or female) on a poster and write down qualities that the bodyguard needs to have to be able to do his/her job well.

##### Group 2

*You (the group) apply for a job as a bodyguard – You really want this job!*

You apply with a picture of you (drawn on the poster) and write down qualities that show: I am perfect for this job!

##### Group 3

*A model agency is looking for a model (male or female) for a fashion show of a famous designer. A real stepping stone to a career in modelling!*

The team of the agency paints a picture of how they imagine the model and what qualities he/she needs to have.

##### Group 4

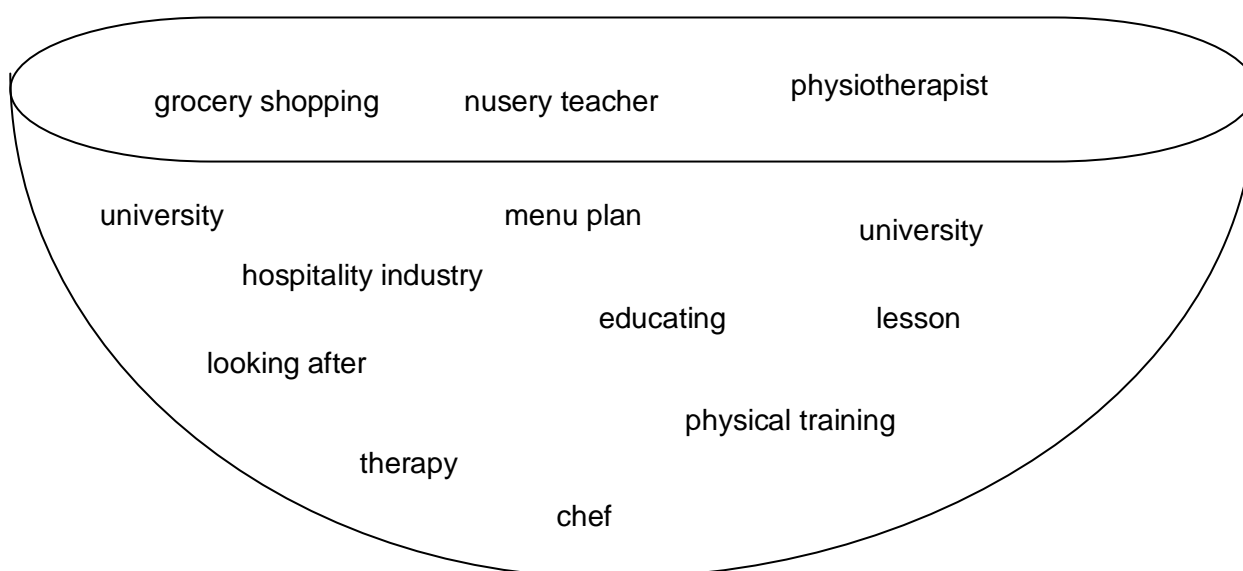
*You (the group) want to make a career in modelling.*

You apply to the agency with a picture of you (drawn on the poster) and you write qualities on that picture that show: I am the best model you can get!

#### 4.4.4 Working Material: Salad of Occupations – Learning about Occupational Fields

Example:

Nursery teacher	Chef	Physiotherapist
teacher training	apprenticeship	university
looking after	grocery shopping	physical training
lesson	menu plan	physical therapy
educating	hospitality industry	therapy

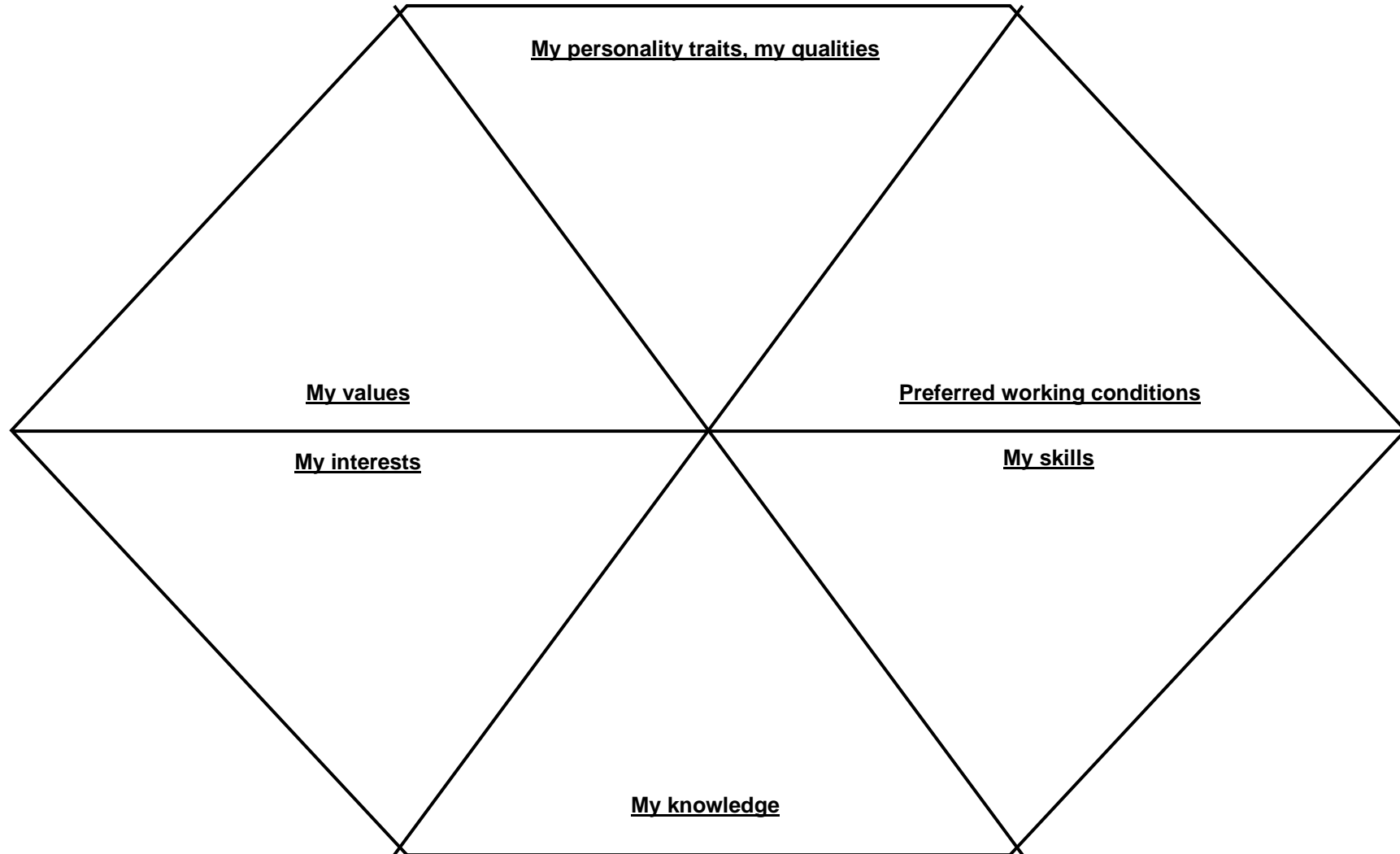


## 4.5 Working Material for 2.5 Analysis of Potential

### 4.5.1 Working Material: Career Decision Funnel – Second Floor: Areas of Aptitude – What Are my Skills?

Physical aptitude	Mental aptitude	Social aptitude	Psychological aptitude
physique	concentration	ability to make contact	patience
health	accuracy	team spirit	stamina
manual skill and dexterity	creativity	adaptation and integration ability	prudence
arm dexterity	reaction	organisational talent	autonomy
head for heights	mathematical talent	openness	tidiness
insensitive skin	understanding of instructions	empathy	cleanliness
agility	spatial ability	ability to deal with conflict	precision
healthy legs	technical understanding		manners
visual acuity	imagination – inventiveness		self-confidence
sense of hearing	innovative ability		reliability
sense of smell	memory for words and numbers		diligence
sense of touch	memory for shapes and faces		punctuality
			determination
			level-headedness
			flexibility
			enthusiasm

#### 4.5.2 Working Material: My Portfolio



### 4.5.3 Working Material: My Learning Experience

Attachment 1: Taking stock of formal and non-formal learning experiences							
Dates		Duration	Name of the training	context: initial education, continuing education, workshops in the context of non-work activities, self-taught knowledge, ...	Place and educational institution	Most important areas of competence and knowledge	Evaluation
start	end						



<b>Attachment 2</b> <b>Analysis of learning experiences</b>
--

**Description of acquired knowledge and competencies**

In the column “Most important areas of competence and knowledge” the concerned areas of competence and knowledge are only listed. Here you should give more detailed answers to the question, “What have I learned in the respective area of competence and knowledge?”

If you still have the course programme (in the case of formalised learning) at hand, it could be helpful in answering this question.

**Course of the learning experience**

What was the duration and content of the learning experience?

How were course times, exercises, practical work, work placements in companies etc. organised?

**Evaluation of the learning experience and results**

What tasks did you have to perform?

How and by whom was the learning experience evaluated?

**Opportunities to use the learning experiences / application at a later point**

What opportunities to apply what you have learnt in work and non-work activities have you already had?

Have you already had the opportunity to get recognition for these learning experiences?

**What personal comments can you make on the education and the learning experiences gained from it?**

**Documents:**

What documents recording your learning experiences do you have?

- official documents as for example diplomas, certificates, confirmations etc.
- documentation of performed work: papers, planned and implemented projects, talks etc.

#### 4.5.4 Working Material: Analysis of Potential: "What Are my Hidden Talents?"

acquire adapt adjust advertise advise analyse answer anticipate apply approach  
arrange assemble assess attach  
build  
calculate categorise coach collect communicate complete compose comprehend control  
convene convince cook coordinate craft create criticise  
dance decide deliver depict define decorate design detect develop dig up diagnose discover  
dissolve draw draw up drive drive out  
edit educate emphasise encourage entertain estimate examine exhibit expand explore express  
extract explain  
feel find out finance fix found formulate  
grow  
hand over help help out hire  
identify illustrate improve improvise increase inform influence inquire inspect integrate  
interview instruct introduce invent  
join  
lead learn listen look after  
manipulate master meet monitor motivate  
narrate negotiate  
observe offer order operate organise overview  
paint paraphrase plan play play music predict prepare present preserve print process produce  
programme protect provide for publish put in order  
question sb.  
reach read rear recommend reconcile reduce rehabilitate reinforce remember renovate repair  
report represent restore retrieve risk run (sth)  
sell separate serve sew shape share show sing solve sort speak stimulate strengthen  
summarize supervise support supply systemise  
take photographs take responsibility talk teach test translate train travel treat  
understand undertake unite upgrade use  
verbalise visualise  
wait weigh welcome win write

**Example:**

Skill: "lead others" (other ways to describe this: *control, organise people, run, motivate, advise*). I could use this skill in ... (Only mention activities you take into consideration.)

- being in charge of a new library
- collecting money for a good cause
- guiding a church group in collecting money for a new organ
- counselling young people making a career choice
- organising a football team etc.

Skills can be categorised into four areas: *people, machines, data* and *ideas*. Concrete activities are tied to these categories. For example:

- *People*: receive instructions, help, serve, speak, give hints, entertain, convince, look after, teach, negotiate, train ...
- *Tools (machines, material)*: tackle, feed material, operate, adjust, put into operation, do fine tuning, maintain, put up, work on ...
- *Numbers (data)*: copy, compare, calculate, collect, analyse, coordinate, make a connection ...
- *Ideas (something abstract, also artistic)*: think up, invent, develop, plan, prepare a draft, be creative, be artistic, make music, act, paint, dance ...

The participants group their skills according to the categories.

With the help of the trainer, the participants then think about what occupations require these skills and competences.

### 4.5.5 Working Material: Weekly Schedule

Table, Weekly schedule:

	0–2	2–4	4–6	6–8	8–10	10–12	12–14	14–16	16–18	18–20	20–22	22–24
Mon												
Tue												
Wed												
Thu												
Fri												
Sat												
Sun												

**Table, time analysis:**

proportion/ percentage of time	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70–100%
role							
mother							
daughter							
partner							
gainfully employed person							
consumer							
citizen							
friend							
sportsperson							
student/learner							
housewife							
other: _____							
other: _____							

**Star rating scale:**

<b>*</b>	<b>**</b>	<b>***</b>	<b>****</b>	<b>*****</b>
<b>not satisfied</b>	<b>somewhat satisfied</b>	<b>satisfied</b>	<b>very satisfied</b>	<b>exceptionally satisfied</b>

#### 4.5.6 Working Material: My Activities and their Evaluation

Duration	Function	Company	Performed Tasks	+ motivating/ - demotivating factors	+ successful/ - not successful	Reasons for success/failure

**4.5.7 Working Material: Analysing Previous Work Experience**

Years	Function	Company	Activities	Used knowledge and skills	Used personal qualities	Acquired competencies
....						
....						
....						
....						
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....						
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....						



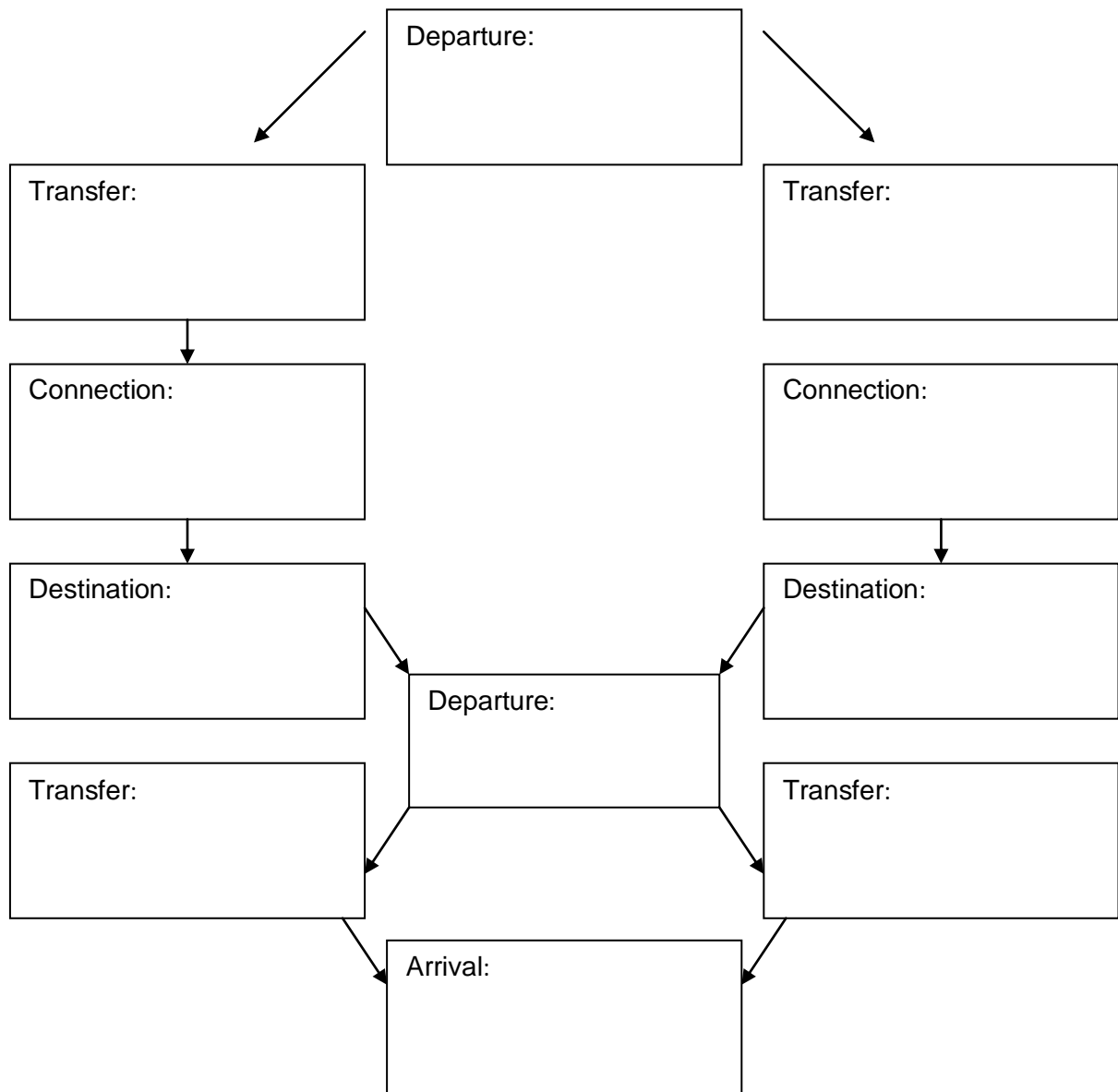
## 4.6 Working Material for 2.6 Educational and Career Choices

### 4.6.1 Working Material: Career Decision Funnel – Third Floor: Working Conditions – When, Where and with What Do I Want to Work?

Career decision funnel – Third Floor: Working conditions

When	Where	With what
in the daytime	office	people
at night	factory	sports
part-time	workshop	plants
in shifts	lecture room	data
in one's own time	hotel	texts
flexible working hours	restaurant	chemicals
according to a rota system	outdoors	wood
	construction site	metal
	gardens and parks	tools
	street	music
	airport	computer
	train station	paper
	hospital	ceramic
	shop	glass
		leather
		clay
		earth
		stone
		machines
		plastics
		vehicles
		electronics
		precision tools

#### 4.6.2 Working Material: Road Map to a Career



Source: Jugendhaus Erfurter Brücke 2005, Anhang 18 (translated by J. Haydn).

### 4.6.3 Working Material: Pros and Cons

<b>Yes-no question:</b>  <hr/> <hr/>	
Pro	Con
advantages	advantages
disadvantages	disadvantages
short-term consequences	short-term consequences
long-term consequences	long-term consequences

#### 4.6.4 Working Material: Gender-specific Priorities?

In my future job it is important to me that	personal decision	group decision
I earn a lot of money		
I don't get dirty in my work		
it is an interesting activity		
I have regular working hours		
I have good career prospects		
I have a secure job		
I have a good education		
my occupation is highly regarded by others		
I travel the world		
I work with people		
I have nice colleagues		
I can work independently		
I have a lot of time for my personal life		
I can provide for my family alone		
I can use my skills at work		
I work at the computer a lot		
I have time and money for further training		
it is meaningful to me		

#### **4.6.5 Working Material: My Professional Identity**

##### **Model of Five Pillars of Identity according to Hilarion G. Petzold (1993):**

Identity (lat.: identitas = sameness) is understood as the uniqueness of a being, especially of a human being.

Identity is the unique personality structure of a human being, dealing with the questions of who am I, who do I relate to, who relates to me, how do I define myself and what makes me who I am. Identity is a lifelong process and manifests itself in appearance, facial expressions, gestures, language, physical strengths and weaknesses and, of course, in the inner image/self-image, the sense of self and the faith in oneself.

It is also important to note that identity is developing and changing in the course of life (identity development, identity crisis). In that process, information from the body-self (identification = "How do I see myself?") and from their environment (identifying = "How do other people see me?") is constantly assessed and adopted or rejected.

Identity therefore is a concept that, on the one hand, endures over time, but that, on the other hand, is always developing and changing throughout life.

##### **The five pillars of identity according to H. G. Petzold are:**

1. body / physical state
2. social network / social relations
3. work and performance
4. material security and
5. values

These pillars establish, support and carry (or do not ...) a person's identity.

##### **In the context of careers or career choice the five pillars can be interpreted as follows:**

The first pillar includes everything that has to do with body and mind (e.g. health, performance, appearance, self-esteem). A career could be chosen or rejected because the working conditions are pleasant or unpleasant, because outward appearance is important or not important etc.

The second pillar contains social relations, relationships and networks. An occupation could be interesting or uninteresting because, for example, the needs of this pillar are met or not, because it is accepted among family and/or friends or not etc.

The third pillar includes work or performance (e.g. job satisfaction, success, performance expectations, being active etc.). An occupation could be interesting or not because of the activity itself; it can be considered as demanding too much or as not demanding enough; it can promise advancement opportunities and success or not.

The fourth pillar includes material security (e.g. income, possession, money, food, clothes, necessities of life, status etc.), but also the ecological space (e.g. place of residence, cultural background). A career can be chosen or rejected because it seems to offer these securities or not.

The fifth pillar includes personal values, standards and visions (e.g. morals, ethics, religion, love, hopes, traditions, belief, essential questions). Career decisions can be made against this background, depending on how important this pillar is to a person in the professional context (e.g. being able to help others, engaging in a “meaningful” activity, performing an activity that is in accordance with my moral standpoint etc.).

**An example:**

The profession of a physician can seem interesting/can be chosen primarily because ...

... the motive of helping others is most important (5th pillar).

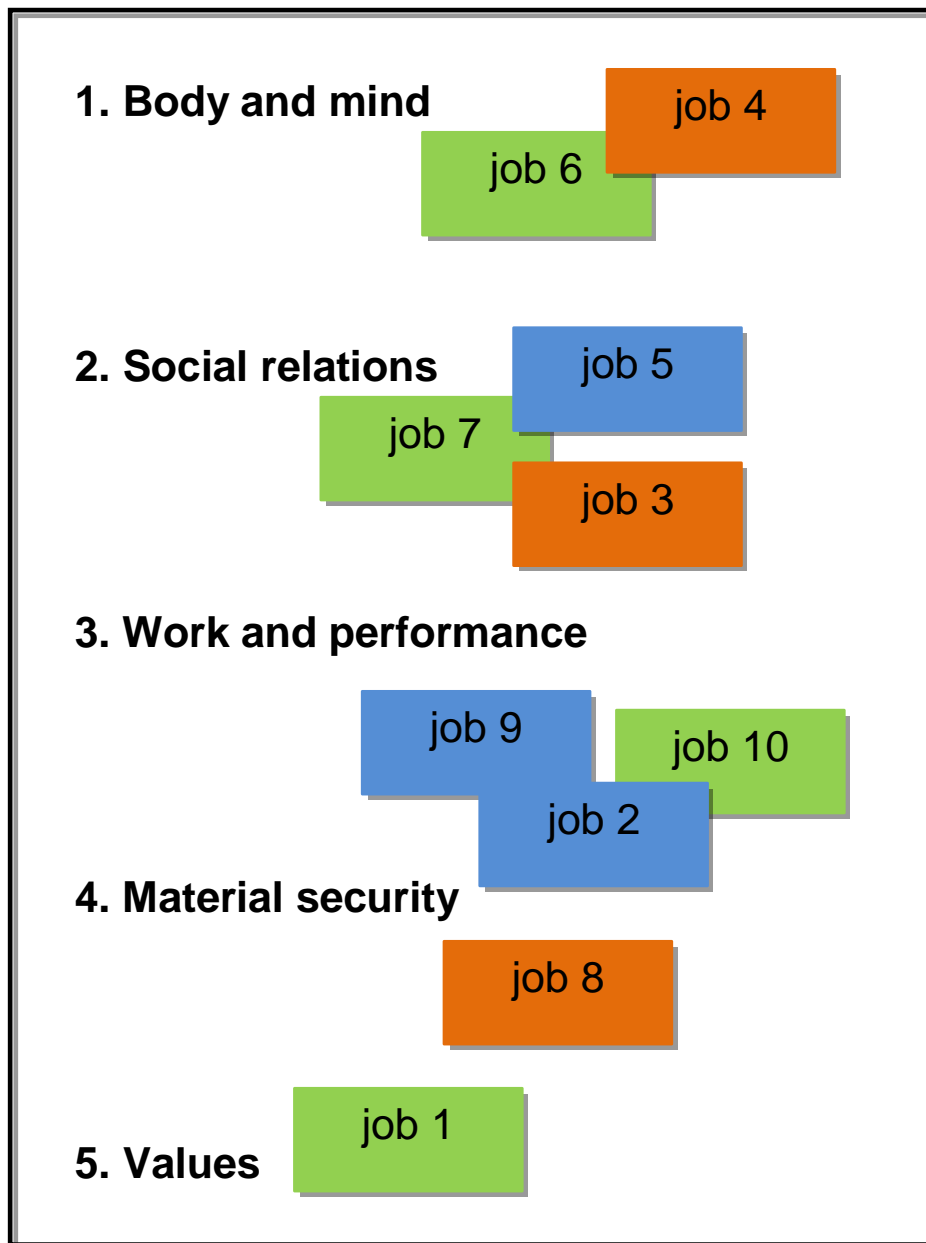
... my mother/father supports me in becoming a physician (2nd pillar).

... status and material security are most important (4th pillar).

... the activity itself seems appealing (3rd pillar).

etc.

Template for the poster:



#### 4.6.6 Working Material: Job Search as a Project

Consider your job search as a project. Collect important information based on the following questions and plan first steps to implement the project.

Describe the project (reason, goals etc.).

What are arguments for the implementation of the project? What opportunities could arise from it?

What are arguments against the implementation of the project? What obstacles could I face? What is still necessary for the implementation or what is still lacking?

What do I have to do to implement the project?

Who could support me in implementing the project?

What are the first steps of the project?

Step 1: .....

Step 2: .....

Step 3: .....

Step 4: .....



---

**My competencies for this project**

Knowledge	Skills	Personal qualities

## 4.7 Working Material for 2.7 Developing Social Skills

### 4.7.1 Working Material: Good Listening

Conversation topics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tell your partner what you did last weekend.</li><li>• Tell your partner about your hobbies and likes.</li><li>• Tell your partner what you have always wanted to do (wishes, dreams).</li><li>• Tell your partner what you want to do for your birthday (or what you did for your last birthday).</li><li>• Tell your partner what made you angry recently.</li><li>• Tell your partner what made you happy recently.</li></ul>
Good and poor listening
<b>Poor listening</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agree with your partner, but look the other way and think about something else.</li><li>• Instead of listening keep talking about your own similar experiences.</li><li>• Give advice or change the subject.</li></ul>
<b>Good listening</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pay attention to the speaker, look at him/her and keep eye contact, show him/her that you are listening (nodding, “yes”, an assenting “mh”).</li><li>• Show interest by asking questions, as for example: “What happens next?”, “How did you feel?”, “What was it like for you?”</li></ul>

Source: Jugert/Rehder/Notz/Petermann 2008, p. 101 (translated by J. Haydn).

#### 4.7.2 Working Material: Three-Minute Expert Talk

1.	Listening instead of “justifying and arguing”
2.	Fairness (honesty) in giving feedback instead of “putting somebody down” or showing solidarity
3.	Subjectivity instead of generalising, judgmental comments
4.	Descriptions instead of psychological interpretations

### 4.7.3 Working Material: Assessment Exercises

1. Imagine you are facing the members of a big company that has different vacancies in various areas. The committee wants to get an idea of the applicants' skills and the areas in which they could employ them and asks you to describe your strengths and weaknesses. You have 5 minutes. The commission can ask questions.

Observation criteria:

- The participant uses his/her time well.
  - The participant brings forward plausible arguments.
  - The participant is eloquent.
  - The participant responds to others.
  - The participant convinces others.
  - The participant keeps his/her goal in mind.
  - The participant considers the consequences of his/her actions.
2. You are employed by a construction company. Because of your background your colleagues keep making jokes about you, your behaviour, but also about typical behaviour in your country of origin. These jokes bother you. The person opposite is one of the major jokers. In a break, a conversation starts between the two of you. He/She makes another joke – how do you react? The trainer takes on the role of the joker.

Observation criteria:

- The participant sticks to facts and does not speak aggressively.
  - The participant takes up suggestions of his/her communication partner.
  - The participant talks about his/her own intentions and feelings.
  - The participant takes account of the feelings and interests of others.
  - The participant listens and does not interrupt.
  - The participant addresses conflicts.
  - The participant is open to other views.
  - The participant offers constructive criticism.
  - The participant asserts himself/herself.
  - The participant overcomes resistance.
  - The participant expresses his/her point of view.
  - The participant can cope with setbacks.
3. You work in a care home as a care assistant. You do your work conscientiously. A patient indicates that she is not pleased with your work. You do not really know what you could do differently. Now a conversation takes place with a relative of the patient who strongly attacks you and says that he does not approve of the fact that his mother is cared for by a foreigner. The trainer takes on the role of the xenophobic relative.

For observation criteria see situation 2.

4. You work as a waiter/waitress in the hospitality industry. An unpleasant customer mumbles and is difficult to understand. Still you are sure that you have taken his/her order correctly. Now he/she makes a complaint. The trainer takes on the role of the costumer.

## 4.8 Working Material for 2.8 Practical Training

### 4.8.1 Working Material: Company Visits

<b>Rules of conduct for the company visit</b>
The company visit is organised by:  _____  _____
Ms/Mr _____ is the person in charge for the duration of the visit.
His/Her instructions are to be followed.
After the visit the group leaves the company together and goes back to the facility institute or to _____
<p style="text-align: center;">Please remember:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>We are guests in this company!</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Our presence should not disrupt operations.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">We are expected to be polite and behave in a decent manner.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Look out for dangerous locations! Use caution!</b></p>

Source: Braun/Hoffmann-Ratzmer/Lindemann/Mauerhof 2007, p. 169 (translated by J. Haydn).

**Interview with an apprentice trainer**  
**Interview with an apprentice**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Class/Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is the exact title of your training/occupation?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. How long does the training take?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What school qualifications are required?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Which school subjects (grades) are especially important?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What do I have to pay particular attention to in my application?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. When do I have to apply?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. For how long have you been working in this job or been doing this apprenticeship?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Would you choose that career/apprenticeship again?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. If so, why?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

10. If not, why not?

---

---

11. Did you expect this occupation/apprenticeship to be different?

---

---

12. Do you need special skills and/or physical abilities in order to learn this profession? If so, please specify.

---

---

13. What are typical activities in this occupation/apprenticeship?

---

---

14. What do you find particularly difficult and exhausting in this occupation/apprenticeship?

---

---

15. What advantages and/or disadvantages does this occupation/apprenticeship have?

---

---

16. What do you especially like about this occupation/apprenticeship?

---

---

17. What does a typical work day look like (e.g. working hours, breaks, regular activities, main place of work)?

---

---

**Thank you for this interesting interview!**

#### 4.8.2 Working Material: Preparation and Follow-up of the Work Placement

Guidelines for a collage	
Create a collage according to these guidelines	
Exact occupational title	Duration of the training
Required school qualifications	Typical activities
Required skills/personal requirements	Physical requirements
Advantages of the occupation	Disadvantages of the occupation
Main place of work	Name and address of the company (if necessary contact person/work placement)



### Exploration – Work placement

Explore your workplace in the company you work for.

It is important to get to know your workplace very well. For that reason, you will find questions here that you can ask your supervisor or colleagues at work.

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupational field: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 1. Requirements:

a) What kind of school-leaving certificate is required?

\_\_\_\_\_

b) Which school subjects are particularly important?

\_\_\_\_\_

c) What is demanded in terms of work behaviour?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

d) Does the company carry out an aptitude test?

\_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. Training for a career:

a) How many apprentices does the company employ each year?

\_\_\_\_\_

b) How long does the apprenticeship take?

\_\_\_\_\_

c) Where is the vocational school?

\_\_\_\_\_

d) Will the company prepare the apprentice for the exam?

\_\_\_\_\_

e) How many hours do apprentices work, how long are the breaks and how much time do they have off?

\_\_\_\_\_

f) What do apprentices earn in the different years of their apprenticeship?

\_\_\_\_\_

<b>3. Requirements (Please check as appropriate):</b>			
Physical strength necessary	<input type="radio"/> yes	<input type="radio"/> not so much	<input type="radio"/> no
Manual skill and dexterity	<input type="radio"/> yes	<input type="radio"/> not so much	<input type="radio"/> no
Long periods of standing	<input type="radio"/> yes	<input type="radio"/> not so much	<input type="radio"/> no
Squatting/bending required	<input type="radio"/> yes	<input type="radio"/> not so much	<input type="radio"/> no
Good eyesight	<input type="radio"/> yes	<input type="radio"/> not so much	<input type="radio"/> no
Good hearing	<input type="radio"/> yes	<input type="radio"/> not so much	<input type="radio"/> no
Good sense of smell	<input type="radio"/> yes	<input type="radio"/> not so much	<input type="radio"/> no
Good sense of taste	<input type="radio"/> yes	<input type="radio"/> not so much	<input type="radio"/> no
Good sense of touch	<input type="radio"/> yes	<input type="radio"/> not so much	<input type="radio"/> no
Working outdoors in all weathers	<input type="radio"/> yes	<input type="radio"/> not so much	<input type="radio"/> no
VDU work	<input type="radio"/> yes	<input type="radio"/> not so much	<input type="radio"/> no
Communication skills	<input type="radio"/> yes	<input type="radio"/> not so much	<input type="radio"/> no
Ability to cooperate	<input type="radio"/> yes	<input type="radio"/> not so much	<input type="radio"/> no
Empathy	<input type="radio"/> yes	<input type="radio"/> not so much	<input type="radio"/> no
Patience	<input type="radio"/> yes	<input type="radio"/> not so much	<input type="radio"/> no
Good PC knowledge	<input type="radio"/> yes	<input type="radio"/> not so much	<input type="radio"/> no
Language skills	<input type="radio"/> yes	<input type="radio"/> not so much	<input type="radio"/> no

**4. Write down whether apprentices work with people, machines or tools:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**5. What kind of people, machines or tools do they work with?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Source: Braun/Hoffmann-Ratzmer/Lindemann/Mauerhof 2007, pp. 181f (translated by J. Haydn).

### 4.8.3 Working Material: One-day Work Placement

Name of the company:	
from – to:	
Activities (What work did I do?):	
Material (With what did I work?):	
What I did not like so much:	
What I liked a lot:	
What was new to me:	

## 4.9 Working Material for 2.9 Job Finding

### 4.9.1 Working Material: The Cover Letter

First name and surname  
Address  
Tel: (applicant)

Company  
Mr/Ms recipient  
Address

Date

Dear Mr/Ms .....

(Re: reference number, position)

**YOU**

Express your interest in the company/in the advertised position to the recipient.

**I**

State your most important skills and explain why they match the company/position and what you could contribute. Stress your personality. Look for similarities.

**WE**

Highlight the advantages of working together. Mention the possibility of an interview.

Yours sincerely

*Signature*

## 4.9.2 Working Material: Analysing No-Nos in the Application Process

### Application mistakes:

The following application mistakes are real and happened to university graduates, who are often convinced that their application strategies are perfect:

1. I send my Curriculum Vitae to a company by e-mail without a cover letter (just a short e-mail indicating that I want to work for the company).
2. I write a cover letter, but I use an informal "Hello Mrs ..." as form of address.
3. I send an e-mail asking whether it would be worthwhile to apply to the company and whether a personal interview would be possible. After I received the answer that it is always possible to apply and that the invitation to an interview depends on the contents of the application, I do not write to the company anymore.
4. In my cover letter I write that I see the company as my ideal employer, but I forget to describe why I would be the ideal employee for that company.
5. I do not research before the job interview what services/products the company offers (This is indeed an essential part of the homework.) and inquire after them in the interview.
6. I send 100 "standard" applications and am surprised that I do not get any response. (After that, applicants are often convinced that nobody wants them, that they are not needed in the labour market etc.)
7. In the job interview, I demand an extraordinarily high salary without having made inquiries first about what is usual in that sector. (If I agreed to a low salary, the employer would not employ me either, as he/she would be convinced that I would not be satisfied with my pay and would only stay until I have found a better/more suitable job offer.)
8. As the personnel manager asks what my weaknesses are, I answer, "Weaknesses, why weaknesses, I can only think of strengths." (Every person has weaknesses, and even if I do not want to reveal them all, I should be prepared for this question and prove my ability of self-criticism with my answer.)
9. After the job interview I demand travel reimbursement from the employer, although this was not agreed upon. (I leave a negative impression on the employer; so there is little chance that I will get a job in that company in the future.)

### 4.9.3 Working Material: Application Rejected – This is What You Can Do!

Reasons for the rejection	What can I do?
<b>Formal errors:</b>  There is something wrong with the form of the application documents.	
<b>Lack of qualifications:</b>  This job or career requires skills and knowledge that you do not (yet) possess.	
<b>Gaps in the employment history:</b>  There are gaps in your employment history. You do not explain what you did during that time.	
<b>Lack of professional experience:</b>  You are still rather new to that career or you have done something different before.	
<b>Bad grades:</b>  Your school reports are not very good, especially in the subjects that are important for the training or the career.	

Source: Arbeitsgemeinschaft Jugend und Bildung e.V. (2007): Absage – das kannst du tun. Arbeitsblatt 1 (translated by J. Haydn).

Reasons for the rejection	What can I do?
<b>Formal errors:</b>  There is something wrong with the form of the application documents.	Ask others for advice; you often do not even see the most basic mistakes in your own documents or you like something that another person does not like at all.
<b>Lack of qualifications:</b>  This job or career requires skills and knowledge that you do not (yet) possess.	Pay attention to what is required in a job. If you do not fulfil the requirements, indicate how you will make up for what you are lacking.
<b>Gaps in the employment history:</b>  There are gaps in your employment history. You do not explain what you did during that time.	Try to explain well why there are gaps in your employment history and what you did during that time.
<b>Lack of professional experience:</b>  You are still rather new to that career or you have done something different before.	Mention internships and temporary jobs in order to show that you have practical experience.
<b>Bad grades:</b>  Your school reports are not very good, especially in the subjects that are important for the training or the career.	Show that you are still suitable and that you continue studying.

Source: Arbeitsgemeinschaft Jugend und Bildung e.V. (2007): Mutig sein, selbst aktiv werden. Material (translated by J. Haydn).

#### 4.9.4 Working Material: The Hidden Labour Market: Your Personal Contacts

##### Contact list

		To-Do			
Name of the contact, note	Urgent steps to maintain contact	Long-term cultivation of contact	Getting into contact is urgent for current job search	by when (date)	completed (date)
e.g. Tony M.	yes – invitation to dinner		yes, see before	end of the week	
e.g. Mary W.		call in 2 to 3 months		2 to 3 months	



#### 4.9.5 Working Material: Job Search

Job advertisement – Check list	
<b>Company</b>	Your notes
Sector?	.....
Product range?	.....
Image?	.....
Size, market position?	.....
National/international?	.....
Future prospects?	.....
Location/transport connection?	.....
<b>Tasks</b>	.....
Job description?	.....
Opportunities for development?	.....
Office work or work outside the office or a combination of both?	.....
<b>Qualification</b>	.....
School qualifications?	.....
Special knowledge (e.g. languages)?	.....
Skills (e.g. sociable)?	.....
Mobility?	.....
Age?	.....
Driving licence?	.....
<b>Job offer</b>	.....
Length of training?	.....
Specific induction training?	.....
Employee benefits?	.....
Possibility of employment after the training?	.....

### **Application**

Type of application/required documents? .....

Making contact by phone? .....

newspaper advertisement (date):

.....

in: .....

*Paste advertisement here:*

#### 4.9.6 Working Material: Getting Ready for the Job Interview

##### Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a creativity technique. By expressing ideas spontaneously without adverse criticism a great number of ideas on a given problem are generated and documented. When brainstorming in a group (about 5 to 9 participants), the participants can encourage each other with their contributions to combine different ideas so that synergy effects can be used.

##### The brainstorming rules are:

1. Criticism is forbidden.
2. Every idea is welcome. The more imaginative, the better.
3. Each participant should develop as many ideas as possible.
4. Every participant is allowed to take up ideas of others and develop them further.

##### Possible job interview questions (a selection):

(Developed by Julia Zdrahal-Urbanek for a series of seminars on how to successfully apply for a job – „Erfolgreich bewerben“, Verband Wiener Volksbildung, 2003):

- Why did you apply to our company?
- What appealed to you in the job advertisement?
- What interests you most about this job?
- Do you already have a specific idea of what activities you could perform in our company?
- What do you know already about our company?
- How did you become aware of our company?
- Do you know who our competitors are?
- Tell me about yourself!
- What activities do you enjoy the most in your current job (interest you the most)?
- How did you choose your current career/education?
- Why did you change your education?/Why did you not formally complete your education?
- Did you have favourite subjects at school?
- Are you able to apply in your current job what you have learnt in your education?
- Why did you leave your last job at company x? OR: Why do you want to leave your current job?
- What did you like most/least about your last job?
- Where do you see yourself in five years' time?
- What are you looking for in your employer?
- What do you not want your employer to be like?
- 200 people applied for this job. In what way would we benefit from your joining the company?
- What makes you different from other candidates?
- What are your strengths?
- What are your weaknesses?
- Do you have plans for further education? In what areas?
- Is your English (or another foreign language) good enough to be able to continue this interview in English?
- Imagine I am a mountain farmer. Sell a credit card to me.
- How would you react if a customer called to criticise the quality of your service?
- What makes a good xx (any job title)? What competencies does he/she need?
- How would your current work colleagues describe you?

- 
- Which of your characteristics are you not happy with?
  - Do you like to work in a team? What position in a team do you prefer?
  - How do you react to stressful situations?
  - How do you deal with conflicts? Describe a situation in which you were confronted with a conflict at work.
  - What are your salary expectations for this job?
  - When could you start working for us?
  - Do you have any expensive/time-consuming hobbies?
  - What are your hobbies/leisure time activities/personal interests?
  - Do you plan to have children?
  - Are you able to balance family and career?
  - Do you want to ask any questions?

**Additional questions:**

- How long have you been looking for a job?
  - What other companies have you already applied to?
  - What are your short-term, medium-term and long-term career goals?
  - How do you organise your work?
  - How do you deal with hierarchical structures?
  - Tell me about 2 occasions when you have shown initiative.
  - Why should we hire you?
  - What has been your biggest success so far?
  - Are you willing to travel? Is it acceptable for you to be away on business a lot?
  - Are you willing to relocate for this job?
  - Have you been involved in any extra-curricular activities? If so, please specify. (for young people)
- etc.

### 4.9.7 Working Material: My Application is Unique

I apply for a job in the caring profession (commercial job, technical occupation, sales occupation, counselling job) as a:

---

This job includes the following tasks:

---

---

Apprentices have to meet the following requirements:

Good grades in	
Technical competence	
Personal and social skills	
in addition	

I think I am suitable for this job because I ... (notes)

1. 

---

2. 

---

3. 

---

### Formulate the individual part of your cover letter

Applicant

Date

Company

Dear Ms/Mr

Re: Apprenticeship

I read in the newspaper/I heard at the job centre that you will take on \_\_\_\_\_ apprentices next year.

I am writing to apply for an apprenticeship.

I am currently in my \_\_\_\_\_ year at \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ and I will finish school next summer.

I am interested in this job because/or: I think I am suitable for this job because

---

---

Please find enclosed my CV for your consideration.

I look forward to discussing my application with you in further detail.

Yours sincerely,

Encl.

Source: Schabacker-Bock/Marquard 2005, pp. 102/103. Worksheets 13 and 14.

#### 4.9.8 Working Material: Understanding the Language of Job Advertisements, Developing a Profile

##### Version 1: Analysis of a job advertisement

The most important features of the company and the job	My personal profile and assets for this job	My expectations and my motivation for this job

## **Version 2: Analysis of different job advertisements**

### **Description:**

For this exercise it is necessary that either the trainer collects job advertisements in newspapers or on the internet or that the participants are asked to do that for a week.

The participants form small groups of 3 to 4 people. Each group receives a few (ideally at least 10) job advertisements or uses advertisements they have collected themselves. The participants receive the following instructions:

In order to check whether your interests and competencies match the requirements described in the job advertisements, arrange and analyse the advertisements according to the following aspects:

#### ***1. Presentation and form of address:***

Advertisements can differ a lot in their visual and linguistic presentation. Some are very conservative in their wording, while others use trendy language. The visual and linguistic presentation of a company in a job advertisement sheds light on the corporate culture and the vacancy to be filled. For that reason, a lot of information can be derived, as for example whether they look for younger or older, rather conservative or less conservative people.

#### ***2. Messages between the lines as essential additional information:***

Specific expressions have been developed, especially in commerce, for a lot of activities and areas of employment, which often contain more information than is apparent at first sight. For that reason, it is worthwhile to interpret the content of a job advertisement in greater detail and assess what a certain expression or statement could mean. A “very dynamic working environment”, for example, could stand for high labour turnover or “strong competition” could mean difficult times for the employees of a company. The description “lone fighter with willingness to concentrate on details” could point to a position of a “general factotum”.

#### ***3. Differentiation between essential and desirable requirements***

As companies try to get the “best” applicant, advertisements often contain maximum requirements. This is also quite often the case when the human resources department of a company does not receive an adequate requirement profile from the recruiting department. In the following, a few common phrases are listed that can be helpful in the differentiation between essential criteria and desirable criteria.



Essential criteria	Desirable criteria
... are absolutely essential ...	... are desirable but not essential ...
... we require ...	... we welcome applicants who ...
... are of paramount importance/are required for this position ...	... it would be beneficial to have ...
... you must be familiar with ...	... would be a great asset ...
... you must be able to ...	... you should be open to ...
... you will certainly have ...	... ideally you have ...
... you must have demonstrated ...	... would be advantageous ...
... it is essential that you have/are ...	... you should be happy to ...
... you will be a proven ...	... X will also be considered ...

After the participants have worked on their advertisements, they put them on a pin board. Each small group presents the results of their work to the whole group and discusses how they interpreted the meaning of the content. The other participants and the trainer can then add other ideas for interpretation.

#### 4.9.9 Working Material: Practicing Job Interviews

##### Version 2:

**Objective:** In a laboratory situation, the participants prepare for and practice interviewing for a job and receive – unlike in practice – honest and productive/constructive feedback that they can use for real application situations. The exercise is designed to make participants aware that they should prepare for job interviews and that they can enlist the help of others (i.e. of the trainer and other participants). Practicing the interview in role play should reduce nervousness about the real situation. Besides it is essential to have experienced a job interview from the viewpoint of a personnel manager in order to be able to better understand the interests and needs of personnel managers. The reversal of roles and specific feedback can help with coming to terms with negative experiences in a playful way. In this exercise the participants should also learn that they, as applicants, are negotiating partners as well and should therefore express their interests and needs.

**Description:** The participants form groups of three, distributing the roles of a job applicant, a personnel manager and a coach. After some time they should change roles so that each participant takes on every role in the course of the exercise. All participants of a team write a job advertisement in response to which they want to apply in role play. The participants can also use advertisements they found in newspapers or online. Then every team decides who assumes the role of the personnel manager and the role of the applicant in the first role play.

The personnel managers receive the job advertisements to be able to prepare the content of interview. All team members prepare for their roles with the help of the coach. This includes working on possible questions and answers.

After that, the role plays start, while the circumstances of the job interview are simulated as follows: Two chairs are placed opposite each other, separated by a table, and another chair is placed behind the chair of the applicant. The first applicant leaves the room, the personnel manager takes a seat and the coach sits down on the chair behind the chair of the applicant. All participants who do not directly participate in the role play form a circle of chairs around the application scene. Their task is to make close observations in order to give feedback after the role play. Finally, the applicant enters the room, and the role play starts like a real job interview that should take about 10 minutes in that case. The coach can – when he/she thinks it is appropriate – interrupt the interview by putting his/her hand on the shoulder of the applicant and by suggesting how to continue: “If I were you, I now would ...” The applicant can choose himself/herself whether she/he wants to follow the advice. After the role play the three participants remain seated and the trainers ask them how they experienced the interview from their perspective: First they ask the applicant, then the coach and in the end the personnel manager. After that, the participants leave the “scene” (Note: In this way they leave the roles they assumed during role play and can distance themselves from the situation, which makes accepting feedback and reflecting on the situation easier.).

The role play can also be filmed. At this point the whole group could watch the recording. If the role play was not filmed, feedback is given by the group, that is all participants who did not directly participate, immediately afterwards. With large groups it is advisable to reduce the feedback to three or four volunteers for time reasons. In job interviews, the following four aspects could be assessed, for example: self-presentation of the applicant, response to the questions asked by the personnel manager, body language and development of the relationship level in the interview.

The trainer is the last one to give feedback by pointing to potential blind spots of the group. At the end of the role play, the job applicant gets the chance to reflect on how he/she can benefit from the

exercise or the experience. It is essential that the feedback rules are observed and that participants do not justify themselves afterwards.

After changing roles the whole role play can be repeated.

**Alternative – “Fun application”:** The participants form small groups whose task it is to set up companies and write job advertisements for vacancies to be filled in these companies. The jobs that the other participants can then apply for do not really exist – they rather are made-up fun jobs, like for example banana evaluator or handbag carrier. Except for that difference, the role play can be carried out as described above. The advantage of this alternative is that it introduces the participants to job interviews in a playful way and in a funny setting while still teaching them the “rules” of that special communication situation.

#### 4.10 Working Material for 2.10 End of the Course

#### 4.10.1 Working Material: Goals and Resolutions

1. Personal Goals:	
The most important tasks are:	

[illegible]

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